

EMN Austria National Conference 2026

The Moderator

The Speakers



Pier ROSSI-LONGHI

Regional Thematic Specialist Immigration and Border Governance, IOM Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

Pier Rossi-Longhi is IOM's Senior Immigration and Border Governance Specialist for Europe and Central Asia, based in the IOM Regional Office in Vienna. Prior to his Austrian posting, he served as Chief of Mission for the IOM Country Office to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. Originally seconded to IOM by the Government of Italy 29 years ago, Pier Rossi-Longhi has gathered vast experience in IOM's Technical Cooperation sector, where he developed a deep understanding of migration security issues from the legal, administrative, operational and technological angles. He also has a broad political perspective on migration governance and is an expert in the EU migration legal framework.

Opening remarks



Julia HARTLIEB

Chief of Mission, IOM Country Office for Austria

Julia Hartlieb has been heading the IOM Country Office for Austria since September 2026. She brings over 25 years of experience in Migration Management & Governance, Protection & Assistance, Humanitarian Response and Recovery, as well as Migration, Development and Resilience across IOM offices in Afghanistan, the United Kingdom, Sudan, Norway, Somalia, the IOM Regional Office for the East and Horn of Africa, and Germany, as well as assignments with IOM in Qatar, the Philippines, Pakistan, Algeria, Denmark, and the IOM Regional Office for West Africa. Julia Hartlieb holds a Master's degree in Geography, Sociology and Urban Planning from the Freie Universität (FU) Berlin and the Technische Universität (TU) Berlin.



Peter WEBINGER

Director-General for Migration and International Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Peter Webinger is Director-General for Migration and International Affairs at the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. He serves as Chair of the Board of the Federal Agency for Reception and Support Services, for the Country of Origin Information Department at the Austrian Federal Office for Immigration and Asylum as well as for the interministerial Task-Force Migration of the Austrian government. He is a member of the Austrian Migration Commission and Head of the Austrian delegation to the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers, and Asylum. Moreover, Peter Webinger is the editor of several scientific publications and gives lectures on migration and asylum i.a. at the Strategic Leadership Course of the Austrian government and various European universities.

Keynote “An Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Building Blocks for a Resilient Schengen Area”



Daniel THYM

Professor of Public Law, European and International Law at the University of Konstanz

Daniel Thym serves as Jean Monnet Professor of Public, European, and International Law and as the Director of the Research Centre Immigration & Asylum Law (FZAA) at the University of Konstanz. He regularly appears as an expert witness in the home affairs committee of the German Bundestag, contributes to the pan-European ‘Odysseus Academic Network’, and has served as the Vice-Chairperson of the German ‘Expert Council on Integration and Migration’. His outreach activities include frequent open-eds and interviews in prominent media outlets and television. Daniel Thym is the author of the 700-page reference work on European Migration Law (OUP 2023) and the German-language general audience book Migration steuern. Eine Anleitung für das Hier und Jetzt [Migration governance. A guide for the here and now] (CH Beck 2025).

Panel I: Schengen within the framework of the European migration architecture



Franziska KANDOLF

Deputy Director-General for Migration and International Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Since September 2022, Franziska Kandolf has been Deputy Director-General for Migration and International Affairs at the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, and since November 2020 Head of EU and International Affairs, Residence, Subsidies. She joined the Ministry as a Policy Officer for EU Coordination in 2006 and subsequently served in various leadership positions in the areas of migration, asylum, Schengen, anti-corruption, and ICT security. Prior to her current position, she was Head of Department for National, European and International Migration Strategies and Policy Officer for EU and international relations in various ministerial cabinets of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the Federal Chancellery. She also serves as Deputy Head of the Austrian delegation to the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers, and Asylum and gives lectures on migration, EU and international affairs at national and international level.



