

Newsletter

of the IOM International Organization for Migration in the Slovak Republic

Issue 01/2013 – January 2013

Dear colleagues,

In the first issue of the newsletter in 2013 we have made an overview of the key activities and achievements of IOM Bratislava, which we were able to carry out in the past year in the field of integration of migrants, assisted voluntary returns and reintegration, counter trafficking, coordination of activities of the European Migration Network and humanitarian transfers of refugees. To introduce a few numbers: in 2012 we helped 54 migrants safely return to their country of origin, we assisted with the return and social integration of the two tens of trafficking victims and nearly 1,700 clients used the legal, social and labour counselling of the Migration Information Centre of the IOM. Hundreds more participated in the courses of Slovak language and social and culture orientation, or received support to gain further education, improve qualification or for retraining courses. We thank our colleagues, donors and partners for their support, which enabled us to provide this help to migrants and our clients in 2012 as well.

After the statistical summary of the whole year this issue presents information about activities of IOM Bratislava conducted from October to December 2012, as well as other IOM client stories. For further information and contact details for all IOM units visit our website www.iom.sk.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IOM Workshops and Consultation Days for Migrants

Between February and May 2013 IOM Bratislava will organize regional workshops for representatives of alien police departments, labour offices, district offices, municipalities and health insurance companies, who in the past took part in IOM trainings for enhancing intercultural and communication competencies. Each workshop will be followed by a consultation day for migrants, so-called "One-Stop-Shop".



Migrants who live and work in Slovakia will be able to get there advice from employees of various institutions – participants of IOM trainings – about work, stay or social security. The goal of both the trainings and the workshops is to support the provision of assistance for migrants in Slovakia.

IOM is Looking for Protagonists for the Film on Migrants

IOM in cooperation with the film director Marcel Pázman is preparing a documentary film about migrants' lives in Slovakia and is seeking protagonists among migrants from Ukraine, Moldova, Vietnam and China, who live and work in the Slovak Republic and would be willing – either individually or with their families – to perform in this film. We will be grateful for help with looking for protagonists. For more information please visit the IOM website.

EMN Studies in 2013



In 2013, IOM Bratislava as the coordinator of the European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact Point in the Slovak Republic will prepare the

following five national studies: *EU Member State Policies and Practice related to Social Security, Health and Housing Services for*

Migrants; Organisation of Reception Facilities for Asylum Seekers; Attracting High-qualified and Qualified Third-country Nationals; Good Practices and Lessons Learned; Identification of Trafficking Victims in Asylum/Migration Procedures and Annual Report on Migration and Asylum Policies in the Slovak Republic 2012. All studies will be available on www.emn.sk where you can also download [previously issued reports](#).

PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES

IOM in 2012

Within the framework of the Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programme, IOM Bratislava assisted 54 returnees with their return to country of origin. The majority of returnees headed for Moldova, Vietnam, Armenia, China, Russia and to United States.

In 2012 IOM provided returnees with reintegration assistance in the value of 42,032.99 EUR. A total of 27 cases consisting of individuals or whole families who opted for assisted voluntary return and applied for reintegration assistance were assisted with reintegration grant. The assisted cases originated from Vietnam, Moldova, Armenia, China, Iran, Macedonia, Nepal, Russia, Kosovo, Thailand, Turkey and Ukraine.

IOM Bratislava identified 30 victims of human trafficking in year 2012, 20 women and 10 men. Five victims were identified through the National Anti-trafficking Helpline [0800 800 818](tel:0800800818). Nineteen victims decided to enter the Return and Reintegration Programme for Trafficked Persons, 13 of whom were helped by IOM to return to Slovakia. IOM provided 1,064 consultations through the helpline. Most of consultations included communication with clients, providing preventative information to public and verification of job offers.



In 2012 the IOM Migration Information Centre (MIC) was contacted by 1,678 clients, with most of them coming from Ukraine, Russian Federation and Serbia. The Centre provided its clients with 3,266 personal, e-mail or phone consultations. The clients also visited [MIC's website](#) which includes information and advice on different aspects of life and residence in Slovakia.

