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## AUSTRIA PREPARES TO DEPORT SYRIAN MIGRANTS AFTER ASSAD REGIME FALLS

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By Seb Starcevic, Dan Bloom, Nektaria Stamouli and Andrew McDonald

Austria has announced plans to deport Syrian migrants following the fall of the countrys dictator Bashar Assad to rebel forces after 13 years of civil war, while Belgium, France, Greece and Germany are pausing Syrian asylum applications.

I have instructed the ministry to prepare an orderly return and deportation program to Syria, Interior Minister Gerhard Karner told Austrian media, without clarifying which migration statuses would be targeted. Some 100,000 Syrians live in Austria, according to the countrys statistics agency.

One day after Syrian rebel factions, led by Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) □ designated as a terrorist organization by the United States and the United Kingdom □ took Damascus, Austria, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Greece and the Netherlands are using the success of the rebels to revise their migration policies, with all six closing their doors to asylum seekers. The U.K. has also said it will stop processing asylum applications from Syrians.

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