

Since 1951 IOM is playing an important role in resettlement around the world. Four IOM Missions in Central Asia: IOM Kazakhstan, IOM Kyrgyzstan, IOM Tajikistan and IOM Turkmenistan are involved in arranging safe, orderly and cost effective movement of refugees, migrants and other persons of concern to the Organization to the countries of their destinations.

Leading resettlement countries for refugees from Central Asia are the United States, Canada and the Nordic countries.

IOM Missions in Central Asia work closely with Governments, the United High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and non-government organizations. UNHCR is the main referring agency for resettlement cases, although, under some circumstances, countries may refer individuals and families directly to IOM for resettlement.



IOM Central Asian resettlement assistance includes the following activities:

- Processing travel documents and exit permissions, according to the requirements of the departure country to facilitate the safe and proper transfer of refugees across the international borders all the way up to their

- destination country
- Medical screening to ensure that refugees meet the requirements of the host country and are fit to travel.
- Movement assistance including transporting refugees from country of location to their receiving countries, providing transit and departure assistance and arranging arrangement of medical or non-medical escorts where required.

## Facilitating migration – visa services

IOM offices in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan facilitate the submission of applications for Canadian temporary and permanent residence visas and immigrant applications under skilled worker and family class programs. The Canadian Embassy in Moscow, Russian Federation is in charge of issuing visas and travel documents for Central Asian Region, and IOM Missions in Central Asia provide the following services for participants in the programme to emigrate to Canada:

- distribute information on relevant requirements as published by the Embassy;
- provide the contact details and web site addresses of the Embassy;
- assist in visa/immigration application package completion;
- translate supporting documents;

- return passports with immigration decisions and inform applicants accordingly;
- offer discounted one way airfares for persons admitted to Canada for permanent stay.

IOM Mission in Kazakhstan provides similar services to citizens of Uzbekistan.

## Assisted voluntary return and reintegration

Assisted Voluntary Return is an area of expertise that IOM has developed over more than 25 years of experience and is offered by IOM to migrants. It aims at orderly, humane and cost-effective return and reintegration of migrants who are unable or unwilling to remain in host countries and wish to return voluntarily to their countries of origin. During the last ten years around 740 000 migrants have received IOM's AVR assistance to over 160 countries. With its global network of over 255 offices in countries of origin, transit, and destination, IOM is well placed to develop and manage comprehensive approaches to voluntary return migration.

IOM offices in Central Asia are providing arrival and reintegration assistance to returnees under AVR programmes conducted by IOM Missions in the main countries of return, which include Belgium, Norway, Finland, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

## United States Refugee Admissions Programme (USRAP)

The U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), funded by the Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (DOS/PRM), is one of the largest continuing activities of IOM, currently operating in over 40 countries.

IOM Kazakhstan, as a local point of contact for migrants, is involved in the process of arranging interviews for US refugees once a year in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Under the supervision of the IOM Mission in Moscow, IOM Mission in Kazakhstan informs applicants about their interview venue and dates, assists immigration officer with interpreting and distributes the decision letters.

For persons accepted for resettlement to USA as refugees, IOM Almaty provides departure assistance from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. IOM Kazakhstan provides counselling to refugees, provides information about the status of their cases, assists with obtaining legal documents and exit visas, arranges airtickets, assigns medical escorts when necessary, and works with border and migration authorities to facilitate departure. It provides support to refugees as they pass through the airport, the registration counter and border and customs check points. IOM also makes sure that necessary information on departures is received by the transiting and receiving missions.

During the period from 2005-2010 IOM Almaty has rendered the assistance to 2012 refugees in their departure to the US. For migrants arriving in the US on a self-payer basis, IOM assists in purchasing air tickets at the discounted rates granted to IOM.

## Movements to Canada

IOM Kazakhstan provides transportation services for refugees travelling to Canada from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan based on an MOU signed in February 2004 between the IOM and Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). IOM Missions provide assistance to Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) referred by UNHCR and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs). The privately sponsored refugee program allows organizations and groups of Canadian citizens and permanent residents to sponsor refugees in addition to those selected through the Government Assistance Program. These private sponsors are volunteer organizations or individual, mostly church, ethno-cultural or community based.

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## Movements to other countries

The leading European receiving countries for refugees from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan during the period 2005-2010 were: Sweden, Norway, Finland and Denmark. The IOM Mission in Kazakhstan is also providing assistance in family reunification of refugees to Austria, France, Netherlands, UK and Australia. At the request of governments and in close cooperation with UNHCR IOM Kazakhstan provides the following assistance to refugees:



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1. Facilitation of the exit permission and immigration formalities;
2. Transportation Assistance;
3. Special assistance as medical escorts if necessary and warm clothing.