The website was visited by 156,973 visitors. Specialized Counselling Days, i.e. [One Stop Shops](#), were organized by the MIC Bratislava and Košice for the first time. The complex counselling provided by the representatives of several institutions was used by 40 migrants from more than 10 countries.

Last year, 403 migrants attended the free of charge Slovak language courses organized by the MIC in Bratislava and Košice and 194 migrants attended the courses of socio-cultural orientation. Financial contribution for education and retraining courses was allocated to 65 clients.



In 2012, IOM Bratislava as the coordinator of the European Migration Network (EMN) National Contact Point in the Slovak Republic published [six studies in the Slovak and English language](#), responded to [76 ad-hoc queries](#) of EU Member States and Norway in the field of migration and asylum, arranged a [national conference](#) and [educational seminar](#), as well as ten meetings of different types – thematic seminars, working breakfasts, cluster meeting, presentation at university, etc.

Based on a trilateral treaty between the Government of the Slovak Republic, UNHCR and IOM 180 refugees from refugee camps in Egypt, Eritrea, Iraq and Yemen came to the Emergency Transit Centre in Humenné in the past year. 166 refugees were successfully resettled in 2012, with 80 percent of them finding a new home in the United States of America, and the rest in Canada.

For more detailed information on the activities of IOM in 2012 see [the IOM website](#).

IOM has brought together Slovak and Migrant Families

32 Slovak and migrant families shared their Sunday lunch on 18 November 2012. The meetings, organized by IOM, took place at 9 various locations in Slovakia and were attended by migrant families from 11 countries. Each meeting was attended by one Slovak family and one migrant family – one family hosted the meeting and prepared a Sunday lunch while another one came for a visit. Most of the families exchanged contact details and agreed to meet again in the future, some of them even

arranged their next meetings. Family meetings, personal contact, communication and the possibility to get to know each other can reduce barriers and isolation and can promote relations between Slovak and migrant families.

Apart from Slovakia, on the same day the meetings of local and migrant families were simultaneously held in 7 other EU countries within the international project [Next Door Family EU](#).



Author of photo: Katarína Téglássyová

The project *Next Door Family EU – Inclusive Neighbourhoods* is co-financed by the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (EIF) and by the U.S. Embassy in Bratislava, Slovakia. Media partners of family meetings in Slovakia were: Radio and television of Slovakia and SME daily.

Conference on Migration of Students from Third Countries



IOM Bratislava as the coordinator of the EMN National Contact Point in the Slovak Republic held a conference entitled [Migration of Students from Third Countries to Slovakia and EU](#) which took place in Bratislava on 4 December 2012. The aim of the conference was to present existing policies, measures and their impact on immigration of international students to selected EU Member States as well as the main findings from the EMN study on [Immigration of International Students to EU Member States](#).

Representatives of the Austrian, Czech, Norwegian and Slovak EMN National Contact Points presented the main findings about international student migration from the perspective of their countries. A panel discussion with state and public sector representatives on the impacts of international student migration to Slovakia also constituted a part of the conference programme.

The EMN was established via Council Decision 2008/381/EC and is financially supported by the European Union. The EMN activities in the Slovak Republic are co-financed by the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. More information about the EMN can be found on www.emn.sk and www.emn.europa.eu.

I N B R I E F

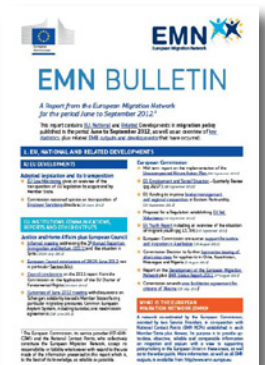
Compendium from an International IOM Conference



IOM published the compendium [Providing Social and Cultural Orientation for Migrants – Exchange of Experience with Foreign Experts from EU Member States](#) (in Slovak language). In this publication the experts from the Czech Republic, Austria, Sweden and IOM Offices in Geneva, Prague and Bratislava share their experience and good practice with the preparation of programmes and courses of social and cultural orientation. These contributions were presented at an international conference *Social and Cultural Orientation for Migrants from Third Countries*, organized by IOM on 19 September 2012 in Bratislava. The compendium from this conference also offers a set of recommendations for preparing programmes of social and cultural orientation for migrants in Slovakia, which can help their better integration.

