IN THIS ISSUE: Overview of projects implemented in 2018, a spotlight on MHD presence at global events, current projects and migration health activities and highlight on publications, etc.
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Welcome to the Regional Migration Health Division for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia’s Annual Newsletter for 2018

This annual regional newsletter provides an overview of migration health projects, events and activities of country missions and the Regional Office in 2018.

This year’s highlight was MHD SEECA’s presence at global events. In September 2018, the United Nations General Assembly was enriched with an IOM SEECA—WHO Europe side event on the “UN Common Position on Ending HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis Through Intersectoral Collaboration”. IOM advocated and appealed to member states to direct concerted efforts to combat HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis, which is of high importance in a region marked by high MDR-TB rates and co-morbidities, and with migrants being among those not only most vulnerable, but also facing substantial barriers to treatment. The following month, in October 2018, IOM SEECA co-organized another side event to the Global Conference on Primary Health Care in Astana in Kazakhstan, which marked the 40iest anniversary of the Alma Ata declaration. By contrasting the more common rights-based approach with an economic perspective on why it is important to guarantee access to primary health care for all migrants, IOM advocated to mainstream health coverage for all migrants irrespective of their status.

In 2018 the IOM Regional Office was also involved in several training on migration health issues carried out in the region and beyond. Target groups were health and non-health professionals (social workers and law enforcement officers) in Austria, Greece, Slovenia and Turkey to better equip for their daily work with migrants and refugees’ health needs and to deliver migrant-sensitive and culturally sensitive care.

In total, the region had eight migration health projects active in 2018, together with health components within projects managed under other divisions, IOM was carrying out health-related activities in twelve countries in the region (MHD projects: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo 1244, Moldova, Tajikistan, and Turkey; health-related activities in other projects: North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine). The majority of the projects were within “Health Promotion and Assistance for Migrants” (MA/H2), and three projects were in “Migration Health Assistance for Crisis Affected Populations” (MP/H3). As already the last year, the topics of HIV and Tuberculosis were very prominent, which reflects the situation of public health concerns in the region.

IOM SEECA also would like to use the opportunity to thank the donors of migration health projects this year: IOM Development Fund, Project HOPE, UNAIDS, International Medical Programme at University of Linköping, Kingdom of Norway, Kingdom of Denmark, SDC, U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of People, Refugees and Migration (PRM), Government of Japan and the European Union.

Special thanks go of course to our engaged migration health focal points, project managers, partners and chief of missions, which all ensured that MHD SEECA has made significant progress on migrant health programming in 2018.

Dr Jaime Calderon, RO SEECA Regional Migration Health Advisor

Milestone: Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular migration (GCM)

The endorsement of the Global Compact for Migration on 18 December 2018 by the UN General Assembly is an important milestone ushering Governments’ recognition and comprehensive management of international migration to achieve sustainable development. Health is featured in the GCM as a cross-cutting priority and can be traced in the following objectives:

- **Objective 1** Accurate and disaggregated data for evidence based policies and programmes
- **Objective 6** Fair and ethical recruitment and safeguard conditions that endorse decent work
- **Objective 7** Reduce vulnerabilities in migration
- **Objective 10** Access to basic services
- **Objective 16** Empowered migrants and societies realizing full inclusion and social cohesion
- **Objective 22** Portable social security entitlement and earned benefits

Please find more information in the infosheet “Mainstreaming the health of migrants in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration”:
https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/our_work/DMM/Migration-Health/mhd_infosheet_gcm_dec2018_for_website.pdf
Side event to the 73rd United Nations (UN) General Assembly on the UN Common Position on Ending HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis through Intersectoral Collaboration in Europe and Central Asia

On 27 September 2018, IOM jointly with WHO and the Slovak government facilitated a panel discussion on “Ending HIV, TB and viral hepatitis through Intersectoral Collaboration in Europe and Central Asia” at the 73rd UN General Assembly in New York. IOM Regional Director for SEECEA, Argentina Szabados, highlighted how social and economic factors affect migrants in their vulnerability to these diseases. She stressed the importance of intersectoral collaboration in addressing vulnerable populations’ needs and reaching the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of “leaving no one behind” and the prospect of the Global Compact for Migration, which acknowledges the importance of health in migration issues.

The panel discussion was chaired by the new President of the United Nations General Assembly Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, Dr. Nedret Emiroglu (WHO), Dr. Masoud Dara (WHO), Prof. Stanislav Špánik (State Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Slovak Republic) and the former TB patient Safar Naimov.

Argentina Szabados, IOM Regional Director for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia addresses the UN high-level side event on HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis in New York. Photo: IOM

The UN Common Position on Ending HIV, TB and Viral Hepatitis

Ending tuberculosis (TB), HIV and viral hepatitis by 2030 is part of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on health and well-being but cannot be achieved by the health sector alone. A number of socioeconomic and environmental determinants affect these ongoing epidemics, which can only be addressed through action across sectors. Within the UN Issue-based Coalition on Health and Well-being in Europe and Central Asia, WHO/Europe, together with IOM and other UN agencies, developed a UN Common Position on Ending TB, HIV and Viral Hepatitis in Europe and Central Asia through intersectoral collaboration.

The Common Position recognizes that despite the substantial health improvements that have been reached in the WHO European Region, with life expectancy has been steadily growing, not all are benefiting from this trend, in particular marginalized and vulnerable parts of society. The paper supports links between services for TB, HIV and viral hepatitis and other sectors, including alcohol and substance dependence, mental health, gender-based violence, sexual and reproductive health, food insecurity and nutrition, taking also into consideration migration patterns and urbanization dynamics.

The UN Issue-based Coalition (IBC) is a regional partnership initiative led by WHO/Europe to support the achievement of SDG 3 on health and well-being for all at all ages as well as the health-related targets present in other SDGs. It reports to the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism for Europe and Central Asia.

