MHD PROGRAMMES IN 2019

In the whole region South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia (SEECA), seven migration health projects were active in 2019. Together with health components within projects managed under other divisions, IOM was carrying out health-related activities in nine countries in the whole region: Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo UNSCR 1244, Republic of Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey and Ukraine.

As in previous years, the majority of the projects were carried out in the programme area “Health Promotion and Assistance for Migrants” (MA) and to a lesser extent in “Migration Health Assistance for Crisis Affected Populations” (MP).

In addition to these projects, many missions carried out advocacy efforts with their respective Ministries or were engaged in training activities (see page 4)

MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT

During a crisis response, mental health and psychosocial support aims to promote, protect and support the well-being of crisis-affected populations, with activities aimed at reducing psychosocial vulnerabilities, promoting community resilience and ownership, by taking into account psychosocial and cultural diversity issues.

Several projects in the region focus on mental health and psychosocial support. They support people displaced by conflict (Ukraine), Syrian refugees (Turkey) and migrants and refugees along the Balkan route (North Macedonia).

Also occupational health, including mental health, is of importance for certain professions. IOM supported projects for the Moldovan border police and the Bosnia Armed Forces to improve the mental health of staff.

UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE

“Leaving no one behind” is one of the main slogans of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, and is essential to support the migration health agenda, and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 on health. Migrant-inclusive Universal Health Coverage (UHC) can be attained by building resilient, accessible and equitable health systems.

This year’s formative topic on health was Universal Health Coverage, which was discussed globally at the UN General Assembly in New York and the Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Belgrade in 2019. (see page 2)
SPOTLIGHT: UNIVERSAL HEALTH COVERAGE (UHC)

Migrants and mobile populations can face many obstacles in accessing essential health care services due to several factors including irregular immigration status, language barriers, discrimination, a lack of migrant-inclusive health policies and lack of affordable health services. Such disparities impact the well-being of migrants and host communities and undermine the realization of global health goals. Therefore striving for universal health coverage is one of the leading themes when it comes to leaving no one behind.

2019 UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

On 23 September 2019, the United Nations General Assembly held a high-level meeting under the theme “Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World,” aimed to accelerate progress toward universal health coverage (UHC), including financial risk protection, access to quality essential health-care services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.

The UN High Level Meeting on the “Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World” was a hugely significant achievement for Member States who reached agreement on a Political Declaration and reaffirmed their high-level political commitment to UHC. It was also a time for celebration for everyone in the global UHC movement who has campaigned long and hard to get here.

Most important of all, this highest level political commitment for achieving UHC holds life changing potential for the 3.65 billion people who currently lack affordable and accessible quality health services.

IOM at the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Belgrade

Over 1700 parliamentarians and UN and civil society partners from around the world met in Belgrade, Serbia, from 13 to 17 October for the 141st Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Under the overarching theme of “Strengthening international law: Parliamentary roles and mechanisms”, and the contribution of regional cooperation, the participants also discussed the latest developments to improve gender equality, empower young people, defend human rights, and achieve universal health coverage.

The IPU adopted a resolution on Universal Health Coverage, which was welcomed also by IOM, represented by Dr Jaime Calderon from the Regional Office in Vienna:

„The right to health is a fundamental right of all human beings, irrespective of their legal status. We welcome the approval on the landmark political declaration on universal health coverage and above all the explicit mentioning of the needs of migrants. Universal health coverage, and with it Sustainable Development Goals 3.8 and 10.7 could be fully realized, unless health service coverage and financial protection measures in all countries include migrants and all other people on the move, especially those who are stigmatised, marginalised and in vulnerable situations.“

Dr Calderon called on States to provide the same rights and entitlements to migrants as they do for their nationals. “The progressive realization of the rights of migrants to health should avoid parallel structures, as was pointed out in the draft of the Global Action to Promote the Health of Refugees and Migrants by the World Health Assembly this year”, he said. Dr Calderon also pointed out that migration can be a path to development with effective labour agreements, diaspora engagements and ethical and well-managed international recruitment of health workers who are critical in making UHC successful in countries of origin.

