

For the first time, Iranians living in Austria held a discussion about the Iranian community in this country

A meeting to introduce, critique, and review the book “The Iranian Community in Austria” was held in Vienna with the participation of a group of Iranians, experts, and those interested in social and cultural studies of Iranians living in Austria.

This meeting took place on Wednesday, 25 Shahrivar 1405, equal to 16 September 2026, at the House of Iranian Wisdom in Vienna. It focused on examining different aspects of the Iranian community in Austria and sharing various views and experiences about the situation, capacities, and issues of this community.

The book “The Iranian Community in Austria,” published in a bilingual Persian-English format with the support of the Iranian Cultural Counselor by UniDialogue Publications in Vienna, was the main subject of this meeting. Participants became familiar with the content of the book and shared their views and critiques on topics related to the Iranian community in Austria.

At the beginning of the meeting, Ms. Mirzaei, the meeting secretary, welcomed those present. She described the program as an opportunity to introduce and critique the first edition of the book “The Iranian Community in Austria” and to have a friendly conversation among Iranians living in Vienna.

Referring to the recent publication of this book in both Persian and English, she emphasized its cultural and social approach and the effort to avoid non-scientific views or one-sided political approaches. The meeting secretary said the goal of publishing this work was to create a basis for a more accurate understanding of the Iranian community in Austria. While introducing the seven sections of the book, she added that completing and deepening the book step by step in future editions is on the agenda.

She then raised questions about the attractions and repulsions of migration, the position of Iranian doctors, the capacity of Iranian culture, the need for constructive dialogue among Iranians, and the expectations of Iranians from the country’s system of governance, and invited those present to take part in the discussion.

Scientific and professional capacity; an important asset for the Iranian community

In the discussion section, one of the main points emphasized by those present was the high scientific, specialized, and professional capacity of Iranians living in Austria. As a clear example, the role of Iranian doctors received special attention. Some participants pointed to their widespread presence and long history of activity in Austria and considered Iranian doctors important and influential forces in the health sector of this country, stressing the need for greater attention to this capacity.

At the same time, those present emphasized that the Iranian community’s capital is not limited only to the medical field. Iranians also have a significant presence in universities, research,

technology, business, art, and other specialized areas. From the viewpoint raised in the meeting, a more accurate understanding of this human capital can help create a more realistic view of the position of the Iranian community in Austria.

Migration; from educational opportunities to staying in the host country

Another part of the discussion was devoted to the reasons for Iranian migration. Some participants explained that a portion of young Iranians, especially in recent years, have chosen Austria for continuing their studies because of special and attractive university fields, reputable universities, and suitable educational and research opportunities. According to them, for some of these migrants, limited job opportunities in certain fields in Iran have gradually created the basis for staying in Austria and entering the labor market of this country.

In this discussion, it was also emphasized that the image of migration should not be formed only on the basis of a simple comparison of facilities in Iran and Europe. One view expressed was that the gap in living facilities between Iran and Europe is not so wide in all areas that it alone explains migration. Instead, weaknesses in management, inefficiency in some structures, and issues related to the fair distribution of resources and opportunities are also factors that should be considered in analyzing migration.

Alongside these factors, the role of foreign media and social networks was also discussed. Some participants believed that the media influence the image young people form of Iran and Europe and sometimes present a negative and one-sided picture of Iran and an exaggerated picture of living conditions in Europe—a subject that, in their view, needs more careful and data-based examination.

Integration into the host society and the issue of preserving Iranian identity

Another important topic was the relationship between the integration of Iranians into Austrian society and the preservation of their cultural and identity ties with Iran. Those present generally saw the growing trend of participation and integration of Iranians into the host society as a sign of their high capacity for social and professional presence in Austria—a capacity that can help create better job opportunities and more suitable living conditions.