IOM is actively part of the IBC and contributed to this common position paper.
Global Conference on Primary Health Care, Astana, 25-26 October 2018

The side event “Primary health care for migrants – the economic argument” to the Global Conference on Primary Health Care in Astana was co-hosted IOM, WHO/Europe and the Ministry of Healthcare of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

It aimed at sharing studies and country experiences that address the socioeconomic aspect of improving access of migrants to health care, regardless of their migration status, be it for legislative or practical reasons. The economic model is complementary to the rights-based approach with regard to health care for migrants.

"High costs are often cited by governments as the main reason to not include migrants in health systems. Meanwhile, migrants contribute more in taxes than they receive in benefits, send remittances to home communities and fill labour market gaps in host societies. Equitable access for migrants to low cost primary health care can reduce health expenditures, improve social cohesion and enable migrants to contribute substantially towards the development."

Jacqueline Weekers, Director, Migration Health Division, IOM Headquarters

The main argument brought forward by the keynote speakers Ursula Trummer and Kai Hong Phua is that migrant-inclusive delivery of preventive and basic health services is saving costs for health systems, and hence is for the benefit of the community. Therefore, this event aimed at promoting Primary Health Care as the minimum package of health care services that should be made available for all refugees and migrants.

Presentation by Dr Ursula Trummer, Ph.D, MSc., Head of the Center for Health and Migration, Executive Partner of Trummer & Novak-Zezula OG

Dr Trummer presented a vignette study using a micro-costing approach to compare the costs of timely treatment of selected cases of patients (i.e. example below on a male patient with coronary heart diseases) in primary care and those costs which would occur in hospital for treatment of more severe conditions in four EU countries. The study found that the expected cost savings, depending on factors such as the age, gender, country of treatment and of course the disease, amount 49 per cent to 100 per cent. The study hence showed the cost-saving potential of timely treatment in primary care settings.

Trummer, Ursula; Novak-Zezula, Sanja; Renner, Anna-Theresa; Wilczewska, Ina (2016): Cost savings through timely treatment for irregular migrants and EU citizens without insurance. Infographic and explanatory note. Commissioned by IOM, Migration Health Division, RO Brussels within the EQUI-HEALTH project “Fostering health provision for migrants, the Roma, and other vulnerable groups”
At the very least, investing on the health of migrants can be achieved by ensuring their access to primary health care. Adding the economic perspective can provide the costs and benefits in order to arrive at a balanced consensus according to Prof Dr Kai Hong Phua: “The necessity of migrant workers in the economy, of keeping private costs for business firms low and ensuring the welfare of migrant workers justifies economically a fair health care policy for migrants.” In his presentation, Dr Phua discussed a study that estimated the social costs of migrants’ health in Singapore. Analyzed data were gathered through literature review, visits, interviews and analysis of various stakeholders’ motivations, resources and desired outcomes; and most importantly the economic costing and computation of direct, indirect and other costs incurred by different case studies collected for the study. Key findings are that the costs for work injuries and ill health are five times higher when lifetime costs are included with the net loss of future earnings and human capital. Based on the calculations, the brunt of the cost is borne by workers (50.5%) and the community (27.4%), while employers are only responsible for 22.1%. Employers’ appreciation of migrants’ health and welfare are tempered by the high supply of the migrants. Thus, NGOs absorb some of the costs while the government precariously balances between keeping businesses profitable and ensuring migrants’ rights are respected. Finding a solution to address the problem goes beyond enforcement of regulations, but rather improving policies that preserve the health and wellbeing of migrants regardless of their migration status.

At the Global AIDS Conference in Amsterdam in July 2018, Dr Rukshona Qurobonova from IOM Tajikistan discussed foreign nationals’ access to HIV services in the Republic of Tajikistan, based on desk reach and qualitative interviews with stakeholders in the field of health and migration, employers and foreign nationals.

She highlighted two discriminatory requirements that had been abolished from Tajik legislation in the last decade: the deportation of foreign nationals living with HIV, and compulsory HIV testing for migrants who apply for a visa valid for more than three months. Moreover, foreign nationals living with HIV are granted access to free antiretroviral therapy (ARVT). In 2017, 6,779 foreign nationals underwent HIV testing, and three migrants from Kazakhstan and Russia received free ARVT. The study also revealed gaps: the requirement of HIV testing for obtaining a work permit, and the occasional requirement of HIV testing for a visa. Another challenge identified is the lack of knowledge among foreign nationals about their entitlement to use HIV services in Tajikistan, which can be attributed to the lack of cultural mediators and information materials on HIV prevention in the migrants’ languages.

Tajikistan’s policy of guaranteeing migrants access to HIV testing and free ARVT ensures their right to health. Still, as the study shows, this commitment has to be accompanied by information and education measures and discrimination-free legislation on all levels. Moreover, the results suggest enhanced cross-border cooperation between Tajikistan and migrants’ countries of origin to be sure that referred patients continue ARVT at home.
WHO Europe’s Knowledge Hub on Health and Migration provides the platform for building, discussing and sharing evidence on the public health challenges of international migration. The hub was formed in November 2016 with the support of the Ministry of Health of Italy and the Regional Health Council of Sicily, and is based in the WHO Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen, Denmark. For more information on the knowledge hub, visit the website in http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/knowledge-hub-on-health-and-migration

In 2018, with the support of the European Commission to WHO’s Migration Health Knowledge Management (MiHKMa) project five technical guidelines with policy briefs on selected topics in migration health were produced, along with a summer school, webinars and organization of the knowledge library. For the publication of the technical guidance paper, Dr. Jaime Calderon from the IOM Regional Office Vienna was invited as one of the technical experts on Migration Health to guide the development of the guidelines. The following are the first of its kind Technical Guidance documents developed by the WHO MiHKMA Project on five priority issues of migrants’ health:

- Health of refugee and migrant children
- Health promotion for improved refugee and migrant health
- Health of older refugees and migrants
- Improving the healthcare of pregnant refugee and migrant women and newborn children
- Mental health promotion and mental health care in refugees and migrants

Technical guidance papers on refugee and migrant health

In November 2018, UNODC invited to the 2nd meeting of the Global Advisory Group on children and substance use. Dr. Jaime Calderon and Ursula Wagner from the Regional Office Vienna, together with Nino Shushania from IOM Georgia participated in the meeting at the Vienna International Centre in Vienna.