During 2005–2010, IOM Kazakhstan assisted in moving 686 refugees to Europe and 13 persons to Australia.

## Canada visa assistance project

In November 2004, IOM Kazakhstan and the Embassy of Canada in Russian Federation concluded the agreement on facilitation of Canadian visa delivery services to residents of Kazakhstan and residents of Uzbekistan willing to receive temporary resident, study permit, work permit and permanent resident visas to Canada.

Kazakh citizens can submit their applications at the IOM Almaty/Astana offices. IOM Almaty/Astana staff provides the following services:

- Provision of application forms and other important information related to temporary and permanent residence in Canada;
- Assistance in filling in the required visa application forms;
- Translation and certification of the supporting documents;
- Consultation in assembling visa application packages;
- Assistance in collecting temporary and permanent residence visas and payment of application processing fees;
- Full kit and the visa processing fees delivery to the Canadian Embassy in Moscow;
- Provision of information and



updates on the status of the application;

- Receipt of passport with the decision from the Visa Section and handover to the applicant or providing notification to the applicant to collect the passport from the IOM Moscow office.

During the period 2008-2010 IOM Kazakhstan provided visa application assistance to 2091 temporary resident applicants, 243 students, and 1183 immigrants under family class and skilled workers programme.

For persons admitted to permanent residence in Canada, IOM Almaty offers discounted one way fares on the airlines with which IOM has Global Agreements. 241 persons admitted for permanent residence to Canada bought the air tickets on discounted fares. The project is service fee based.

## Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Program (AVRRP) in Kazakhstan

IOM Kazakhstan renders assistance to returnees, which range from rendering arrival assistance to schemes to assist long-term reintegration and economic viability of the migrants once they are back to the country. IOM Kazakhstan provides financial assistance to returnees for medical treatment and other reha-

bilitation activities (rehabilitation assistance), as well as reintegration grants allocated by the governments of the countries from where the migrant returns to start up their businesses or pursue studies, as per individual needs (reintegration assistance). IOM Kazakhstan provides the following services to returnees from Belgium, Norway, Switzerland and UK:

1. Assessment of the feasibility of candidates reintegration;
2. The contact (including airport assistance) and communication with the candidate upon arrival to Kazakhstan;
3. Follow-up and monitoring of the reintegration activities in the country of return;
4. Reporting on the reintegration activities: one month, six months, twelve months after the returnees' arrival in country of return.

In recent years IOM Kazakhstan assisted 12 cases of voluntary return.



# KYRGYZSTAN

## Movements

The Mission of the International Organization for Migration in the Kyrgyz Republic provides humanitarian assistance to migrants, refugees and internally displaced people. In close cooperation with receiving states and UNHCR, IOM provides assistance in the resettlement of refugees and migrants who have been approved for immigration. IOM provides assistance only in accordance with request of Embassies and ensures that its movement activities correspond to requirements and constitution of the receiving country.



One of the largest continuing IOM resettlement projects is the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), funded by the Department of State/Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (DOS/PRM). Within the framework of this project, the Mission of IOM in the Kyrgyz Republic provides efficient and effective field operation services, including medical, cultural orientation and movement services. For the period from 2005 to 2010 486 refugees have been resettled to USA under this program.

IOM is also involved in the process of resettlement of refugees and migrants to other countries, such as Canada, Australia, Sweden, Netherlands and Denmark. Resettlement of refugees and migrants, including family re-unification, is implemented only upon request of the relevant Embassy and in compliance

with relevant agreements between IOM and respective countries. According to these agreements, IOM field missions are responsible for transportation of refugees and migrants, including planning of the departure process, receiving of travel documents and exit visas, informing the accepting parties, governments and agencies, providing transit assistance and other logistical support; and providing cultural orientation and migration health services. For the period from 2005-2010, 643 refugees and migrants have been resettled to European countries, such as Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, France, UK, Switzerland, Finland, Ireland, Belgium, Norway, Czech Republic, Romania; 226 refugees and migrants have been resettled to Canada and 62 refugees and migrants have been resettled to Australia. IOM also facilitates migration by providing air tickets to migrants under global IOM agreements with several airline companies. Under

this activity, 485 migrants departed to Canada and USA from 2005 to 2010.