The IPU was founded 130 years ago, to facilitate parliamentary diplomacy and empower parliaments and parliamentary to promote peace, democracy and sustainable development around the world. Its 141st Assembly focussed on strengthening international law, gender equality, young people, human rights, and achieving universal health coverage.
The rate of new HIV infections is decreasing globally, however in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (EECA), the HIV epidemic continues to grow. According to UNAIDS, there are approximately 1.7 million people living with HIV in the region. The HIV epidemic in EECA has grown by 29 percent since 2010, reflecting insufficient political commitment and domestic investment in national AIDS responses across much of the region. While there have been significant improvements in the legal environment relevant to HIV and TB in the region, legal barriers persist.

Chisinau, Moldova - The first Regional Judges’ Forum on HIV, Human Rights and the Law in the Europe and Central Asia region was held 3-4 October 2019 in Chisinau, Moldova. The main topics where how the law can better protect the rights of people living with HIV (PLHIV), key populations of HIV and those living with tuberculosis. It also looked at the social and structural factors that increase the vulnerability of these populations and the development of jurisprudence on HIV and TB related cases. The forum brought together over 50 participants from seven countries (Belarus, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan and Ukraine), including judges, government representatives, academics, civil society organizations, key population representatives and UN agencies.

While there have been significant improvements in the legal environment relevant to HIV and TB in the region, legal barriers persist. The rights of people living with HIV, key populations at risk of HIV and of people experiencing TB are not sufficiently and effectively protected. Some key obstacles include the criminalisation of or increased punitive measures against HIV transmission, sex work, and drug use; the introduction of homophobic and transphobic laws usually presented as “anti-propaganda” legislation; punitive “prevention” measures against people with HIV as those more likely to commit crimes; forced and coerced HIV testing; prosecution of people who are not able to or willing to undergo TB treatment; and a shrinking space for civil society organizations to provide services for those living with HIV, TB and other key populations. Also discussed were up-to-date medical evidence pertaining to HIV prevention, treatment and care and co-infections, the latest international and regional guidance on HIV, co-infections, law, human rights and addressing stigma and discrimination. Judges shared the experiences and challenges in HIV-related litigation.

Dr Jaime Calderon, IOM Regional Health Advisor for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia gave a presentation on the health implications of HIV-related travel restrictions, with evidence from studies conducted among migrants by IOM in the South Caucasus and in Central Asia. He pointed out that the fear of deportation drives people into avoiding HIV or TB testing and to delaying to seek medical care in general. This does not only impact the individual health status of migrants, but has broader implications from a human rights angle and public health angle.
In 2019, the Regional Office Vienna was directly involved in three trainings on migration health in the SEEECA region. They all had to the goal to advocate for migrants’ health, to better equip the target groups for their daily work with migrants and refugees’ health needs and to deliver migrant-sensitive and culturally sensitive care.

**TRAINING BORDER AND COAST GUARDS**

IOM Turkey carried out the second joint trainings on migration and health within the framework of **Regional Cooperation on Border Management with Greece and Bulgaria Phase-2 Project** on in June 2019 in Alexandroupolis, an important migrant hub in Greece. The overall objective was to strengthen participants’ capacities to deal with health aspects of migration. The three-day training was jointly conducted by Dr Kaoru Takahashi, Giulia Gitti (both IOM Turkey) and Ursula Wagner (IOM Regional Office Vienna). In total, 22 participants from Greece and Turkey — border guards, coast guards, and representatives from DGMM, the Turkish Ministry of Interior and the Turkish Ministry of Trade — took part in the event.

The training consisted of an introduction to migration health, how to recognize and deal with communicable diseases, mental health and migration, occupational health, first aid, as well intercultural issues in dealing with migrants and health.

The training 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**. The identified needs were further communicated to the IBM and MHD units in IOM Turkey for development of new programmes.

**MIGRANTS’ RIGHT TO HEALTH TURKMENISTAN**

IOM Turkmenistan organized a two-day national workshop on “**Migrants’ Right to Health and Access to Services**” in November 2019 with government representatives. It was facilitated by the IOM experts Dr. Jaime Calderon from the Regional Office in Vienna and Dr. Rukhshona Kurbunova from IOM Tajikistan.

The workshop covered different issues such as international legal frameworks on migration health, migrants’ awareness of health risks and access to healthcare, and health vulnerabilities of migrants.