The meeting laid the foundation for drafting the Terms of Reference for the core advisory group and the task force, and to define working sub-groups working on specific, although interlinked topics, one of them being on health.

The meeting brought together experts from different UN organisations, academia and practice, who all acknowledged the multi-factorial nature of children using substances and the need to work together to tackle this topic adequately. Participants shared their respective organization’s approach to the topic and shared examples from the field.

Ms. Shushania presented IOM’s approach to children and health, and highlighted a project carried out in Georgia on prevention of substance use among school children through various activities such as an art contest.

The next meeting of the Advisory Group will take place in June 2019 in Vienna.
The Regional Office Vienna was engaged in the delivery of a training-of-trainers for health professionals, social workers and law enforcement officers rolled out by the IOM Regional Office Brussels in several EU countries.

Vienna, Austria

In October 2018, OM Austria in coordination with the Center for Migration and Health in Vienna facilitated a three-day training-of-trainers (ToT) for health professionals, social workers and law enforcement officers working on migration and health. The training covered a range of topics such as communicable diseases, mental health, occupational health, caring for vulnerable migrants and intercultural aspects in health care service delivery.

IOM Regional Office Vienna colleagues from MHD and IBM Units were engaged in the preparation of the content of the training and were also invited as experts to deliver sessions.

Dr. Jaime Calderon covered the topic “Health needs, challenges and risks among migrants and refugees”, Oksana Nazarchuk from the IBM Unit in the Regional Office Vienna facilitated the practical exercise for the border guards officials on challenging situations with regard to health needs of migrants and refugees. Ursula Wagner facilitated the module on “intercultural competence and communication” for medical professionals and social workers, where participants vividly discussed their intercultural experiences.

Trainees highly appreciated that the topics were presented by both different trainers familiar with the Austrian context and IOM experts with international experience. The facilitation of interprofessional exchange of experts working in different areas related to migration and health was considered as asset of the workshop by trainees and trainers alike. All three target groups displayed high interest and an open-minded attitude towards the other participants’ experience and expertise. The exchange increased the mutual understanding of the specific work environment/context. Moreover, the multiprofessional composition of the group enabled participants to build a network for future cooperation beyond their own field of expertise.

Ljubljana, Slovenia

IOM Slovenia organized the roll-out of the training-of-trainers with the participation of six health professionals and social workers in October 2018.

Ursula Wagner from the Regional Office Vienna was invited to deliver the session on “Health needs, challenges and risks among migrants and refugees”. Participants discussed the different transmission ways of infectious diseases, and shared experiences on most frequently encountered health issues from their own work with migrants and refugees in the recent years.
IOM Turkey with the support of Ursula Wagner from the Regional Office Vienna carried out the first of two Joint trainings on migration and health within the framework of Regional Cooperation on Border Management with Greece and Bulgaria Phase-2 Project on in December 2018 in Edirne, a border town and hence important migrant hub in Turkey. The overall objective was to strengthen participants’ capacities to deal with health aspects of migration. The training was attended by 26 Turkish and two Greek border guards and coast guards.

The three-day training consisted of an introduction to migration health, how to recognize and deal with communicable diseases, mental health, occupational health, first aid, as well intercultural issues in dealing with migrants and health. The event concluded with a mapping exercise on existing structures and materials in place, as well as gaps to be fill to fully ensure migrant-responsive and culturally sensitive provision of services to migrants and refugees.

“I learned about the health problems of migrants and first intervention procedures”

Participants practicing first aid with Security and Training Officer Giulia Gitti (IOM Turkey)

Group picture from the training in Edirne

IOM Azerbaijan organized a two-day workshop with government representatives, IOM in-house experts and researchers on “Policy approaches in countering irregular migration” in October 2018. The workshop shed light on the different realities of irregular migrants both in Azerbaijan and beyond, and aimed at developing adequate policy approaches to tackle these migratory movements. Ursula Wagner from the Regional Office Vienna presented on the right to health of migrants, explained health challenges for migrants in irregular situations and pointed towards the need to ensure access of all migrants to health care irrespective of their status.

Participants at the workshop in Baku

Workshop on policy approaches in countering irregular migration in Baku, Azerbaijan
IOM and UNAIDS has issued a study on the nexus between migration and HIV among different groups of migrants living in Belarus to identify the gaps and build up a strategy for further work with the Government to ensure migrants’ health. The research is first of its kind done in Belarus – to the date there was no data available on specific vulnerabilities to HIV among migrants.

IOM conducted the study on the nexus between migration and HIV to collect quantitative and qualitative data and analyze behavioral patterns of different groups of migrants, which reflect the dynamics between the risks of exposure to HIV and mobility of people. One of the key purposes of the study was to identify the level of awareness of HIV and its routes of transmission among the target groups:

1) international drivers,
2) foreign students, and
3) working migrants, which turned to be quite low among the groups in focus. Low awareness in its turn leads to higher behavioral risks.

The study consisted of a survey among 949 respondents, focus group discussions and interviews with key stakeholders.

