



IOM International Organization for Migration

DIVISION OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION

**ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAMME FOR THE
ASSISTED RETURN OF MIGRANTS STRANDED IN EASTERN
AND CENTRAL EUROPE (SMIT)**

MAY 1996

INDEX

I.	Findings and Recommendations	1
II.	Programme Concept and Design	1
	Context	1
	Overall Goal	2
	Purpose	3
	Activities	3
	1. Assisted return	3
	2. Information to potential irregular migrants	3
III.	Budget, Pilot Phase and Implementation	3
	Budget	3
	Pilot Phase	5
	Pilot Phase Results	5
	Implementation	7
IV.	Status of the Programme	9
V.	Programme Extension	9
	ANNEX - Movements Per Processing Office	10

I. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The programme for the Assisted Return of Migrants Stranded in Eastern and Central Europe (SMIT) appears to be properly managed; a sound approach has been used for this programme within the complex context of its implementation.

The programme's scope – particularly its overall goal, initially planned purpose and activities – has been reduced/hampered through lack of financial resources. IOM was obliged to reduce the programme to a pilot phase, the budget of which was US\$ 380,000, i.e. 11.6% of the original appeal (US\$ 3,290,992) and 13.3% of the revised budget (US\$ 2,863,395).

With a total of USD 347,880 at the end of April 1996, IOM was able to assist 359 stranded migrants at an average cost of US\$ 969. Real costs per case (including administrative and direct support costs for the return) show a decrease of 32% in relation to the average cost given in the revised budget.

As for the activities, one might expect that with the very limited resources available the impact of information dissemination to potential irregular migrants could not be measured. Accordingly, it is difficult to assess – without a survey among a selective group of potential beneficiaries – the role and impact of the provision of reliable and relevant information to such migrants, as well as the impact of broad-based promotional activities.

From the information available on file, there appears to be a substantial number of cases in the pipeline, and this no doubt reflects a clear interest from stranded migrants to benefit from programme assistance. A recommendation could be made that the IOM managers responsible for the programme elaborate a new programme concept based on lessons learned during the pilot phase. A new, less ambitious programme than the first – which aimed to assist 2,000 stranded migrants – could be developed to assist 500 stranded migrants and include a monitoring/evaluation component to assess the programme's impact, through a survey of a representative group of potential beneficiaries.

II. PROGRAMME CONCEPT AND DESIGN

CONTEXT

The programme was conceived based on the assumption that an increasing number of persons are spontaneously leaving their homelands to seek a better life in industrialised countries. Some of these irregular migrants arrive at their destination, others are stranded en route. The widening economic gap between South and North in general, poverty or lack of economic prospects, the lack of opportunities for regular migration, combined with erroneous information regarding living conditions in industrialised countries and the easy access to international transportation, are the principal underlying reasons for these uncontrolled movements.

Information gathered in the past three years by IOM field offices in **Eastern and Central Europe** – as well as a series of specific country studies on **transit migration** carried out by the **IOM Migration Information Programme (MIP)** for Eastern and Central Europe which indicate a significant volume of arrivals of such migrants in the region – indicate that such inflows will continue because many of these persons can reach Eastern Europe with relative ease. It also confirms that compatriots who have already arrived have a magnet effect on future arrivals and that the majority of these persons are economically motivated.

The IOM studies indicate that many of these transit migrants originate from Asia, Africa and the Middle East and that they have **left their countries of origin with the clear intention of reaching Western Europe and Northern America**. Some of them will succeed in reaching their intended destinations, but an increasing number are now stranded in the Baltic States, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey. As countries of intended destination have established ever more efficient border controls to refuse entry to irregular migrants, Eastern and Central Europe have now become, for a majority of these migrants, their final destinations rather than the originally intended transit zones.

Various bilateral and international programmes have been established to return irregular migrants from countries of destination to their countries of origin. Yet many individuals still fall outside the scope of such programmes. According to IOM findings these persons are willing, even desperate, to escape the conditions they find in transit countries and to return home, but they lack the ways and means to do so.

Although IOM decided to assist some individual requests for return assistance, experience has shown that an increasing number of irregular migrants in distress require support to return to their home countries. These migrants are a heavy burden on the transit countries; in most instances the countries concerned are ill-prepared financially and technically to deal with such populations. There is a risk that growing numbers of stranded irregular migrants in Eastern and Central Europe will overstrain the **social services** of these countries, and that they represent a **sizeable potential for uncontrolled onward movements to Western countries**.