The last part of the workshop was dedicated to good practices with regard to raising awareness and improving migrants’ access to health services.
Detection and treatment of HIV/AIDS among migrants in Armenia

Increasing the Capacity of the United Nations Joint Programme of support on AIDS to inform and motivate migrants for better detection and treatment of HIV/AIDS in Armenia (MA.0467)

**Donor:** UNAIDS  
**Budget:** USD 85,000  
**Duration:** 12 months (1 June 2019—31 May 2020)

In this project IOM aims to contribute to the enhancement of local capacities for the prevention, increased detection, referral and treatment of HIV/AIDS among outbound male and female labour migrants in Armenia. Like in other South Caucasus countries and Eastern Europe, HIV has been on the rise in Armenia, with migrants and their family members comprising many of the new cases registered in the last few years.

Recent surveys among Armenian labour migrants reveal that migrants have inconsistent knowledge about HIV transmission and do not consider themselves at risk for HIV infection, practice risky behaviour and do not seek HIV testing voluntarily. To address these problems, IOM plans to pilot a social media campaign on HIV/AIDS targeting Armenian urban labour migrants, who go abroad for work. This tailored information on the risk of HIV/AIDS should stimulate healthy behaviours and increase voluntary testing. Thus, the information campaign will considerably improve the prevention and detection of HIV/AIDS among urban outbound labour migrants and hence contribute to the achievement of the 90-90-90 treatment target by Armenia.

**Key activities in 2019**

- Project introduced to the National Center for AIDS Prevention (ARMAIDS)
- **Behavioral Scientist, Digital Marketing Specialist and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Specialist** selected. The Behavioural Scientist started the desk research, met the ARMAIDS representative responsible for the surveys conducted on HIV in Armenia and developed the questionnaire for focus group discussions (FGDs) and trained the FGD facilitators
- **Six focus groups discussions** with male migrants and labour migrants’ partners (wives/girlfriends) conducted in Yerevan, Vanadzor and Martuni
- **Electronic media communication plan** developed
- **M&E, accountability, and learning (MEAL) plan** developed
- **TOR for campaign implementing company** developed

**AWARENESS-RISING ON WORLD AIDS DAY**

On December 1, the World AIDS Day, with this year’s topic “Communities make the difference”, public events were held in Yerevan and Gyumri. The aimed at promoting HIV testing and changing the stereotypes associated with testing in the society. Staff from the National Center for AIDS Prevention informed the public about the importance of knowing one’s HIV status and provided free HIV tests. The events were organized with the support of UNAIDS and IOM Armenia.
Swedish medical teams provide surgery in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

**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 specializations included were plastic and reconstructive surgery, ophthalmology, ENT, neuro-surgery, orthopaedic surgery, vascular surgery, interventional radiology, paediatric 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 supported: paediatric surgery, paediatric urology, emergency care and burn care.

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.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**Pediatric surgery and pediatric urology**

This project started in 2012 in Pristina, University Clinical Centre of Kosovo (UCCK) and 2013 in Sarajevo, University Clinical Centre of Sarajevo (UCCS) with visits twice a year with the focus on children with idiopathic and neurogenic bladder and bowel dysfunction. The Swedish paediatric surgeon noticed that the initial results after several visits to Pristina and Sarajevo were not as satisfactory as expected and not getting the same results as in Sweden despite performing the same surgical interventions and procedures. Probable cause was that the children did not undergo the same diagnostic and medical evaluation before the decision of surgery. Improvements in preoperative evaluation and diagnosis were needed, as well as better postoperative follow up routines. Both clinics in Sarajevo and Pristina have patients with bladder and bowel disorders, and only a certain number can be treated surgically, which in turn leads to the need for alternative treatments. This was the argument and reason for creating the urodynamic unit in Pristina and one year later in Sarajevo.

**KEY ACTIVITIES IN BOSNA AND HERZEGOVINA IN 2019**

- Several visits of multi-professional teams in the pediatric surgery and urodynamics units in Sarajevo
- Workshop “Inter-professional collaboration” for health professionals in Sarajevo with seven health professionals from the Paediatric Surgery Clinic (Pristina), the Paediatric Surgery Clinic (Sarajevo) and Paediatric Surgery Clinic (Podgorica)
- Participants developed an understanding of professional awareness, gained experience in teamwork and problem-based learning through lectures, exercises with interactive group discussion and activities focusing on reflection.