Results

The results clearly point to the necessity for large-scale innovative preventive activities aimed at informing the target groups about the risks and safety measures. Moreover, the study revealed that migrants face certain difficulties in accessing HIV testing and ARV treatment services, that needs to be addressed through the development of effective policies to address the issue. In order to fully assess the scale of issue and efficiently address it programmatically, the study will be continued to cover other groups of migrants and get the full picture of the situation and measures needed to be taken.

The study will set in motion further cooperation with the Government, UNAIDS and competent NGOs to address migration and health issues in the Republic of Belarus.

The Russian version was published in November 2018, the English translation appeared in March 2019.

When I was in school, we were taken to the cinema to watch a film about AIDS, that is it.”
International driver

“These diseases are dangerous, you can die, and I heard that you could die from HIV infection”
Foreign student
Background
The conflict in BiH and Kosovo* led to thousands of civilian injuries and severely damaged the country’s health care infrastructure. After the immediate need for emergency assistance during and shortly after the war was addressed the focus shifted to long-term redevelopment. In 1997 the first Swedish Medical Team (SMT) was established in BiH and extended to Kosovo in 2000. The main priority is to build the local capacity of medical staff and institutions in BiH and Kosovo. The SMT’s activities focused on informing local health care professionals on contemporary techniques and transferring skills. Among the many specializations included were plastic and reconstructive surgery, ophthalmology, ENT, neuro-surgery, orthopedic surgery, vascular surgery, interventional radiology, pediatric cardiac surgery, emergency care and treatment for burn patients. Substantial training has been provided during these 20 years, but some areas remain in need to be continued and supported: paediatric surgery, pediatric urology, emergency care and burn care.

Objective
The overall objective is to contribute to the continuing improvement in the access of patients with complicated health conditions to good quality and needed specialized medical and surgical interventions in prioritized health facilities at the University Clinical Centre Sarajevo, Pristina, and the University hospital in Linköping. The project primarily targets medical facilities in BiH and Kosovo that have limited capacities to provide adequate specialized medical treatment, thus requiring treatments and assistance abroad.

Key achievements in 2018
Pediatric surgery and pediatric urology Priština and Sarajevo:
- Improvement of care for pediatric patients with urinary tract disorders was addressed through visits of multiprofessional teams in pediatric surgery and urodynamics.
- Five SMTs – three pediatric urodynamic teams (pediatricians specialized in urodynamics, a pediatric neurologist) and two pediatric surgery teams (pediatric surgeon) – visited the clinics in Sarajevo and Pristina in April, May and October 2018.
- SMTs shared skills and knowledge with their BiH counterparts by involving them in patient care, and through discussions and lectures on relevant topics;
- More than 100 patients with different pathologies were examined by the SMTs, in cooperation with local BiH professionals;
- More than 40 different surgeries and procedures in pediatric surgery and urology were performed;
- Consumables were donated to the two clinics.

The project improved the nurses’ skills in patient care and the follow up treatment of patients. The teams’ awareness on the importance of nurses in patient care increased.

Training on paediatric urodynamics at the University Clinical Centre Sarajevo, May 2018

The workshop “Teamwork and experiential learning” from the paediatric surgery clinics in Sarajevo, Pristina and Podgorica took place between in Budva, Montenegro in May 2018. Fifteen health professionals from the University Clinical Centre Pristina, Sarajevo and Montenegro participated in the workshop. The aim was to make participants aware of the benefits of teamwork, how each individual contributes to the team, and how inter-professional team training can be applied. This was delivered through a problem-based learning and patient-centred model.
Title of the project: Building the Capacity of the BiH Institutions to Address and Respond to Mental Health Issues amongst Defense Personnel (Preventiva) – Phase II (MP.0338)

Donor: Kingdom of Norway
Budget: 151,232 EUR
Duration: June 2017 - May 2019
Country: Bosnia and Herzegovina

Background
Since the conclusion of the conflict, there have been no programmes specifically designed to support Military Personnel and members of the Armed Forces (AF) in mental health, and no comprehensive and reliable data on the number of persons with mental health problems related to the conflict are available in BiH. AF members receive healthcare through civil health institutions in BiH.

However, the health insurance only covers the place of origin, while members of the AF often work abroad and need healthcare there. Furthermore, medical assessments on the ability of members of AF are in a civilian context, without necessarily taking into account the specific situation and needs of AF personnel. Therefore, there is a need for a systematic approach, and the MoD identified mental health issues amongst personnel as a priority issue.
**Objective**

The overall objective to contribute to the BiH Ministry of Defense’s efforts to improve all current and discharged military personnel’s access to mental health and psychosocial services regardless of gender, particularly those who are participating peacekeeping mission, through two components, namely:

- strengthen the MOD’s human and technical capacities to provide systematic and integrated responses to mental health issues, and
- support the exchange and utilization of identified best practices and expertise from the region.

**Key achievements in 2018**

- An online confidential questionnaire for the AF Intranet was developed to assess the impact of peacekeeping missions on the mental health of deployed military personnel by AF psychologists
- Monitoring visit of a Norwegian psychologist to BiH MoD/AF psychologists
- Several materials were designed, printed and distributed among MoD/AF psychologists:
  - Manual on Training of cognitive-behavioural skills for working with couples
  - Handbook „Leadership”
  - “Art of communicating” brochure
  - Handbook „Radicalism, extremism, terrorism”
- A workshop with representatives of the MoD/AF BiH was held in February 2018, during which the Ethical standards on the Protection of Mental Health and Psychosocial Assistance in the MoD and the AF in BiH were finalized and approved
- Project promotion continued by organizing:
  - An interview for the daily show “U programu ste” broadcasted on 26 February 2018 on BH TV channel
  - An interview for the daily newspaper “Oslobodjenje” on 03 March 2018
- Regional Conference on Psychological support in the security sector was held in February 2018 in Sarajevo in the UN House
- Initiated purchase of psychological tools – test for MoD/AF BiH psychologists
- In March, regional workshops of military psychologists took place in Sarajevo
- Participation of MoD psychologists from BiH from at the International Applied Military Psychology Symposium (IAMPS) in May 2018, Romania
- Study visit of the MoD psychologist from North Macedonia to psychologist of MoD/AF BiH
- Study visits of BiH MoD psychologists to psychologists of the MoD/AF Republic of Serbia and Republic of Slovenia
- Organisation of International Applied Military Psychology Sumposium (IAMPS) which will be held in Sarajevo in May 2019, was initiated.
Combating HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis in the South Caucasus