In view of the increasing number of irregular migrants in Central and Eastern Europe, IOM proposed to carry out a programme – initially for 2,000 stranded irregular migrants – to provide the means for a dignified return and initial reinstallation support. IOM would also take advantage of its past experience in information dissemination by combining such return assistance with measures to provide objective and credible information to potential migrants on the pitfalls of spontaneous migration and on the likelihood of their being unable to reach their intended destination. In doing so, irregular migration would hopefully be prevented. This programme would therefore serve the interests of both countries of intended destination and of transit and would meet the needs of individual migrants in distress, and facilitate their reinsertion in the countries of origin that are currently unable to assist their stranded nationals.

In June 1994, IOM launched an appeal for the Assisted Return of Migrants Stranded in Eastern and Central Europe (SMIT). This programme offered a means to return home safely, and with dignity, to Westward-bound irregular transit migrants from Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

OVERALL GOAL

Through an integrated approach of direct counselling, return transportation assistance and information campaigns, the programme would aim to:

- **lessen the burden** which the presence of irregular migrants represents for countries of transit and of intended destination;
- **diminish future flows of this nature** through information dissemination;
- **help the migrants** to return home safely.

PURPOSE

The programme would facilitate the return to their country of origin of 2,000 irregular migrants from countries in South-West Asia, South-East Asia, the Middle East, and Africa, who are stranded in Central and Eastern European countries through lack of means to return home. At the same time, it would inform potential irregular migrants of the pitfalls of spontaneous migration and the likelihood of their being unable to reach their intended destination.

ACTIVITIES

The following activities should be carried out by IOM:

1. Assisted Return

- a) Provision of pre-departure counselling, as necessary, to particularly needy or vulnerable groups, such as trafficked women and children;
- b) Co-operation and liaison with appropriate organizations in transit countries, such as UNHCR, to ensure that any bona fide asylum seekers among the potential beneficiaries of IOM voluntary return assistance have the opportunity of being screened;
- c) Provision of appropriate travel documentation for migrants wishing to return, in close collaboration with countries of transit and of origin;
- d) Provision of transportation for migrants wishing to return, by the most appropriate and inexpensive means available to the Organization;
- e) As necessary, establishment of local mechanisms for reception and initial reintegration of migrants in countries of origin.

2. Information to potential irregular migrants

- a) Broad-based promotional activities – in collaboration with local authorities, other organizations and representatives of migrant communities – using expertise acquired in the field of information dissemination;
- b) Provision to potential irregular migrants of relevant and reliable information on the pitfalls of spontaneous migration and the likelihood of their being unable to reach their intended destination.

III. BUDGET, PILOT PHASE AND IMPLEMENTATION

BUDGET

Since December 1994, IOM Offices in Turkey, Romania and the Russian Federation have been implementing the SMIT programme. The experience gained during the past months has enabled the Organization to refine its support, and consequently the resources needed to be able to carry out the necessary activities to assist stranded irregular migrants. The budget of the initial appeal – launched in June 1994 – has therefore been revised, from US\$ 3,290,992 to US\$ 2,868,395, to take into account the experience acquired during implementation. The following items are covered:

REVISED BUDGET PROPOSAL FOR THE SMIT PROGRAMME – 1995-1996

Stranded migrants to be assisted: 2000	18-month 1st proposal	12-month 2nd proposal
1. Assistance to Returnees		
Migrant Transport and Related Costs		
a) International air travel at IOM fares (2000p)	<i>1,800,000</i>	1,800,000
b) Local transport	<i>100,000</i>	100,000
c) Pocket money (25\$)	<i>50,000</i>	50,000
d) Documentation	<i>100,000</i>	100,000
Reinstallation and Reintegration Assistance		
e) One-time reinstallation grant (100\$/head + 50\$/depend.)	<i>192,00</i>	192,000
Total	<i>2,242,000</i>	2,242,000
2. Information to potential irregular migrants		
Information material production, printing and dissemination	<i>180,000</i>	180,000
Total	<i>180,000</i>	180,000
3. Staff and Office costs		
a) 1 Ops assistant x 6 countries of dep. Office costs x 6 countries	<i>73,000</i> <i>162,000</i>	48,667 108,000
b) 1 Ops assistant x 6 countries of orig. Office costs x 6 countries	<i>33,000</i> <i>129,000</i>	22,00 86,00
c) Misc. IOM field support	<i>27,000</i>	18,000
d) 1 Proj. Coord. 1 Ops assistant Office costs	<i>180,000</i> <i>90,000</i> <i>25,000</i>	0 60,000 25,000
e) Staff travel international Staff travel domestic	<i>30,000</i> <i>20,000</i>	10,000 15,000
f) Communications costs – HQ	<i>24,000</i>	15,000
Total	<i>793,600</i>	407,667
Adm. overhead 9.5%	<i>75,392</i>	38,728
Sub-total staff and office costs	<i>868,992</i>	446,395
Total costs for programme implementation	<i>3,290,992</i>	2,868,395