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**Swedish Medical teams & Medical Emergency Assistance for Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244 (PHASE V) (MP.0280)**

**Donor:** International Medical Program (IMP) at University Hospital of Linköping, Sweden

**Budget:** EUR 388,495

**Duration:** March 2016 – December 2019 (no-cost extension until December 2020)
KEY ACTIVITIES IN KOSOVO IN 2019

Reconstruction & Plastic surgery
Two Swedish Medical Team (SMTs) visited the Plastic Surgery Clinic in Priština in January and September 2019. The visits contributed to improving the competence and skills of Swedish medical professionals in the County of Östergötland. They have been exposed to the treatment of complex cases rarely seen in Sweden, as well as exchange of experience with local medical professionals.

- **80 patients** with different pathologies from different regions of Kosovo were presented by the local team in Priština,
- **40 patients** were operated by the SMT in cooperation with local professionals.
- **Lecture on pneumatic suppression treatment** as wound treatment
- **Pump for pneumatic suppression treatment** of difficult to heal wounds and essential supplies needed for wound treatment donated to the clinic
- **Training in microsurgical skills and hand surgery** was continued

Pre-hospital emergency services in Kosovo
This project aimed to build the capacity of health workers of the Emergency Health Services (EHS) in Kosovo through training and exchange visits with health providers from the University Clinical Centre in Linkoping, Sweden.

The project contributed to the improvement of the Emergency Health Services responses and referral system, as well as strengthening the communication and coordination mechanisms between pre-hospital and hospital emergency services. Moreover, the project further enhanced the quality of everyday pre-hospital emergency services and provided support to relevant institutions in gaining an integrated understanding on how to manage, communicate and coordinate emergencies with the hospital emergency centres most efficiently.

Two Swedish Medical Teams (SMTs) specialized in pre-hospital emergency services visited Kosovo in January and September 2019.

- **First set of six treatment guidelines for emergency medical services** based on the ones in Sweden and contextualized to the local needs presented in Pristina and Prizren
- **Evaluation of the acceptance and incorporation of the guidelines** into everyday work, and its effect on the quality of patient care.
- **Further provision of practical and theoretical knowledge about prehospital management**
- **Five health professionals from Kosovo** participated in a workshop in Sweden and were introduced to the guidelines applied in Sweden.
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. The MoD identified mental health issues amongst personnel as a priority issue.

Building on the results of the initial PREVENTIVA Project (October 2013 - June 2017), Preventiva II aimed at further strengthening the capacities and structures of the MoD/AF BiH system, to independently and sustainably deliver quality psychosocial services to military personnel beyond the conclusion of the project. The project’s objective was to contribute to the Bosnia and Herzegovina’s MoD’s efforts to improve access to all current and discharged military personnel regardless of gender to mental health and psychosocial services, particularly those who are participating peacekeeping mission was achieved through two components, namely:

- to strengthen the human and technical capacities of the MoD/AF BiH to provide systematic and integrated responses to mental health issues, and
- to support the exchange and utilisation of identified best practices and expertise from the region.

During the project, the MoD BiH finalised and adopted all necessary internal documents to ensure a strong base for the established system and continuation of work of employed psychologists and hence the sustainability of the project. Following the good practice presented by Danish and Norwegian military psychologists during various activities and study visits, and in accordance with recommendations and specific needs of MoD/AF BiH, several sets of psychological tests (personality test KNT, Eyseneck personality test, etc.) were purchased and donated to the MoD/AF BiH.

By recognizing the importance of regional cooperation and exchange of experience with military psychologists from the region and other countries, a regional workshop was organized which resulted in the organization of additional study visits of MoD/AF BiH psychologists to the Republic of Slovenia and the Republic of Serbia. Moreover, military psychologists from North Macedonia visited colleagues in BiH, and became familiar with the work of MoD/AF psychologists in BiH. MoD/AF BiH psychologists participated at the 53rd International Applied Military Psychology Symposium (IAMPS) in Romania, which is an important forum for military psychologists from different countries in the world.

INTERNATIONAL APPLIED MILITARY PSYCHOLOGY SYMPOSIUM (IAMPS) IN SARAJEVO

As a consequence of the established contacts, Bosnia and Herzegovina was nominated to organize the 54th IAMPS, which was supported by donor and accepted by the MoD BiH. The 54th International Applied Military Psychology Symposium took place in Sarajevo from 6 to 10 May 2019 as the final event of PREVENTIVA Phase II.