**Title of the project:** Enhancing Mechanisms for Prevention, Detection and Treatment of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis Among Migrant and Mobile Populations in the South Caucasus Countries (MA.0379)

**Donor:** IOM Development Fund (IDF)

**Budget:** 250,000 USD

**Duration:** December 2016 – November 2018

**Countries:** Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia (implementing mission)

**Background.** HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, particularly high rates of multi-drug resistant (MDR) and extensively drug resistant (XDR) TB forms in the South Caucasian countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia represent a great public health concern, factoring into the increased migration in the region and beyond. Rates of interrupted treatment courses are substantial in the Southern Caucasus, representing the main drawback in effective TB and HIV/AIDS control in the region, including the main countries of destination for outbound labour migration such as Turkey and the Russian Federation.

**Objective.** The project intends to contribute to the enhancement of cross-border mechanisms for prevention, increased detection, referral and treatment of HIV/AIDS and TB among migrant and mobile populations in the South Caucasus. Planned activities are a health promotion campaign focusing on the importance of preventive screening and treatment adherence; cross-border and in-country migrant health surveys in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia; and capacity building of all countries’ government counterparts, namely, healthcare professionals and border authorities.

**Key achievements of the project**

- The regional health promotion campaign was successfully implemented in all three countries of the South Caucasus, outreaching to over 12,000 migrants and mobile populations (MMPs) and sensitizing them on the importance of prevention, early detection and treatment of TB and HIV/AIDS as well as raised MMPs awareness on risks and transmission ways of these communicable diseases.

- Transnational, multi-country and cross-sectoral partnership frameworks between the governmental structures and healthcare and border control authorities of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia were successfully established through conduct of regional and in-country migrant health surveys.

- Capacities of healthcare and border control institutions were significantly enhanced, and leading to sustainability and innovative, modern healthcare interventions benefiting MMPs and public at large.

Representatives from IOM missions and governments in the South Caucasian countries Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia gathered in Tbilisi in November 2018 for the presentation of the findings and discussion of results at the final conference of the project. The objective was to establish the regional dialogue between professional national entities responsible for health policies and disease control and define responsibilities and roles of government counterpart engaged in the implementation of IOM’s regional project on TB and HIV/AIDS in South Caucasus. The conference concluded with a discussion of ways forward for migration health programming in the region and it was agreed that more and better information for HIV and TB prevention among migrants is needed.

The details on the full report of the migrant health surveys can be found in this report on page 20 (Publications)

14 / Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia
Background
The Border Police (BP) is the main public authority in Moldova that ensures border control and observance of border regime in the border zone and border crossing points. It implements the state policy on Integrated Border Management (IBM), including combating irregular migration and transnational crime.

Objectives
The objective is contributing to an improved implementation of the state IBM policy through establishing and making operational of integrated psychological services of the BP by creating the System of Integrated Psychological Services (SIPS) for planning, organizing and carrying out activities for appropriate testing of and support to staff, as well as for providing psychological support to vulnerable migrants.

Key achievements in 2018
The project continued to support the General Inspectorate of Border Police (GIBP) of the Moldovan Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) on restructuring and enhancement of its psychological service:

- Development of the Concept of the SIPS and draft Action Plan for implementation (consolidated approach to planning, organizing and carrying out of psychological testing of and support to the GIBP personnel and providing psychologic support to people crossing the border, especially migrants in vulnerable situations).
- Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of the Psychological Service of the BP and practical guidance on elaboration and updating the SOPs based on the existing EU and international best standards and practices.
- Assessment of the current training structure of the GIBP Psychological Assistance Services and development of a curriculum and course reader on the BP Psychological Service for the Academy of the MIA and the BP Centre of Excellence on Border Security (CEBS).
- Four-day staff training for 10 female and 6 male GIBP’s psychological and human recourses personnel on organizing and carrying out psychological testing of and support to the GIBP personnel.
- Development of a Guide and Training Curriculum for BP psychologists on psychological assessment of and assistance to the BP staff and migrants.
- Study visit for five GIBP personnel to Poland on international best practices to support daily operation and assisting its staff (professional assessment at recruitment, assistance in cases of psychological trauma, behavioral difficulties, addictions, stress, burn out etc.).
- Setting up of six psychological cabinets of the BP through partial refurbishment and provision of furniture, IT equipment and other facilities.
Labour migration predominantly to the Russian Federation is an important pillar of the political, economic and social life of Tajikistan. This intensive cross border migration is marked by unstable access to health care, exposing Tajik migrant workers to increased health risks and negative health outcomes, especially with regard to tuberculosis. IOM Tajikistan’s migration health activities therefore focus on improving the Tajik Government’s collaboration with countries of destination for implementation of the Minimum Package for Cross Border TB Control and Care.

In March 2018, IOM jointly with the Tajik Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment, the Russian Ministry of Health and the Tajik National TB Control Program in cooperation with Russian HIV service organizations conducted a training on TB and HIV prevention for Tajik diaspora and staff of the state migration service in Moscow. Ten Tajik diaspora members and five staff of the Tajik migration service improved their knowledge on TB prevention among migrants and agreed to organize an awareness raising campaign among Tajik migrants.