Olivier ONIDI

Deputy Director-General of DG Migration and Home Affairs and Schengen Coordinator, European Commission

Olivier Onidi is Deputy Director-General of DG Migration and Home Affairs at the European Commission, responsible for internal security, Schengen and geographical implementation, and serves as Schengen Coordinator. He has also acted as EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator and EU Counter-Terrorism Coordinator. Earlier in his career he was a Director in DG MOVE, covering the Trans-European Transport Network and the Connecting Europe Facility, Deputy Head of Cabinet to Commissioner Oettinger, and Head of the Galileo Unit, giving him a rare combination of European space programme and home affairs experience. He holds Master’s degrees in Economics and European Studies.



Raoul UEBERECKEN

Director for Council Decision-Making and Digital Transformation Officer (DTO), Council of the European Union

Raoul Ueberecken is Director for Council Decision-Making and Digital Transformation Officer at the Council of the European Union. From 2000-2016 he served as the European-affairs adviser to successive Luxembourgish Ministers of Justice, led the JHA team during the 2005 and 2015 Luxembourg Council Presidencies. He also sat on the Management Board of Frontex. In 2014 he served as Deputy Head of Cabinet to the European Commissioner for Justice. He then became Director for Home Affairs (2016-2021) at the Council of the EU and Director for the Internal Market (2021-2022), before taking up his current roles in 2023. He holds a law degree from the Sorbonne and a political-science degree from the College of Europe.



Nataša KOVÁŘ CHMELÍČKOVÁ

Head of the Legislation Unit, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic

Dr. Nataša Kovář Chmelíčková serves as Head of the Legislation Unit, Department for Asylum and Migration Policy, Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic. She has extensive experience in the negotiation of EU migration and asylum legislation and is responsible for its transposition and implementation at the national level. Her professional expertise focuses on the Common European Asylum System, return policy, and the Schengen acquis. She has actively contributed to both CZ PRES as a chair of a working party. Alongside her governmental responsibilities, she lectures at the Faculty of Law of Charles University in Prague. In 2026, she obtained her PhD with a dissertation examining the interplay between asylum and return procedures. Outside her professional career, she is a keen futsal player and regularly represents the Ministry of the Interior at annual international tournament of migration services.

Panel II: Integrated and technologically advanced external border protection: a new framework for new opportunities



Jasna TODIĆ
Head of Unit for Integrated Border Management – Legal Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Jasna Todić is Head of the Integrated Border Management – Legal Affairs Unit (V/B/6/a) at Austria’s Federal Ministry of the Interior. She studied law at the University of Vienna. Her remit includes legal matters relating to the application of the Entry/Exit System (EES), the Schengen Borders Code, the rules on Advanced Passenger Information (API) and the Screening Regulation. Her responsibilities also include implementing national legislation and bilateral agreements in the area of border control, as well as providing legal oversight of the competent authorities. Since joining the Ministry in 2021, she has been responsible for legal and practical coordination of EES implementation in Austria. She also represents Austria in EU working groups in the area of border management and in bilateral border commissions with neighbouring countries.



Aija KALNAJA
Deputy Executive Director for Capabilities, European Border and Coast Guard Agency – FRONTEX

Aija Kalnaja, Deputy Executive Director for Capabilities (DED-CAP), served as Executive Director ad interim from 1 July 2022 to 28 February 2023. Before taking up the position of Deputy Executive Director, Aija Kalnaja worked as the Director of Capacity Building Division, where she was responsible for pooling and managing the necessary capabilities from Member States and the agency to carry out operations at the external borders, in the pre-frontier area and in third countries. Prior to joining Frontex, she was Head of Operations Department a.i. and Head of Training Unit at CEPOL, the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Training. Aija Kalnaja has the professional experience of working in various public administration positions within the State Police of Latvia, including Deputy Chief of Police, Police Attaché to the United Kingdom in London, and Head of SIRENE Bureau. Aija Kalnaja holds a Bachelor’s degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Latvia.