The Symposium hosted 78 participants from 25 countries, and 36 papers and posters were presented on four topics:

1) Selection and leadership
2) Individual and organizational assessment
3) Resilience and operational stress and
4) Veterans and military family support.

The MoD/AF supported the Symposium by hosting it in the BiH Army Hall. In addition to the lectures and panel discussions, three social events were organized.
The Border Police 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, including combatting irregular migration and transnational crime. The project aimed at contributing to the improved implementation of the state policy on IBM through establishing and making the System of Integrated Psychological Services (SIPS) of the Moldovan Border Police operational. It contributed to strengthening the capacity of the Government of the Republic of Moldova’s (GoM) in the field of border management, including prevention and combating of irregular migration and transnational crimes for a comprehensive state-driven response to existing and potential migration challenges.

**Key achievements of the project**

- **18 GIBP staff members (11 women, 7 men)** trained
- **3 study visits to Poland, Greece and Spain** on management of complex psychological issues generated by mass migration
- **6 psychological offices** established and/or upgraded
- **SOPs for psychological activities** developed
- **Curriculum on psychological training** for Center of Excellence in Border Security (CEBS) developed and shared with two academic institutions
- **Automated information system on Psychological Support (AISPS)** established
- **2680 beneficiaries** (2663 GIBP officials, 17 migrants, 16 asylum seekers) provided with quality psychological support

**MOU BETWEEN IOM AND POLICE ACADEMY**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the IOM and the Police Academy “Ștefan cel Mare”, establishing the collaboration framework for joint activities enhancing the educational process of the police officers and supporting capacity building of the law enforcement agencies in the Immigration and Border Management domains.

“The Signing of the MoU is a landmark moment for broadening the collaboration of the two institutions, serving to enhance service provision by the police officers as well as the evidence-based policy making in the area of immigration and border management”.

Lars Johan LÖNNBACK, Chief of Mission of IOM Moldova
Since the signing of the EU-Turkey Statement and closure of the 'Balkan route', as of March 2016, refugees and migrants have been attempting to reach Western Europe through alternative paths, including the sea, crossing from Turkey to Greece. Since then, IOM has been supporting the Turkish Coast Guard (TCG) by providing migrants and refugees with NFIs and psychosocial support. In 2019, according to TCG statistics, 60,802 crossing attempts occurred from Turkey, translating to a 128% increase compared to 2018.

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) activities are targeting host and refugee communities to build strong relations and long-term trust. The Mobile PSS teams target underserved and under-targeted areas, focusing on rural and remote areas with Syrian refugees who have limited access to various forms of assistance: Hatay, Şanlıurfa, İzmir and Gaziantep.

Working closely with the Emergency Case Management (ECM) Teams, the Mobile PSS teams support the identification of individuals and families requiring specialised assistance for further support. Sensitisation and awareness sessions are conducted for refugees and migrant communities, Turkish host societies, local authorities, UN partners and NGOs.

Given the role of local authorities in managing migration and ensuring social cohesion at local level, IOM has been cooperating with municipalities to establish and operate Municipal Migration Centers in four cities. IOM is currently cooperating with the Keçiören District Municipality (Ankara), Şanlıurfa Metropolitan Municipality, Adana Metropolitan Municipality and Gaziantep Metropolitan Municipality to effectively operate Municipal Migrant Centers (MMC). The main objective of the centers is to support municipalities in implementing a model for integrated service delivery to refugees and other migrants and promote and enhance social cohesion with the host community.