However, it was later pointed out that successful integration into the host society, if it is not accompanied by the preservation of cultural and historical connections with Iran, may gradually increase the distance of new generations from the Persian language, culture, and Iranian identity. For this reason, attention to the second and third generations of Iranians, creating attractive and non-imposed cultural programs, and providing a natural basis for their connection with the language, history, literature, and art of Iran were among the topics emphasized in the meeting.

In this regard, those present also referred to Iran's civilizational background and said that Iran's several-thousand-year historical and cultural heritage has created a kind of cultural and social capital for Iranians living abroad—a capital that many Iranians in different countries are proud of and try to introduce. At the same time, the meeting stressed that until every Iranian can in

practice become a cultural ambassador of Iran, there is still a long way to go. In addition, supporting cultural products in Austria are limited, old, and few in variety.

The need for dialogue and managing differences

One of the most important axes of the discussion was the issue of dialogue within the Iranian community. Some participants believed that Iranians living abroad, despite having wide scientific and social capacities, have still not sufficiently opened the doors of their hearts to constructive dialogue and in many cases face difficulty and weakness in managing differences of opinion and accepting different viewpoints.

In this discussion, it was emphasized that the start of real dialogue first requires accepting the principle that diversity of views, tastes, and differences of opinion are a natural part of social life, and that a difference of view does not necessarily mean hostility or rejection of the other side. From this perspective, dialogue can reach a result when individuals and groups believe in the benefit of dialogue and, instead of eliminating or discrediting the other, create the possibility of mutual listening and understanding with the motivation of getting closer to the truth.

The issue of the decline in the culture of mutual support among Iranians living abroad was also noted. At the same time, some participants stressed that this issue should not be exaggerated too much and that the Iranian community abroad still has many examples of cooperation and mutual support within itself.

From the human capital of Iranians to their relationship with Iran; some expectations from the respected President

In another part of the meeting, the type of government view toward Iranians living abroad was discussed. Some participants emphasized the need for an opportunity-oriented view of the human, scientific, economic, and social capital of Iranians living abroad and asked that Iranians living in other countries not be seen only from the perspective of migration or distance from the country, but that their capacity for participation in the scientific, economic, and cultural development of Iran also be considered.

Within this framework, among the expectations raised from the government and the President were creating the ground for effective participation of Iranians living abroad in the affairs of the country, paying more attention to the capital of migrant Iranians, increasing managerial efficiency, and strengthening justice. Some participants also stressed the need for continued resistance and standing against the oppressions and bullying of America and preparing the ground for ending the war while securing national interests.

The narrative of Iran and the role of the media

Another subject that received attention in the discussions was the way Iran is represented in European media and cyberspace. Some participants, referring to their experiences in Austria and Europe, emphasized the importance of media capacity in introducing the realities of Iran and the Iranian community.

In this regard, in the remarks of some participants, reference was made to the support of a significant part of Iranians living in Europe and Austria for their country during the recent war, and the view was expressed that the reflection of these supports in the European media space has not been fair. The reason for this situation was also stated by them as including the weakness of Iran's media capacity and the difficulty of competing with media that, as a practice, present unfair narratives of Iranians living abroad and have eliminated the opportunity to present different viewpoints.

Dr. Reza Gholami's emphasis on dialogue, tolerance, and the formation of "transnational citizenship" of Iranians

In the final part of this meeting, Dr. Reza Gholami, Iran's cultural representative in Austria and head of the House of Iranian Wisdom, presented his views on the future of the Iranian community in Austria under the title "Being Iranian; Dialogue, Kindness, and Tolerance; An Introduction to the Solidarity and Social Responsibility of Iranians Living in Austria."

In his remarks, Gholami considered Iranians living in Austria part of Iran's human, scientific, cultural, and social capital. He emphasized that the Iranian community in Austria, with its deep-rooted background and presence in various scientific, university, medical, economic, cultural, artistic, and professional fields, has an important capacity for creating connections between Iran and Austrian society.

