

VIENNA MIGRATION CONFERENCE 2023

10-11 October 2023

Draft Programme

The [Vienna Migration Conference 2023](#) (VMC2023) will take place on 10-11 October in Vienna and online. During two days of lively discussions, the conference will tour key themes in the European and global migration policy arena. Discussions will encompass the future of work in a digital world, the role of cities in migration governance, labour and skills migration partnerships, how the European Union is faring in its reform efforts, and much more.

Now in its 8th edition, VMC is ICMPD's annual flagship event. Every autumn, a diverse expert group of decision-makers and practitioners from governments, international organisations, academia, and civil society come together in Vienna for two days of high-level discussions on contemporary migration trends and dynamics in Europe and beyond. ICMPD livestreams these discussions to bring them to the doorstep of the wider global migration community.

Confirmed high-level speakers

- Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, European Commission
- Maria Malmer Stenergard, Minister of Migration, Sweden
- Nicole de Moor, State Secretary for Asylum and Migration, Belgium
- Christoph Wiederkehr, Deputy Mayor of Vienna, Executive City Councillor for Education, Youth, Integration and Transparency, City of Vienna
- Monique Pariat, Director-General, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

Tuesday, 10 October 2023 – Day 1

09.30 – 09.50

Conference opening

Director General Spindelegger welcomes participants to VMC2023 and highlights ICMPD's growing engagement in regional and global migration governance against the backdrop of a fast-evolving migration landscape. High-level Austrian and Swiss

representatives share their national perspectives as founding members of ICMPD, which turned 30 in June.

09.50 – 10.00

A short introduction to VMC2023

Over the years, VMC has asserted itself as Europe's leading forum on migration. ICMPD's VMC leadership walk participants through the rich 2023 conference agenda and share with the audience the vision that continues to animate the format after seven successful editions.

10.00 – 10.30

Keynote address

Setting the scene for VMC2023, the keynote speaker assesses where Europe stands in its migration diplomacy efforts, highlights steps that the EU has recently taken to devise a more coherent and comprehensive response, and outlines a vision for moving forward.

10.30 – 11.00

Coffee break

11.00 – 11.45

High-level panel

Decision makers take stock of a turbulent but eventful year, assess successes and failures in the policy response, and identify policy areas in which closer international cooperation remains key to improved migration governance.

11.45 – 12.15

In the spotlight The future of work

The labour market is transforming at an unprecedented speed. Technological innovation, particularly in the field of artificial intelligence, climate change, geopolitical competition—together with post pandemic adaptations – are all shaping the future of work. This spotlight session explores the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead and discusses how the choices made by policymakers today will play a pivotal role in shaping the global workforce of tomorrow.

12.15 – 14.15

Lunch break

13.00 – 13.45

Side event Mobility and the green transition

14.15 – 14.45

Musical performance Notes of inclusion: Empowering refugees through music

Teachers and students from Open Piano for Refugees showcase the transformative power of music as a catalyst for social inclusion and empowerment through live performances and inspiring success stories of music as a means of integration. In this interactive session we witness first-hand how the performing arts act as a bridge, connecting refugees, migrants, and host communities, fostering a sense of mutual understanding and belonging.

14.45 – 15.15

Keynote conversation The role of cities in managing sustainable migration

Migrant and refugee reception and integration is taking place against a backdrop of sweeping transformations affecting major urban centres worldwide, from population increase to increasingly cogent environmental concerns and socio-economic changes. What strategies and solutions can cities employ to foster sustainable urban development with a view to addressing the impact migration has on urban infrastructure and services, economic growth and entrepreneurship, culture, diversity and social cohesion?

15.15 – 16:15 **Panel discussion** **A new era for labour migration?**

Widespread labour shortages in both traditional and non-traditional migrant destination countries are putting increased pressure on governments to review the way they manage labour migration, design international partnerships and attract international talent. In this panel, a diverse group of government and private sector representatives share their insights and experiences from a sector that is seeing rapid changes in policy, practice, as well as public opinion.

16.15 – 16.45 Coffee break

16.45 – 18.00 **Panel discussion** **Building migration partnerships that deliver**

Migration partnerships are built on a foundation of communication and investing time and resources to meet each other's needs and interests. This session illustrates how partnerships are being put into practice, at different levels and across all areas of migration governance, with the aim of delivering concrete results. Panellists share their experiences and views on good practices, engaging in a discussion on which international cooperation frameworks are needed to maximise opportunities and minimise challenges confronting migrants, returnees, and the societies they live in.

18.00 – 18.30 **In the spotlight** **East-West perspectives on geopolitical Europe**

War in Ukraine has helped harmonise European perceptions of collective defence, external threats, economic self-interest, and humanitarian obligations. And yet on certain issues internal divisions remain sharp: enlargement, the rule of law, climate change, transatlantic ties, and migration. Two veteran EU observers discuss whether Europe can still stand united as a geopolitical player in a global system that is characterised more and more by great power rivalry and competition.

Wednesday, 11 October 2023 – Day 2

09.00 – 09.30 **In conversation** **A Pan-African vision for safe and secure cross-border movements**

This session presents Africa's vision for safe and secure migration on the continent and discusses how Africa, Europe, and other relevant stakeholders can join forces to ensure better standards and practices in managing cross-border movements.

09.30 – 10.30 **Panel discussion** **People on the move: Protecting lives, managing borders**

Around the world, thousands of migrants risk their lives by taking dangerous land and sea migration routes, not least across the Sahara and the Mediterranean. Policies that steer border and immigration control must seek to protect and keep the state, its population, *and* people on the move safe and secure. This session analyses the strengths and weaknesses of different policy approaches and legal frameworks in ensuring protection in a rapidly changing migratory environment. Panellists focus on the policy frictions that arise when people are on the move and explores how and with whom pragmatic solutions can be forged to ensure higher standards for safe migration.

10.30 – 11.15 **In conversation** **People on move: Shared leadership for safe and orderly migration**

In continuation of the discussion on people on the move, this conversation sheds light on how cooperation between African and European partners is moving towards joint leadership and shared responsibilities to ensure safe and orderly migration.

11.15 – 11.45 Coffee break

11.45 – 12.15 **In conversation** The Pact: Quo vadis?

When it was introduced in 2020, the New Pact on Migration and Asylum was billed as offering a 'fresh start' for an EU migration governance system that took a long-term perspective, rested on European values and international law, and contributed to growth and innovation. Three years later, negotiations are well underway on this hotly debated policy package, with the European Parliament having a key role in finalising the deal before European elections take place next year. This session takes stock of how far we have come, where we stand, and what the prospects are for a united EU approach to migration.

12.15 – 13.00 **In conversation** A vision for Europe's migration policy framework

A sensitive and often controversial issue, migration will determine the future of Europe's integration process as well as crucially contribute to defining Europe's external action. Two distinguished Brussels-based speakers will walk us through the most recent developments in European migration governance and discuss what may lie ahead as migration remains front and centre of discussions among European decision makers and the European public.

13.00 – 13.30 **Conference closing**

VMC2023 will wrap up with final reflections and observations as well as key takeaways to carry forward to VMC2024.