## Canada visa assistance project

Citizenship and Immigration Canada represented by the Embassy of Canada in Moscow concluded an agreement with International Organization for Migration in Bishkek regarding improvement of customer services provided to citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic and residents of other CIS countries, who wish to apply for a visa to the Embassy of Canada in Moscow. IOM provides services including receipt of application forms and payment of visa fees to the Embassy of Canada in Moscow from applicants for permanent and temporary visas. IOM also include submits passports to the Embassy of Canada in Moscow, notarizes and translates documents,

provides general information on CIC requirements for the Skilled Worker Program, checks applications to ensure they have been correctly completed and informs applicants about the eventual decision of the Embassy of Canada. Decision on necessity to apply via IOM office in Bishkek is voluntary: applicants can submit their applications for visas to the Embassy of Canada in Moscow personally or through authorized persons. During the period from 2007 to 2010 Mission of IOM in the Kyrgyz Republic processed approximately 1000 applicants/cases.

## Assisted voluntary return and reintegration

Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Programmes (AVRRP) are one of the core activities of IOM. Through this program, IOM provides reintegration assistance to migrants who are returning to their home country. Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration activities include organizational and financial assistance for the returnee, and, where possible, provision of reintegration measures to the returnee. There are 3 stages in AVRR: pre-departure assistance and travel preparations; assistance with the actual trip home; post-arrival assistance for the socio-economic reinstallation and reintegration of returnees. The Mission of IOM in the Kyrgyz Republic provides assistance to returnees on the 3rd stage of AVRR per request of IOM sending mission. The post-arrival assistance consists of reception assistance at the airport, providing of initial post-arrival information, disbursement of reintegration grants to returnees, organization of onward travel to the final destination, provision of further reintegration assistance, if needed, including monitoring. For the period from 2008-2010 years, Mission of IOM in the Kyrgyz Republic assisted to returnees from such countries as Belgium, Finland, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

# TAJKISTAN

## Canadian government resettlement programme

Likewise, between 2000 and 2010, IOM Dushanbe has organized 1213 Afghan and Iranian refugees resettlements to Canada. In cooperation with IOM Manila, IOM Dushanbe has organized and conducted Cultural Orientation Abroad trainings for Canada-bound refugees.

## Nordic countries resettlement programme

Finally, between 2000 and 2010, IOM Dushanbe organized the movement of 118 refugees from Afghanistan to Norway, Finland, and Sweden.

## Family reunification, medical assessment of refugees, and residents in Tajikistan

From 2000–2010, IOM doctors have examined more than 2000 Family Class, Refugees as well as Residents of Tajikistan selected for Resettlement, study, and work to destinations in Canada, USA, New Zealand, Norway, and Finland.

## Customer service for visa application to residents of Tajikistan

As the Canadian Government does not have an embassy in Tajikistan, the Embassy of Canada in Moscow



subcontracted the International Organization for Migration to perform courier services and facilitate visa application process for citizens of Tajikistan. The Agreement was signed in 2008.

Trained staff ensures that applications submitted are complete, and that all necessary supporting documentation is attached and translated into English as required. With submission of the visa application in person, the Canadian visa-processing fee must be paid with original proof of payment submitted with your application. In addition to the Canadian visa-processing fee, an IOM service fee is also

charged.

IOM Tajikistan has absolutely no role in the assessment of Canadian visa applications, which is the sole prerogative of the Consulate General of Canada in Moscow.

Since 2008, IOM Dushanbe has assisted 541 individuals with the applications for work, study, immigration and visitor application forms.



# TURKMENISTAN

## Assisted Voluntary Return Program

IOM Ashgabat office provides arrival assistance to Turkmen returnees under IOM Turkey AVR Program. Within the period of 2008 – 2010 IOM Ashgabat provided assistance to 253 returnees. They are mostly stranded migrants who illegally stayed in Turkey and found themselves in difficult situation. According to the information received from IOM Turkey, there are more cases to come in 2011.

“The Program for Assisted Voluntary Return for Irregular Migrants in Turkey” intends to support the Government of Turkey with the establishment of efficient and humane return mechanisms for the voluntary return of stranded and irregular migrants.

The aim of the project is based on existing IOM return and reintegration programs in Europe and elsewhere, and includes: information, referral, arrangement of travel, onward travel to the home location and limited support towards reinsertion. AVR assistance also includes: information and counseling to potential returnees. AVR programs are particularly effective in situations where the voluntary return option is part of a multi-pronged approach to migration management.

## Movements

In close cooperation with receiving countries and the UNHCR office, IOM Ashgabat provides assistance in the resettlement of persons granted refugee status to United States, Canada, Norway and Sweden. Stranded migrants in Turkmenistan were returned to Armenia and Tajikistan. Within the period 2005-2009 with the assistance of IOM Ashgabat, 220 refugees and 39 Visa 92/93 holders were resettled to US, 104 refugees to Canada, 44 refugees were moved to Sweden.