A seminar on HIV prevention among migrants was organized jointly with the Russian HIV service NGO “Shagi” in June 2018 for Tajik, Kyrgyz and Uzbek diaspora as well as the Tajik migration service. Participants improved their knowledge on HIV and agreed on the referral mode for migrants for HIV testing, in case of issues with documents or need of interpretation services. Joint activities/events were also discussed during the seminar.

The information campaign for Tajik diaspora in the Russian Federation from April to August 2018 consisted of 578 information sessions and reached 11,413 migrants (8,440 men, 2,973 women); in total, 5,044 brochures and 845 posters were distributed.

In December 2018, additional brochures were provided to the Tajik migration service in the Russian Federation, to Tajik diaspora and Russian HIV service NGOs to distribute them among Tajik migrants in Moscow, Novosibirsk and other towns of Siberia, Ufa, Yekaterinburg, Saint Petersburg.

The IOM IEC materials were also printed by the Russian HIV service NGO “Est mnenie” (“There is an opinion”) in Chelyabinsk and distributed among Tajik migrants.

Key achievements in 2018

- Information, education and communication (IEC) materials on TB prevention were developed and approved by the Tajik Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Tajik Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment and the Russian Society of Physiatrists. In total 29,150 brochures, 4,250 posters and 345 visual manuals were distributed in Tajikistan and the Russian Federation.

- Meetings with Tajik migrants in Saint Petersburg, organized by the diaspora organization “Ajam”
IOM conducted a training for health professionals of the Republican Clinical Center on Occupational Diseases and other health clinics on district level responsible for the health assessment of migrants on pre-departure health assessment of migrants in April 2018.

A study visit to IOM Almaty clinic was conducted in November 2018 to improve knowledge on international practice for pre departure health assessment of migrants. The Director of the Republican Clinical Center on Occupational Diseases, Deputy of the Director of the Clinic, and head of the branch of the Clinic in Sogd Oblast took part in the study visit hosted by IOM Almaty.

A data base was developed for the Republican Clinical Center on Occupational Diseases and installed to the provided by IOM new equipment (computers, server etc.)

IOM continued the implementation of the five-year USAID TB Control Programme. Being part of the consortium of the partners lead by Project HOPE, IOM addressed the issue of migrants’ access to TB services. The focus lay on innovative approaches to promote migrants’ health-seeking behavior, pre-departure TB screening, and active TB detection in the four target districts Baljuvon, Danghara, Farkhor and Temurmalik.

One of the pillars is to engage the diaspora for cross-border TB control, building on the capacity of the migrants’ network.

Key achievements in 2018

- Staff of the Republican Center on Healthy Lifestyle Promotion, health specialists of the Republic Clinical Center on Family Medicine and representatives of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment received **31 on the job trainings**. The knowledge of the trainees increased by 35 per cent on average.

- Field staff, volunteers and outreach workers in the four target districts reached **18,750 beneficiaries** (13,177 men and 5,393 women; 8,925 migrants and 9,645 family members of the migrants). In total, 955 beneficiaries (733 migrants, 266 family members) received referral vouchers for TB testing, out of whom 86% approached a health facility for TB diagnostic, and 43 new TB cases (26 men and 17 women; 32 migrants and 11 family members) were detected.

- Seventeen peer sessions were conducted to train 256 migrants. Trainees reached 2,147 migrants and their families by information sessions, referred 24 people with presumptive TB symptoms and found 4 TB cases.

- In the target districts, **39 coordination meetings** were facilitated with representatives from primary health care facilities, the local TB Control Center, the local migration service, the local Healthy Lifestyle Promotion Center, as well as community leaders, field staff trained by the program and local authorities.

**Title of the project:** USAID TB Control Program (MA.0387)

**Donor:** Project HOPE/USAID

**Budget:** USD 98,316 (year 4)

**Duration:** September 2014 – August 2018

**Countries:** Tajikistan, Russian Federation

An outreach worker of the diaspora “Mechta” conducts information session and distributes brochures in Alexandrov (Moscow Oblast)
As the Syrian crisis enters its seventh year and with 3.3 million Syrian refugees residing in Turkey, access to essential services remains critical, particularly those pertaining to psychosocial support (PSS). Despite the best efforts of the Turkish Government, meaningful access to available services remains patchy due to locally stretched capacities, awareness of services and rights, language and cultural barriers and administrative delays amongst others. Further, IOM’s assessments have indicated pockets of social tensions underpinning relations between host and refugee communities, thus highlighting the need for efforts to contribute towards harmonization. These barriers, coupled with economic insecurity serve to create new or exacerbate existing vulnerabilities of Syrian refugee households.

To address this, IOM has been implementing a comprehensive protection response through the provision of information on refugee rights and available assistance and individualized case management assistance to vulnerable refugees with specific protection concerns and vulnerabilities. Alongside these, and as part of its community-based protection approach, counter-trafficking sensitization has also been a key component under this project to highlight issues of exploitation and human trafficking associated with the crisis.

Objectives
The overall goal of the project is to support a multi-faceted protection response to Syrian refugees through the provision of information on refugee rights and available assistance in Turkey, and individualized case management assistance to vulnerable refugees with specific protection concerns and vulnerabilities. Alongside these, and as part of its community-based protection approach, counter-trafficking sensitization has also been a key component under this project to highlight issues of exploitation and human trafficking associated with the crisis.

Specific outcomes of the project include:

- ‘Syrian refugees have increased access to protection assistance’ - to be achieved through specialized case management services, psychosocial and information sessions, legal rights and responsibilities, and gender-specific protection assistance (especially for women and girls)

- ‘Interaction between Syrian refugee and Turkish host community members is improved’ - to be achieved through social and cultural activities that aim to promote interaction and longer-term cohesion between Syrian refugees and Turkish host communities.