Second Issue of the EMN Bulletin

In October 2012, the European Commission published the second edition of the [EMN Bulletin](#) which provides up-to-date and topical information in the field of migration and asylum. It highlights recent EU and national developments including latest documents and statistics for the period July to September 2012. This EMN Bulletin is also available in the [Slovak language](#).



Days of Ibero-American Film



The representative of Latin American community in Slovakia in cooperation with the MIC organized the 9th Days of Ibero-American Film at the end of November 2012 in Bratislava.

During the three-day-event the visitors had the opportunity to watch five movies of recent Brazilian, Colombian, Cuban, Spanish and Venezuelan cinematography.

X-mas Fusion in Košice

Cultural mediators of IOM Migration Information Centre (MIC) in Košice prepared a unique multicultural Christmas party *X-mas Fusion* on 8 December 2012 for the citizens of Košice and its neighbourhood. Each cultural mediator presented their country and its traditions at Christmas - guests could taste the traditional Egyptian drink of hibiscus, Slovak cabbage soup or Indian cuisine. Moreover, they could learn about the customs and celebrations of Slovak and Russian Christmas and Diwali – Indian festival of lights. Another part of the programme was a performance of oriental dance group *Soraya* and their showcase of traditional Egyptian and Indian dances.

Other information Meeting of the Communities in December

The representative of the Cuban community in cooperation with MIC organized a meeting for the members of Cuban community and other interested people. The topic of the meeting was the recent development in the community.

The aim of the meeting "St. Nicholas in Colours" was to present different customs and traditions which are connected to this feast in Slovakia and Africa. The programme consisted of cultural and sport activities, as well as food tasting.

I O M C L I E N T S T O R I E S

Alexandra from Moldova: Thanks to IOM I have a place to live

Mrs. Alexandra comes from Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Europe. She left for Slovakia to make some money and pay back all of her debts. "In Slovakia I was working as a cleaning lady and I paid back all my debts," says Mrs. Alexandra.

At the beginning of 2012 she was detained by the Slovak Alien Police and threatened with deportation back to Moldova.

In this complicated situation IOM stepped into her life and helped her return back home within the framework of the Assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme. "At the beginning I didn't believe it but I had nothing to loose..." confesses Mrs. Alexandra her initial distrust. After gaining more experience with the IOM staff all her doubts disappeared: "They are very good people, they helped me and supported me."



The assistance provided by IOM also continued after returning back to Moldova, where her destroyed and uninhabitable house was waiting for her: "I had nothing, everything was destroyed and in a catastrophic state. IOM supplied me with the building material and I renovated everything. IOM completely changed my life in Moldova; I have a place to stay now."

Watch the [video](#) story of this woman and IOM assistance.

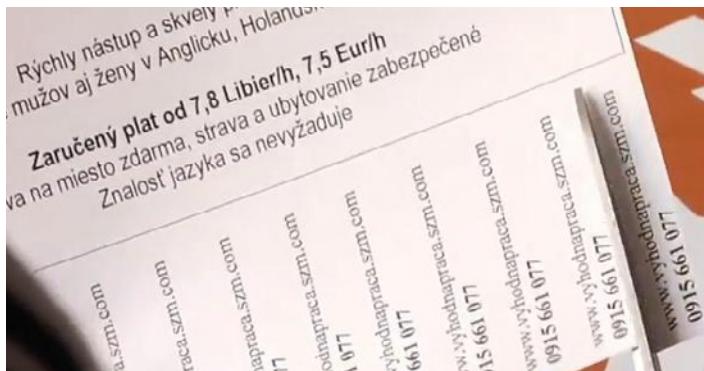
The AVRR is co-funded by the European Union from the European Return Fund and the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic. Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows.

Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking Does Not End after They Return Home

Peter was left in England without any documents, without access to his bank account and he was denied contact with his family. He became the victim of trafficking in human beings. Thanks to the IOM reintegration assistance, Peter is currently at home and is able to earn his living and support his family.

