



## IOM Helsinki Regional e-Newsletter

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### Foreword by the Regional Representative

Welcome to the fifth edition of IOM Helsinki's quarterly regional e-Newsletter! This issue comes with stories of recent major donations to IOM activities and an update on some of our latest projects. More information can be found at our website: [www.iom.fi](http://www.iom.fi).

*Dr. Thomas Lothar Weiss*

### Minsk conference to shift focus onto demand for human trafficking

On 26-27 October, representatives from several international organizations, Belarus' neighboring countries, and several EU countries will come together in Minsk to discuss opportunities for strengthening cooperation between source and destination countries in the fight against trafficking. Special attention will be paid to the need for measures on the 'demand'-side.

### MINAS: ensuring minimum standards for the treatment of asylum seekers in Estonia

*Donor: European Refugee Fund, UNHCR, IOM*

Through the MINAS project, IOM and UNHCR, in close cooperation with partners in Estonia, are building the capacity of Estonian officials in order to meet the requirements of the act on "Providing International Protection to Aliens" (726 SE), which seeks to harmonize Estonian law with European Union directives on temporary protection, reception, and qualification of asylum seekers.



Estonian border guard © Piirivalveamet, Estonia

Project activities are targeted at officials responsible for implementation of the national crisis plan for mass influx and the labour market integration of asylum seekers and include study visits, development of information material, and training. Additionally, training material on asylum is being developed for border guards.

### Danish government gives generous support to repatriation of Angolan refugees from Zambia

*Donor: Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

The Danish Government has decided to support IOM's and UNHCR's joint efforts to repatriate Angolan refugees from Zambia to the tune of DKK10m (approximately €1.34m). This contribution comes at a crucial point for the repatriation project, which was recently extended owing to heightened demand from Angolan refugees willing to return home.



Refugees returning home to Angola © IOM 2005

Since the voluntary repatriation from Zambia started in 2003, a total of 63,324 Angolan refugees have been repatriated to Angola from various locations in Zambia.

### Armenian-US cooperation on border guard training expanded

*Donor: US Department of State*

The US Embassy in Armenia has granted US\$ 99,600 for a project on "Capacity Building of Armenian Border Guards and Allied Services Personnel". The project is aimed at improving the border management system of Armenia and reducing illegal migration flows by enhancing the capacity of the border guards and related personnel. An in-house training capacity will be built, and training will be provided on document examination, fraud detection, English language and computer skills for up to 250 participants among border guard and related services' personnel.

### Moldova: Faith-based organizations join the fight against trafficking

*Donor: European Commission, US Department of State*

IOM Moldova has launched a programme for 2006-08 that will involve faith-based organizations in the fight against human trafficking.

The programme, funded by the European Commission and the US Department of State, will be implemented in collaboration with the Moldova Partnership Program of the World Council of Churches, which represents a cooperation platform for the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the Union of Christian Evangelical Baptist Churches, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Republic of Moldova.



Priests during a training session © IOM 2006

It is envisaged that over 1000 priests and relevant personnel from religious institutions throughout the country will be involved.

Programme activities include in-depth workshops, publication of sermons on the human trafficking theme and a guide on "Prevention of Trafficking in Persons through Pastoral and Didactic Activities". In addition, a grant mechanism will be developed aimed at promoting the involvement of faith-based organizations in preventing human trafficking at community level.

## IOM and Belarusian State Border Guards Committee plan further cooperation

A Memorandum of Understanding supplemented by the Plan of Action for the period 2006-2007 was signed between the State Border Guards Committee (SBGC) of the Republic of Belarus and IOM on 3 August, 2006.

The Memorandum sets priority areas for interagency cooperation in the sphere of preventing and combating trafficking in human beings, illegal migration, and transnational organized crime, while the Plan of Action contains concrete activities within each area to be implemented during the next two years.

The Memorandum will greatly contribute to improving methods of combating these phenomena, as well as facilitate further development of mutually beneficial cooperation between the SBGC and the IOM. So far, two practical seminars on "Combating Trafficking in Human Beings" have been organized.

## IOM Helsinki kicks off 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of e-Learning project on anti-discrimination for Judiciary

*Donor: EC's Exchange Programme for Judicial Authorities*

On August 1 IOM Helsinki started implementation of the project "Judges Online: Capacity Building for the Judiciary through e-Learning". The project encourages members of the judiciary in Estonia, Finland, and Latvia to learn about anti-discrimination legislation and its implementation with the help of modern e-learning technology and resources. National e-learning courses

for the judiciary, which will be carried out by participating training institutes, will introduce IOM Helsinki's e-Learning Tool on anti-discrimination. The project also has a distinctly European dimension through Europe-wide events on judicial e-learning strategies and anti-discrimination legislation. The project represents a continuation of IOM Helsinki's anti-discrimination activities, which began in 2002.

## Finland's EU Presidency: Migration experts convene on IOM Helsinki's invitation

Experts on return and resettlement policies and Finnish government officials convened in Helsinki on October 20 to discuss current migration challenges and innovative approaches with a special view to return and resettlement. The event, which is part of IOM Helsinki's contribution to the Finnish EU presidency, featured addresses by Ms. Nicoletta Giordano, Head of Assisted Voluntary Returns from IOM's headquarters in Geneva, and Ms. Alexia Scarlett, Head of Policy and Programme Support at IOM Brussels.

Other IOM Helsinki contributions to Finland's EU presidency include the facilitation of workshops on child victims of human trafficking at the conference on human trafficking organized by the Ministry of the Interior and on migration and development as part of the European NGO platform's conference that called for coherence in EU development policies. IOM also participated in a hearing on migration and asylum hosted by the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Finnish Parliament. In November, the Labour Ministry and IOM will co-host a conference on illegal employment in the Baltic Sea region.

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As the intergovernmental lead agency on migration management, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to:

- » Assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration;
- » Advance understanding of migration issues;
- » Encourage social and economic development through migration;
- » Uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

With some 290 field locations in over 100 countries and 118 Member States, IOM's activities correspond to the four main areas for managing migration: migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and forced migration. A number of cross-cutting activities relevant to each of these areas include technical cooperation and capacity building, protection of migrant rights, promotion of international migration law, research, policy debate and guidance, regional and international cooperation, public information and education, migration health, integration and reintegration.

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