Vaidas ČYPAS
Head of International Cooperation Board, State Border Guard Service at the Ministry of the Interior, Republic of Lithuania

Vaidas Čypas is an experienced border management and law enforcement professional with extensive expertise in international cooperation, criminal intelligence, corruption prevention, and integrated border management. Since 2019, he has headed the International Cooperation Board of the State Border Guard Service under the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Lithuania. Previously, he served as Resident Twinning Advisor in Jordan and held several senior positions within the Lithuanian State Border Guard Service. His responsibilities have included coordinating international cooperation, EU institutional relations, FRONTEX activities, EU projects, and preparation and implementation of Integrated border management strategies. He has also represented Lithuania as an alternate member of the FRONTEX Management Board. Vaidas Čypas holds Master’s degrees in European Strategic Border Management and Law and Police Activity, as well as a Bachelor’s degree in Law.



Henrik ANKERSTJERNE
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Immigration and Integration, Denmark

Henrik Ankerstjerne has been working as Deputy Permanent Secretary (International Relations) in the Danish Ministry of Immigration and Integration since 2015, where he had also worked from 2004 to 2011. In between his work in the Ministry of Immigration and Integration, Henrik Ankerstjerne assumed the role of Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Danish Ministry of Justice. Earlier in his career, which he began as an attorney, he gained experience at the Permanent Representation of Denmark to the EU, the Danish Mission to the UN, the Danish Immigration Service as well as UNHCR India. Since 2011, he has been an observer on the Management Board of the European Union Agency for Asylum and is also a member of the Advisory Board of ICMPD.

Panel III: Prevention instead of reaction: the external dimension of Schengen



Tobias T. MOLANDER

Director for EU and International Migration and Special Representative for External Migration Policy, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Tobias T. Molander has been working in the field of asylum and migration for almost 20 years. Being Director since 2019, his main focus is on effective migration management in a globalized world. He is currently responsible for implementing Austria’s international migration policy, including new and innovative solutions. Before being named Director at the Austrian Mol, he was the Head of Unit in charge of Austria’s Humanitarian Admission Programme as well as Austria’s return policy during the EU Presidency 2018. From 2010-2015, he served as Attaché for Home Affairs at the Permanent Representation of Austria to the European Union in Brussels with a focus on asylum and border protection.



Georg LUKE

Policy Assistant, Cabinet of Commissioner Magnus Brunner, European Commission

Georg Luke has been working in the European Commission since 2024, where he serves in the Cabinet of Commissioner Magnus Brunner, whose portfolio covers internal affairs and migration. His work focuses on migration and asylum policy, as well as drugs policy and organized crime. Prior to joining the European Commission, he worked for six years at the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior, where he held various positions, most recently as Head of Unit for European Migration Affairs. He studied international relations at the University of Exeter in the United Kingdom and at Sciences Po in Paris, France.