Peter was recruited to work as a painter in England by the friend from his hometown in Eastern Slovakia. He promised Peter to help him with the arrangement of social benefits for his six children. He really got the job and benefits. However, the bank account to which money was transferred, was at the disposal of Peter's friend. Despite Peter's disagreement, he was forced to keep working by the means of threatening and intimidation. Traffickers did not give him the personal documents back, Peter was under their control and was not allowed to contact his family. After three months he managed to escape and return back to Slovakia, upon which his family contacted IOM and Peter agreed to be included into Return and Reintegration Programme for Trafficked Persons.

Reintegration care for victims of trafficking contributes to the client's stabilization after his return home, so the risk that such situation will recur is minimized. The IOM staff elaborated a re-integration plan together with Peter – accommodation being a priority, because his house was damaged by accidental fire. Unemployed Peter got one-time financial support and counseling. His situation required intensive social assistance as well. Therefore IOM contacted the social worker from Peter's region, who was trained to work with victims of trafficking in the past. This social worker helped Peter to analyse his family financial budget, to ensure building material for repairing his house, to get the personal documents and to orientate in social benefits system. He also prepared a CV together with Peter and assisted him with searching for a job. Because another child was born in his family, IOM staff sent him clothes and further material help. When the client decided to cooperate with the police regarding the criminal proceedings in his human trafficking case, the social worker supported Peter accordingly.



Reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings is a long-term process. Meanwhile, Peter has found a part-time job and is now able to earn his family living and support his family. Despite this, his economical situation is still affected by the problems with the possession of Peter's family house, as well as by usury in the community he lives in. Considering this, intensive social assistance is still inevitable in this case.

The Return and Reintegration Programme for Trafficked Persons is carried out by IOM Bratislava as the integral part of national Programme of support and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings, which is financed by Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic.

WE OFFER

Courses of Slovak Language for Migrants

The Migration Information Centre (MIC) offers migrants free of charge open Slovak language courses. The courses started in January 2013 and take place every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:30 p.m. till 8:00 p.m. on Grösslingová 4 in Bratislava and on the same days from 5:30 p.m. till 7:00 p.m. in the premises of MIC on Poštová 1 in Košice.



The courses can be attended by the third country nationals who have been granted temporary, permanent or tolerated residence in Slovakia. The courses are free of charge and open for the beginners and per-intermediates of all age categories. The course may be attended without the need of previous registration and entrance test. The attendance of the course may start whenever during the cycle.

More information on the course is available on the web page www.mic.iom.sk. You can contact the MIC by phone on 02 – 5263 0023 (Bratislava) and 055 – 625 8662 (Košice) or by e-mail on mic@iom.int.

The project Migration Information Centre to Support Integration of Migrants in Slovakia is co-financed by the European Union from the European Fund for Integration of Third Country Nationals. Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows.

I O M I N M E D I A

News selection about activities of the IOM Bratislava published in the Slovak media from October to December 2012:

An extraordinary Sunday lunch

The Slovak Spectator, 19. 10. 2012

<http://spectator.sme.sk/articles/view/48047/9/extraordinary-sunday-lunch.html>

IOM distributes a movie about victims of human trafficking to schools

TASR, 25. 10. 2012

<http://www.hlavnespravy.sk/socialne-iom-distribuuje-do-skol-film-o-obetiach-obchodovania-s-ludmi/41021/>

Modern slavery in the UK. Slovaks and Czechs are experiencing it the most

Aktuality.sk, 2. 11. 2012

<http://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/216615/novodobe-otrokarstvo-v-britanii-slovaci-a-cesi-ho-zazivaju-najviac/>

Good people still exist: They are not afraid to accept a migrant

Topky.sk, 17. 11. 2012

<http://www.topky.sk/cl/10/1331361/Dobri-ludia-este-na-Slovensku-nevymreli--Neboja-sa-prijat-cudzincia>

Slovakia does not attract foreign students, laws make their life more difficult

Sme.sk, 4. 12. 2012

<http://www.sme.sk/c/6626357/zahranicnych-studentov-slovensko-nelaka-zakony-im-stazuju-zivot.html>