In view of the revised budget (US\$ 2,868,395) the average cost per case would now be US\$ 1,434.

PILOT PHASE

With the contributions received from Switzerland (US\$ 330,000) and Norway (US\$ 50,000) the Organization was able to start implementing the SMIT Programme in three countries: Romania, Turkey and the Russian Federation, and more recently Bulgaria. In addition, IOM field offices offer return assistance to stranded migrants throughout the Eastern and Central European region in co-ordination with IOM Headquarters.

PILOT PHASE RESULTS

From inception of the pilot phase in 1994 until 30 April 1996, IOM has assisted 359 stranded migrants from the following countries of origin:

Countries of origin of stranded migrants

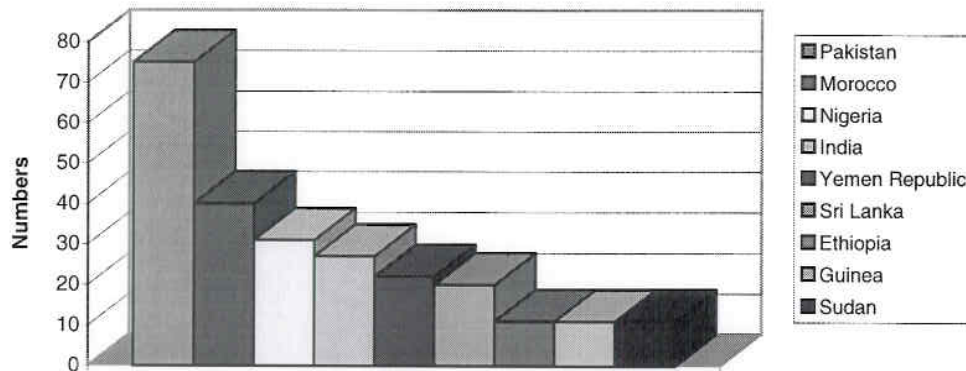
ImmigCountry	1994	1995	1996	Grand Total
Algeria	0	5	1	6
Angola	0	3	2	5
Bangladesh	0	5	3	8
Benin	0	1	0	1
Burkina Faso	0	0	1	1
Côte D'ivoire	0	0	1	1
Cambodia	0	2	2	4
Cameroon	0	0	1	1
Chad	0	0	1	1
Congo	0	9	0	9
Egypt	0	1	0	1
Equatorial Guinea	0	2	0	2
Ethiopia	0	7	4	11
Ghana	0	2	0	2
Guinea	0	6	5	11
Guinea Bissau	0	5	1	6
India	0	22	5	27
Jordan	0	2	2	4
Kenya	0	1	0	1
Laos	0	0	3	3
Madagascar	0	2	0	2
Mali	1	4	1	6
Mauritania	0	0	1	1
Morocco	0	25	15	40
Niger	0	0	2	2
Nigeria	4	23	4	31
Pakistan	0	57	18	75
Peru	0	0	1	1
Philippines	0	3	2	5
Senegal	0	5	1	6
Sierra Leone	0	7	0	7
Sri Lanka	0	16	4	20
Sudan	0	10	1	11
Tanzania	0	0	2	2
Tunisia	0	0	4	4
Uganda	0	0	5	5
Vietnam	0	2	0	2
Yemen Republic	0	9	13	22
Iran	0	8	0	8
Romania	0	1	0	1
Azerbaijan	0	3	0	3
Grand Total	5	248	106	359

It worth noting that the highest numbers of movements reflect assistance to nationals of the following countries (by descending order):

Countries of origin of assisted cases

Country	1994	1995	1996	Total	%
Pakistan	0	57	18	75	20.9%
Morocco	0	25	15	40	11.1%
Nigeria	4	23	4	31	8.6%
India	0	22	5	27	7.5%
Yemen Republic	0	9	13	22	6.1%
Sri Lanka	0	16	4	20	5.6%
Ethiopia	0	7	4	11	3.1%
Guinea	0	6	5	11	3.1%
Sudan	0	10	1	11	3.1%

