

## IOM Joins Forces With Hope For Children



The International Organization for Migration and the Hope For Children (HFC) CRC Policy Center signed a cooperation agreement on 23 January 2020 in Nicosia, aiming at enhancing their common efforts to prevent violence against children and promote respect for their rights.

The main areas of cooperation include the exchange of best practices and experiences for the promotion of autonomy of children in care and young care-leavers, the strengthening of national integrated child protection systems and capacity building activities for child protection and national asylum and migration professionals.

IOM and HFC also agreed on the coordination of activities related to the [INTEGRA Multidisciplinary Mentorship programme](#) and the activities related to entering the Platform for Cooperation and INTEGRA network of IOM.

With partners from Greece, Spain, Italy and Portugal, the INTEGRA project is transnationally coordinated by HFC and focuses on the need to qualify care professionals who work with and for children, granting their rights and protection. These professionals are crucial for the minors to overcome situations of abuse and neglect and to guarantee the implementation of comprehensive measures to ease their social integration.

"In joining the INTEGRA cooperation platform, we will build up the capacity of professionals working with children and promote the autonomy of children in care and young care leavers", concluded Natasa Xenophontos Koudouna, Head of IOM Cyprus.

## Irregular Migrant Arrivals to Cyprus Increase in 2019

January - December 2019



According to available data from authorities in Cyprus, a total of 7,821 arrivals have been registered this year (January–December), which is almost 1.5 times the 4,795 reported in 2018 and three times the 2,662 reported in 2017.

In 2019, migrants and refugees arriving by land were most frequently registered as nationals of Syrian Arab Republic (31%), followed by Cameroon (14%), Pakistan (12%), Bangladesh (12%), Georgia (4%), and others (28%). Most were adult males (72%), some were adult females (14%) and the remaining were children (13%).

As regards monthly statistics, 487 arrivals were recorded in December 2019. Of these, 454 arrived by land via the Green Line from the northern part of the island and the remaining 33 arrived by sea. Overall, this represents a decrease of 40 per cent from the 813 arrivals reported in November 2019, and it marks one of the lowest numbers of monthly arrivals this year so far.

IOM collects data from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. [Read More](#)

## IOM continued AVRR assistance in 2019



On 17 December IOM presented to officials of the Cyprus Police Aliens and Immigration Unit the assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme during a lively exchange hosted at the Unit's headquarters in Nicosia.

This event was held in the framework of the "Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration Centre" project. In the course of 2019 IOM Cyprus assisted a total of 173 migrants to return to their home countries, almost 2.5 times higher compared to the project's beginning in 2016. It is also worth noting that more than a third of returnees were eligible for reintegration assistance. Among the key countries of origin in 2019 were India, Iraq, Viet Nam, Nepal and Bangladesh.

Highlights among the assisted return beneficiaries include a migrant with health needs who was escorted by IOM medical staff back to Sri Lanka in August 2019 and a seventeen-year old unaccompanied boy who returned to Lebanon in December 2019, following cooperation between IOM and the Social Welfare Services.

Within the framework of the project, and in parallel to the return and reintegration assistance, since autumn, IOM Cyprus has also taken up enhanced information provision on AVRR with weekly presence in the First Reception Centre in Kokkinotrimithia.

According to IOM's preliminary data, Cyprus has featured as one of the top ten host countries in terms of implemented assisted voluntary returns in the European Economic Area in 2019.

The project, which was renewed in January 2019 for a twenty-one-month period and has now an enhanced reintegration component, is co-funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the Republic of Cyprus.

## International Migrants Day 2019



In celebration of the International Migrants Day, IOM organized in cooperation with Nicosia Municipality and the Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation the "Sharing stories and mingle" event on Tuesday 17 December at the Nicosia Municipality Multifunctional Foundation.

Migrant champions of integration were invited to share stories and exchange views with fellow citizens of Nicosia, highlighting the role of local communities in their efforts to start a new life in Cyprus.



The event concluded with the screening of "The Lost Café" film, focusing on the theme of social cohesion. The film was part of the [Global Migration Film Festival](#) official selection for 2019.