At the same time, he identified one of the important issues of the Iranian community abroad as the weakness of real dialogue among Iranians themselves. He said: Differences in political, cultural, and social views are natural, but what can harm the community is the inability to manage these differences through dialogue and preserving mutual dignity. He stressed the need for the formation of a culture in which criticism without humiliation, difference without alienation, competition without destruction, and difference of opinion without enmity are possible.

Another important part of Gholami's remarks was devoted to kindness, tolerance, and good conduct among Iranians. He emphasized that the success of an Iranian doctor, university professor, researcher, artist, entrepreneur, or young person in Austria can be a source of joy and support for other Iranians, and that the Iranian community can benefit from its capacities when, instead of exhausting competitions, it strengthens the ground for cooperation and mutual support and revives Iranian traditions of kindness and sincere support for one another.

Gholami also stressed in this speech the need to redefine the relationship of Iranians living abroad with Iran and stated that belonging to Iran should not be conditional on having the same political and cultural views. According to him, the Persian language, religion, rituals such as Nowruz, literature, art, and historical memory have created bonds that go beyond geographical borders, and Iranians, despite differences in views and lifestyles, can connect with one another in a shared cultural space.

One of the ideas raised in this speech was the concept of “transnational citizenship.” Gholami, referring to the dispersion of Iranians in different countries, did not consider geographical distance a stopping point and emphasized the possibility of turning this dispersion into a network of human, scientific, economic, and cultural connections. He stated that Iranians living abroad can at the same time be responsible and successful citizens in the countries where they live and maintain their constructive bond with Iran. According to him, mutual trust and attention to the citizenship rights, ownership, and security of the capital of Iranians living abroad can create the ground for using their expertise, experience, and global connections in the path of Iran’s development.

Continuing, Dr. Gholami addressed the second and third generations of Iranians in Austria and stressed the need to create a natural, attractive, and non-imposed connection between these generations and Iranian culture. He said that to preserve this bond, the Persian language, literature, music, art, philosophy, and history of Iran must be introduced in the language and according to the needs of the new generation, and it must be shown to them that having both an Iranian identity and a successful life in Austrian society is possible and valuable.

He also noted the role of successful Iranians in Austria in shaping the world’s understanding of Iran and said: The success of Iranians in universities, medicine, art, research, entrepreneurship, and other fields can help form a direct and human image of Iran’s capacities in the world. In his words, the world should not know Iran only through the frame of the news; the daily experience and behavior of Iranians in different societies can also be a window onto the culture and abilities of Iran.

In summarizing his remarks, Gholami considered the future of the Iranian community in Austria dependent on two changes: a change in the view of the government and state institutions toward Iranians living abroad, and a change in the culture of the relationship of Iranians with one another. He stressed moving from distrust to trust, from judgment to dialogue, and from exhausting competition to cooperation, and saw the Iranian community in Austria as having the capacity to become a bridge between Iran and Austria, between generations, and between scientific, cultural, and social fields.

He ended his remarks by emphasizing a set of principles: “Building bridges, not walls; dialogue, not elimination; trust, not suspicion; kindness, not resentment; cooperation, not exhausting competition; and cultural bonds, not ideological boundaries.”

In this consultation, the Iranian community in Austria was considered not merely as a collection of migrants, but as a diverse society with different social, cultural, scientific, and professional experiences, and discussion took place about the capacities of this community for preserving and expanding cultural and social bonds between Iranians and Austrian society.

Different views of the participants about the issues and opportunities facing Iranians living in Austria were also raised, and the importance of dialogue among generations, different social fields, and various intellectual tendencies for a more accurate understanding of this community was emphasized.

Holding this meeting in a free and dialogue-oriented atmosphere provided an opportunity for Iranians living in Austria to consult about identity, issues, capacities, and the future of the Iranian community in Austria, and the book “The Iranian Community in Austria” was also introduced and reviewed as one of the written sources for understanding this community.