Highest number of movements by country of origin



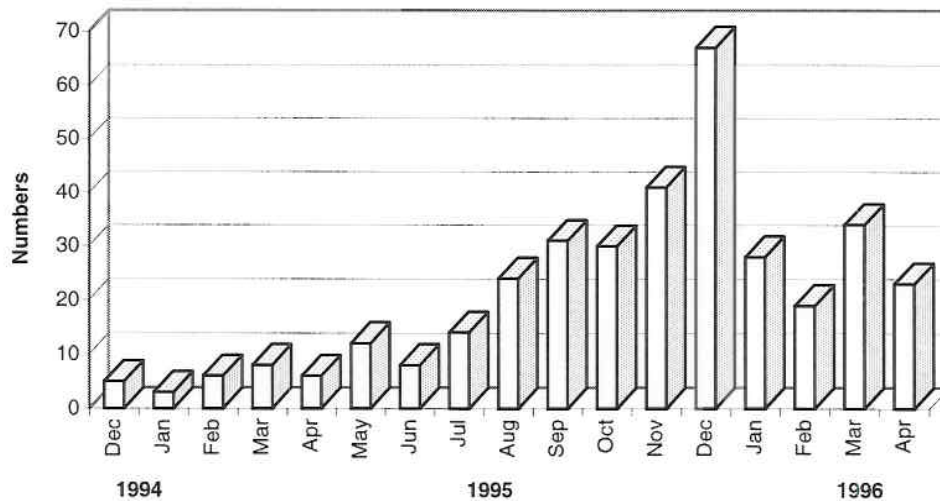
IMPLEMENTATION

The monthly implementation rate shows the evolution of the programme since its inception.

Monthly implementation rate

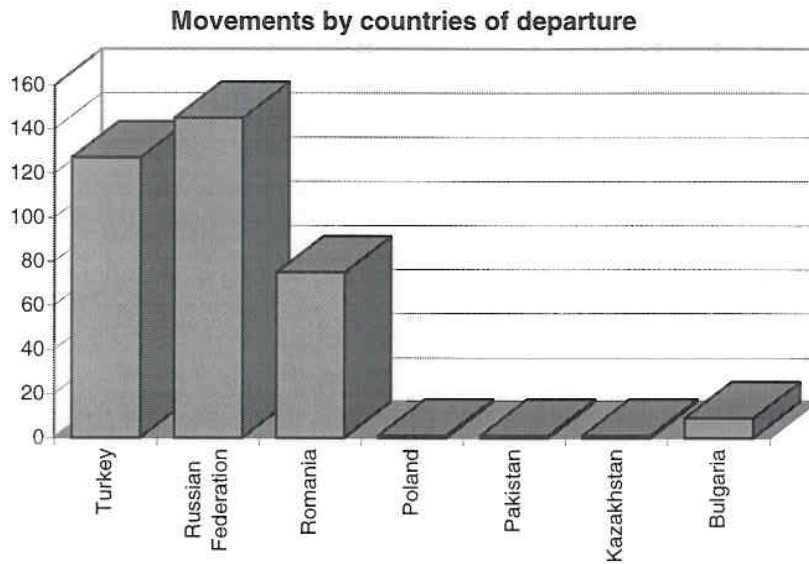
Year	Month	Total
1994	Dec	5
1995	Jan	3
	Feb	4
	Mar	8
	Apr	6
	May	12
	Jun	8
	Jul	14
	Aug	24
	Sep	31
	Oct	30
	Nov	41
	Dec	67
1996	Jan	29
	Feb	20
	Mar	34
	Apr	23
Grand Total		359

SMIT monthly movements



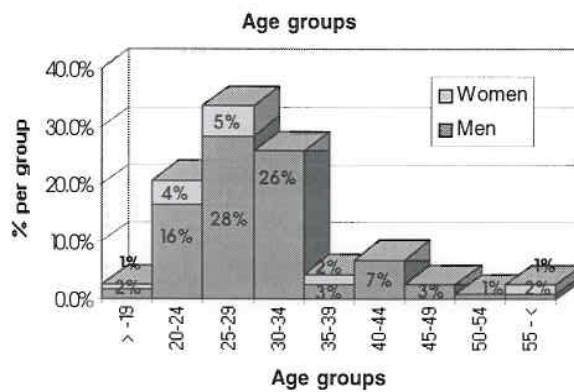
The following table and chart show the movements by countries of departure:

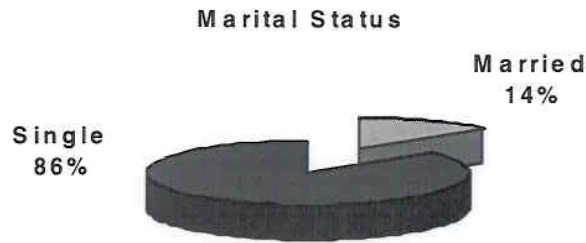
EmigCountry	1994	1995	1996	Total
Bulgaria	0	0	9	9
Kazakhstan	0	0	1	1
Pakistan	0	1	0	1
Poland	0	0	1	1
Romania	0	56	19	75
Russian Federation	1	91	53	145
Turkey	4	100	23	127
Total	5	248	106	359



As for the composition of the stranded migrants processed under the programme, more than 80% of them are male; the majority between 20 and 35 years old. Over 80% are single.

Sex, age group and marital status of stranded migrants processed





IOM has spent US\$ 347,880 to process 359 cases. The average cost per case (US\$ 969) is lower than the revised budget. Real costs per case (including administrative and direct support costs for the return) show a decrease of some 32%. It could therefore be assumed that IOM is implementing the programme with a high degree of efficiency.

IV. STATUS OF THE PROGRAMME

Most of the funds received during the first year have been spent and the programme is now counting on the US\$ 200,000 pledged by the Government of Switzerland for 1996, of which US\$ 100,000 have already been received.

V. PROGRAMME EXTENSION

It is essential that additional funds for the programme be identified as soon as possible in order to continue this assistance. Otherwise, stranded irregular migrants will have no other viable alternative than to go to Western Europe.

Movements per processing office

Mission	ImmigCountry	1994	1995	1996	Total
HQ		0	0	1	1
Moscow	Angola	0	3	2	5
	Benin	0	1	0	1
	Burkina Faso	0	0	1	1
	Côte D'ivoire	0	0	1	1
	Cambodia	0	2	2	4
	Cameroon	0	0	1	1
	Chad	0	0	1	1
	Congo	0	9	0	9
	Equatorial Guinea	0	2	0	2
	Ethiopia	0	5	3	8
	Guinea	0	5	0	5
	Guinea Bissau	0	4	1	5
	Jordan	0	2	2	4
	Laos	0	0	3	3
	Madagascar	0	2	0	2
	Mali	1	4	1	6
	Mauritania	0	0	1	1
	Morocco	0	17	8	25
	Niger	0	0	2	2
	Nigeria	0	12	4	16
	Peru	0	0	1	1
	Sierra Leone	0	7	0	7
	Sudan	0	8	1	9
	Tanzania	0	0	1	1
Uganda	0	0	5	5	
Vietnam	0	2	0	2	
Yemen Republic	0	6	13	19	
Moscow Total		1	91	54	146
Ankara	Algeria	0	5	0	5
	Egypt	0	1	0	1
	Ethiopia	0	2	0	2
	Ghana	0	1	0	1
	India	0	0	1	1
	Kenya	0	1	0	1
	Morocco	0	8	7	15
	Nigeria	4	11	0	15
	Pakistan	0	52	8	60
	Philippines	0	3	2	5
	Senegal	0	2	0	2
	Sri Lanka	0	1	0	1
	Sudan	0	2	0	2
	Tanzania	0	0	1	1
	Tunisia	0	0	4	4
	Yemen Republic	0	1	0	1
	Iran	0	7	0	7
	Romania	0	1	0	1
	Azerbaijan	0	3	0	3
Ankara Total		4	101	23	128

Movements per processing office (cont.)

Bucharest	Bangladesh	0	5	3	8
	Ethiopia	0	0	1	1
	Ghana	0	1	0	1
	Guinea	0	1	4	5
	Guinea Bissau	0	1	0	1
	India	0	22	4	26
	Pakistan	0	5	9	14
	Senegal	0	3	0	3
	Sri Lanka	0	15	4	19
	Yemen Republic	0	2	0	2
	Iran	0	1	0	1
Bucharest Total		0	56	25	81
Athens		0	0	3	3
Grand Total		5	248	106	359