Key achievements in June – December 2018
- Expansion of interventions in new areas in Hatay Province (Iskenderun and Hassa Districts) and Sanliurfa Province (Siverek and Sanliurfa City Centre) and establishment of new teams in Gaziantep and Izmir Provinces.

- Under its Emergency Case Management (ECM), IOM responded to 635 cases (assisting 672 individuals) with individualized case management assistance.

- The Mobile Psychosocial Support (PSS) teams reached 13,364 individuals through PSS sessions, information sessions and social cohesion activities. Protection counselling was provided to 29 individuals. In total, the Mobile PSS teams reached 15,643 persons through various interventions including assessments, focus group discussions, and PSS activities.

- Through its legal and awareness component, IOM provided capacity building to 125 key humanitarian personnel on issues relating to the Turkish legal system, Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and its direct effect on refugees in Turkey. Additionally, IOM reached 118 beneficiaries through its legal activities on topics including safe migration and rights and entitlements as SuTP in Turkey. Topics included labour law, residency, and citizenship among others.
Re-Health² implementation in Serbia

**Title of the projects:** Re-Health² - Implementation of the Personal Health Record as a tool for integration of refugees in EU health systems  
**Donor:** Co-funded action IOM MHD /DG SANTE – European Commission.  
**Budget:** 86,058 EUR  
**Geographical coverage:** Serbia  
**Project duration:** February 2016—January 2019

**Background**
Re-Health² has been implemented by IOM Serbia in collaboration with the Ministry of Health (MoH) and Interior (MoI) of Serbia, IOM MHD RO Brussels and Vienna. The action intended to support Member States in improving healthcare provision for migrants and integrating them into national healthcare systems, by identifying third country nationals’ health needs, with attention to vulnerable individuals, and facilitating the provision of health care, through the utilization of the electronic Personal Health Record (e-PHR) as universal EU tool for health assessment. Besides Serbia, Re-Health 2 is also implemented in Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Slovenia.

**Implementation in Serbia**
In Serbia the action has been implemented in nine migrant centers, out of the existing 15. With the use of the e-PHR, important evidence from aggregate data has been collected, highlighting increasing needs in the Mental Health.

The e-PHR has been also translated in Serbian. In line with the action the engagement of two trained IOM Health Mediators in main migrant centers enabled better understanding of needs and provision of services by health providers.

From December 2017 until March 2019 in Serbia 4008 e-PHR have been registered with a higher number of follow up visits.

The action facilitated the implementation of training in migration health and meetings with main stakeholders and partners at national (MoH - MoI) and civil society level (UN, academia, NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services – CRS- and Danish Refugee Council – DRC). Discussions on how the scale up the initiative are in place.
Assisting migrants and refugees in the Western Balkans

**Title of the project:** EU Support to Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia in Managing the Migration/Refugees Crisis / Balkan Route (RT.1319)

**Budget:** Serbia: 18 Million USD (Health = 3,36 Million USD), North Macedonia: 1.808.229,44 USD (for MHPSS purposes 675.383 USD)

**Donor:** European Union

**Geographical coverage:** Serbia, North Macedonia

**Duration:** 16 December 2016—15 December 2019

**Aim:** The overall objective of the Action is to ensure and expand the direct operational capacities of Macedonian and Serbian national authorities to effectively respond to the mid-term and long-term challenges related to the migration flows. The specific objectives aim to support targeted governments in provision of accommodation capacities to stranded migrants and asylum seekers in line with the applicable standards for long term stay, as well as to facilitate access of targeted groups to medical services and assisted voluntary return programmes and protection mechanisms.

**Activities in Serbia**

Within the health component of this project, IOM has been providing direct medical assistance in all reception/asylum locations in Serbia through Danish Refugee Council and Catholic Relief Services. In line with the recommendations issued by the Institute for Public Health under the Ministry of Health, the teams have been comprised of one general practitioner and one medical nurse/medical practitioner, providing primary health care services within the centers. In regular and timely consultations between CRS, DRC, Ministry of Health and Serbian Commissariat for refugees and Migration, adequate monitoring of health services has been ensured through regular multilateral meetings as well as weekly touring of the centers provided by IOM Public Health Monitoring Specialist.

Out of 4,976 primary care consultations in total, 4,874 were male patients and 1602 were female patients. Among the patients were 1,932 vulnerable migrants, with 74% of them being male.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Total Number of Healthcare Consultations</th>
<th>Number of Routine Compulsory Examinations</th>
<th>Number of Individual Examinations</th>
<th>Number of Migrants provided with medical services</th>
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<tr>
<td>Šid</td>
<td>3,960</td>
<td>930</td>
<td>3,030</td>
<td>1,143</td>
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<td>Belgrade</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Bujanovac</td>
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<td>Vranje</td>
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<td>2,048</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25,051</td>
<td>2,549</td>
<td>22,502</td>
<td>2,902</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1. Primary health care consultations provided by CRS in numbers 15.06.2018-31.12.2018*
Besides provision of primary health support, IOM and DRC have also been engaged in provision of psychological counseling and mental health support, through a daily presence of IOM and DRC psychologists in the centers. Below is the number of psychological counseling, group sessions and referrals made by IOM teams:

**Data on Psychological Counselling and Mental Health Support Activities and Referrals in the Serbian Reception Centres**

**Activities in North Macedonia**

The overall objective is to ensure and expand the direct operational capacities to effectively respond to the mid-term and long-term challenges related to migration flows. The aim to achieve this through the implementation of specific actions in the two Transit Reception Centers located in north/south border area in Gevgelija and Kumanovo. More specifically, IOM aims to strengthen operational capacities of the national authorities to efficiently respond to the needs of migrants, as well as directly facilitate access to basic medical care, offer AVRR option for return to home county, as well as improve referral and protection measures for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in the reception centres.

