

## EMN Austria National Conference 2026:

### “The Future of Schengen: Governing beyond borders, strengthening stability within”

14 October 2026, Hilton Vienna Plaza, Schottenring 11, 1010 Vienna, Austria

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| 08:45                                                                                                                             | <i><b>Doors open &amp; welcome coffee</b></i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 09:15                                                                                                                             | <b>Opening remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Julia Hartlieb, Chief of Mission, IOM Country Office for Austria</li> <li>Peter Webinger, Director-General for Migration and International Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 09:30                                                                                                                             | <b>Keynote: “An Area of Freedom, Security and Justice: Building Blocks for a Resilient Schengen Area”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Daniel Thym, Professor of Public Law, European and International Law at the University of Konstanz</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| 10:00-10:20 – COFFEE BREAK                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i><b>Panel I: Schengen within the framework of the European migration architecture</b></i>                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 10:20                                                                                                                             | <p><u>Content:</u><br/>The Schengen Area is characterized by a tension between national responsibility and joint European cooperation and solidarity, with internal border controls and emergency mechanisms providing only temporary stabilization. The panel discusses how the EU legal framework and governance structures can be improved to enable coherent decision-making and to enhance trust between Member States.</p> <p><u>Panel discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Franziska Kandolf, Deputy Director-General for Migration and International Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior</li> <li>Olivier Onidi, Deputy Director General and Schengen Coordinator, European Commission</li> <li>Raoul Ueberecken, Digital Transformation Officer (DTO), Council of the European Union</li> <li>Nataša Kovář Chmelíčková, Head of Asylum Legislation Unit, Czech Republic</li> </ul> <p><u>Q&amp;A with the audience</u></p> |
| 11:45-13:00 LUNCH BREAK                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <i><b>Panel II: Integrated and technologically advanced external border protection: a new framework for new opportunities</b></i> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 13:00                                                                                                                             | <p><u>Content:</u><br/>The stability of the Schengen Area depends crucially on the effectiveness of its external borders and the interoperability of systems such as EES, ETIAS, EUROSUR and Eurodac. The panel discusses increased pressure on Member States at the external borders and the future mandate of Frontex, particularly regarding returns and crisis response.</p> <p><u>Panel discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jasna Todic, Head of Unit for Integrated Border Management – Legal Affairs, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior</li> <li>Aija Kalnaja, Deputy Executive Director for Capabilities, FRONTEX</li> <li>Vaidas Čypas, Head of International Cooperation Board, State Border Guard Service at the Ministry of the Interior, Republic of Lithuania</li> <li>Henrik Ankerstjerne, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Immigration and Integration, Denmark</li> </ul> <p><u>Q&amp;A with the audience</u></p> |

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

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| 15:15 | <p><u>Content:</u><br/>Migration has a significant geopolitical dimension, and the debate on the future of Schengen in 2030 must incorporate cooperation with third countries as a key pillar, given current challenges of instrumentalization and hybrid threats. The panel discusses the role of a coherent visa policy and sustainable partnerships with third countries in the proactive management of migration.</p> <p><u>Panel discussion:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Georg Luke, Policy Assistant, Cabinet of Commissioner Magnus Brunner, European Commission</li> <li>• Tobias Molander, Special Representative for External Migration Policy and Director for Migration Affairs (EU and International), Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior</li> <li>• Nadia Papakosta, Secretary General for Migration Policy, Ministry of Migration &amp; Asylum, Greece (online)</li> <li>• Svenja Niederfranke, Research Fellow, Center for Migration, German Council on Foreign Relations</li> <li>• Géraldine Ansart, Deputy Director, IOM Global Office Brussels</li> </ul> <p><u>Q&amp;A with the audience</u></p> |
| 16:45 | <p><b>Final remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Philip Schmidt, Head of Migration Communication and Research Unit, Austrian Federal Ministry of the Interior</li> <li>• Saskia Heilemann, Head of the Policy Research and Migration Law Unit, IOM Country Office for Austria (EMN Austria National Coordinator)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 17:00 | <b>End of the conference</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

  

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|  | <p><b>Moderation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pier Rossi-Longhi, Regional Thematic Specialist Immigration and Border Governance, IOM Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia</li> </ul> |
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