Nadia PAPAKOSTA

Secretary General for Migration Policy, Ministry of Migration & Asylum, Greece

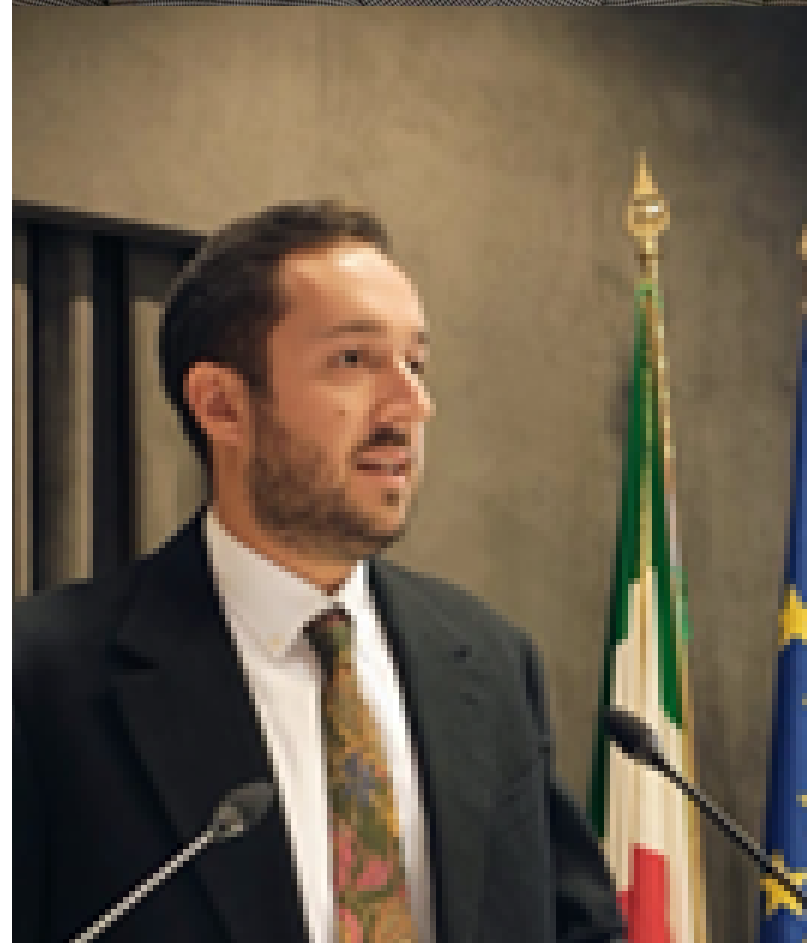
Nadia Papakosta has been Secretary General for Migration Policy at the Greek Ministry of Migration and Asylum since 2026. A graduate of the Faculty of Law of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens with a Master’s degree in Civil Law from the University of Athens, she has been an attorney at the Supreme Court and the Council of State and a member of the Athens Bar Association since 2006. Before her current role, she served i.a. as Legal Advisor to the Minister of Health, as Scientific Associate of the Hellenic Parliament, as President of the Board of Directors of the Institute of Pharmaceutical Research and Technology, and most recently as Legal Associate of the Minister of Migration and Asylum.



Svenja NIEDERFRANKE

Research Fellow, Center for Migration, German Council on Foreign Relations

Svenja Niederfranke is a Research Fellow in the Center for Migration at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP). Her research examines the foreign and development policy effects of the EU's migration cooperation with third countries, drawing on research trips and expert consultations in Tunis, Beirut, Brussels, and Berlin. She regularly publishes, comments, and speaks in the media on European migration issues. Before joining DGAP, she worked on European migration policy at the European Policy Centre, on international migration law at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Geneva, and on migration and development at the GIZ Representation in Brussels.



Giacomo TERENCE

Senior Global Thematic Specialist for Returns, Protection and Immigration & Border Governance, IOM Global Office Brussels

Giacomo Terenzi is Senior Global Thematic Specialist for Returns, Protection and Immigration and Border Governance at the IOM Global Office to the EU in Brussels. He supports the Global Office’s work on migrant protection, voluntary return and reintegration, border governance, counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling, with a particular focus on EU-funded initiatives. Throughout his career with IOM, he has served in Libya, Rwanda, Italy, Côte d’Ivoire and Guinea. Giacomo Terenzi holds a Master’s degree in International Relations from Roma Tre University and has pursued further specialization in migration, asylum, and Middle East studies at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and SOAS University of London.

Final remarks



Philip SCHMIDT

Head of Migration Communication and Research Unit, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior

Philip Schmidt is the Head of Unit for International Migration Communication and Research at the Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior. In this role, he is responsible for the implementation of information campaigns on migration as well as developing strategic and innovative approaches regarding international migration policy. In addition, Philip Schmidt serves as the Austrian Member of the Steering Board of the European Migration Network.



Saskia HEILEMANN

Head of the Policy Research and Migration Law Unit, IOM Country Office for Austria (EMN Austria National Coordinator)

Saskia Heilemann is a professional in migration policy and research, currently leading the Policy Research and Migration Law Unit at the IOM Country Office for Austria. Among other things, she is responsible for the overall coordination of the National Contact Point Austria in the European Migration Network (EMN). Prior to that, she worked as a Research Associate at IOM Austria and Programme Support Officer at IOM Egypt. She graduated in International Development from the University of Vienna.