**Key achievements in 2018**

Through the health component of this project, in total 22,038 individuals (73% male, 14% female and 13% children) were assisted in 2,474 interventions in 2018. Activities are implemented in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health and include three medical teams (medical doctor, nurse, driver and interpreter). The teams are on duty at the medical unit in the transit centers from Monday to Sunday and provide basic medical care and examinations for migrants. Moreover, IOM provides referral and coverage of the cost for hospital treatment of vulnerable migrants. The majority of migrants assisted suffered from dehydration, seasonal flu and flash injuries due to long walks. Special consideration is put to communicable diseases and protection of the health of children. The medical teams in coordination with the MoH Center for Control of Disease are overseeing fumigation and epidemiological control at the Transit Reception Centers as well as control of water.
### Psychosocial support for internally displaced persons in Ukraine

**Title of the project:** Essential relief and early recovery support to vulnerable returnees, IDPs and other conflict-affected communities in eastern Ukraine (2018-2019) (DP.1950)

**Budget:** overall 3,000,000 USD (for MHPSS purpose 1,500 USD)

**Donor:** U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of People, Refugees and Migration (PRM)

**Geographical coverage:** Donetsk and Luhansk regions, government controlled area (GCA)

**Duration:** July 2018—June 2019

**Aim:** To assist 150 beneficiaries living with chronic illnesses that are in need of medical examination or treatment that is not accessible in the location of their residence with compensation of transportation costs to access specialized medical facilities.

**Results achieved in 2018:**
- **The need in transportation** was indicated by Zolote3, Zolote4 and Katerinivka. The estimated number of potential beneficiaries is 246 individuals.
- **The leaflets were distributed** in the mentioned settlements, the verification process was started.

### Title of the project: Promoting Cohesion and Sustainable Community Development in the Conflict-Affected Communities of the Donbas’ (2018-2019) (CS.0977)

**Donor:** Government of Japan

**Budget:** 500,000 USD, for MHPSS purposes 32,700 USD (CS.0977)

**Geographical coverage:** Donetsk and Luhansk regions, government controlled area (GCA)

**Project duration:** March 2018—March 2019 (CS.0977)

**Objective**
The overall objective is to contribute towards the Government of Ukraine’s efforts to support socio-economic recovery through the promotion of inclusive, cohesive and stabilized communities affected by conflict in the Government-controlled areas (GCA) of the Donbas region through the implementation of community-driven social cohesion activities.

**Key achievements in 2018**
In 2018, IOM identified 161 psychosocial specialists to participate in capacity building sessions to further improve their skills and abilities to support the conflict-affected population. An outreach campaign organized together with the implementing partner NGO and local Departments for Social Protection, Departments of Education, Social Services Centers for Families, Children and Youth targeted local psychosocial specialists who are experienced in training and motivated to obtain new knowledge and skills. A social media platform for networking and peer-to-peer support was created.

The PSS specialists conducted 594 PSS group information sessions for 8,013 individuals (5,796 female, 2,217 male, 1,161 children) to increase their awareness of the effects of psychological trauma, symptoms, measures to reduce the impact, available support networks and services provided. In total, 12,800 IEC materials on stress resilience and posters for children with behavioral tips were distributed.

### Psychosocial support activities

To ensure comprehensive and sustainable support to veterans from the conflict in eastern Ukraine and their families, targeted assistance will be provided by IOM to improve psychological wellbeing and mitigate the use of negative coping mechanisms, including domestic violence and substance abuse. In total, 14,400 veterans of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, their families and community members will be engaged in psychosocial activities in 60 communities, including individual and family counselling, group counselling and training for volunteers.
USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

IOM

Regional Migrant Health Survey on Tuberculosis and HIV and Health Service Response for Migrants in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (2019)

This regional survey report presents findings from qualitative and quantitative surveys among migrants in the South Caucasus countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The objective of the qualitative survey was to assess experiences with and access to public health care services related to HIV and tuberculosis (TB) in migrants’ own countries and abroad. The objective of the quantitative surveys was to measure HIV prevalence and TB signs and symptoms among migrant populations. Other goals were to determine the study participants’ migration experiences, living and working conditions, sexual behaviour, and HIV testing and TB screening history in their own country and abroad. This evidence will help to ensure the development of adequate migrant-inclusive policies and public health interventions, especially related to TB and HIV.


Santé et migration en Asie centrale (2018)
Edited by Sophie Hohmann and Rukhshona Kurbanova
Editions Petra

With the following articles by IOM colleagues:

Rukhshona Kurbonova, Ilhom Bandaev and Mariya Samuilova
*Health Status and Health Needs of Foreign Migrant Workers in Tajikistan. Legal, Social, Community, and Individual Aspects*

Boris Sergeev
*Awareness of Communicable Diseases Among Migrants in St Petersburg*

Rukhshona Kurbonova, Ilhom Bandaev and Mariya Samuilova
*Tajik Healthcare Workers on the Move: Causes, Consequences and Responses*

WHO

Report on the health of refugees and migrants in the WHO European Region: no public health without refugee and migrant health (2018)

This report, the first of its kind, creates an evidence base with the aim of catalysing progress towards developing and promoting migrant-sensitive health systems in the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region and beyond. This report seeks to illuminate the causes, consequences and responses to the health needs and challenges faced by refugees and migrants in the Region, while also providing a snapshot of the progress being made across the Region. Additionally, the report seeks to identify gaps that require further action through collaboration, to improve the collection and availability of high-quality data and to stimulate policy initiatives. The report is a much-needed boost for Member States and other stakeholders to ensure high-quality health care for all.
This report was compiled by Ursula Wagner of the IOM Regional Migration Health Division for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The Migration Health Division is interested in hearing your comments and feedback. Please email uwagner@iom.int.