**Integrated Protection Assistance through mobile outreach and case management to improve the well-being of Syrian refugees in Turkey (MP.0378)**

**Donor:** SDC  
**Budget:** 1,315,000.00 CHF  
**Duration:** June 2018—March 2020

**30,733 individuals** benefited from PSS activities in 2019:  
- 88 information dissemination sessions  
- 134 PSS activities for social cohesion  
- 77 structured PSS activities

**Supporting Refugees and Migrants through a Consolidated Mediterranean and Flow Monitoring Response in Turkey (DP.2019)**

**Donor:** BPRM  
**Budget:** 580,000 USD  
**Duration:** 1 September 2019 - 31 August 2020

**37,387 migrants and refugees assisted by IOM** (61% of the total rescued by the TCG) in 2019

367 **beneficiaries referred** to UN organizations, international, local NGOs and governmental institutions for specialized assistance (legal counselling, medical treatment, family reunification, identification of separated or unaccompanied children, psychosocial support and socio-economic support)

**Provision of Multi-Sectoral Assistance and Strengthening Social Cohesion for Refugees and Host Community in Southeast Turkey (Gaziantep and Şanlıurfa) (CS.1027)**

**Donor:** Government of Japan  
**Budget:** 451,000 USD  
**Duration:** 1 April 2019 - 31 March 2020

**51,049 beneficiaries** benefited from the Municipal Migrant Center services:

- 9,173 beneficiaries reached in Adana  
- 6,748 beneficiaries reached in Şanlıurfa  
- 16,667 beneficiaries reached in Gaziantep  
- 18,461 beneficiaries reached in Keçiören since 2017
Health care for migrants along the Balkan route

Title: 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 (MHPSS purposes 675.383 USD)
Donor: European Union
Geographical coverage: Serbia, North Macedonia
Duration: December 2016—December 2019

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.

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.

NEWLY STARTED PROJECTS

ENGAGING DIASPORA FOR HIV PREVENTION IN TAJIKISTAN

Title: Improving Migrants’ Access to HIV Services in Tajikistan (MA.0467)
Budget: 40.000 EUR
Donor: AFEW
Duration: December 2019—August 2020

STUDY ON BOSNIAN HEALTH AND ICT PROFESSIONALS

Title: Contributing to evidence-based labour migration policies in for the health care and ICT sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina (LM.0157)
Budget: 200,000 USD
Donor: IDF

STUDY ON HEALTH LITERACY OF SYRIAN REFUGEES

Title: Assessing the health literacy and health communication needs of Syrian refugees in Turkey (DX.0035)
Budget: 165,000 USD
Donor: WHO
Background

According to the Ministry of Veterans Affairs, Temporarily Occupied Territories and Internally Displaced Persons, 378,115 registered veterans of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine (over 16,000 of whom are women) have returned from combat as of 01 January 2020, with many struggling to reintegrate into civilian life. In January 2020, IOM published a household survey on the socio-demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of veterans and their families, which identified mental health and psychosocial support as one of the key areas of assistance for veteran reintegration: Nearly three-quarters state that participation in the armed conflict had changed their life forever. While veterans are reluctant to consider themselves in need of psychosocial support, for more than half of them counselling or individual consultations with a psychologist is generally desirable for veterans. The project therefore aims to ensure that veterans and their family members are provided with increased access to appropriate mental health and psychosocial support.

Activities carried out in 2019

To foster the knowledge of local psychologists in conflict and trauma-related topics, IOM selected an International Psychosocial Support expert and trainer to conduct trainings for local psychologists on trauma-focused therapy. From August to December 2019, five four-day training sessions were held for 135 psychologists from Lviv, Kyiv, and Dnipropetrovsk regions. The psychologists deepened their knowledge in trauma and trauma-informed care, the deployment cycle, psychological first aid, and other PSS components. The participants’ feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Participants appreciated the facilitators’ warm and engaging style and of the new information they learned through theory and through activities such as role-plays and demonstrations of the concepts learned.

The most common issues when dealing with veterans and their family members are problems in families upon veterans’ return, co-dependency, anxiety, substance abuse, and emotional burnout.

Key achievements in 2019

- 31 psychologists selected
- 2,718 individual and group sessions
- 4,106 beneficiaries, out of whom:
  - 1,127 veterans & 1,376 family members of veterans
  - 798 children (442 girls, 356 boys)
  - 3,308 adults (1,927 women, 1,381 men)
IOM GEORGIA


This report presents the results of the survey that assesses the effectiveness of the substance use primary prevention campaign conducted by IOM and relevant stakeholders in Georgia. It depicts findings related to changes in the awareness of migrant and ethnic minority school children with regard to risks of the use of specific psychoactive substances subsequent to the implementation of the primary prevention campaign in the public school setting.

The survey was carried out in the project “Awareness Raising on the Dangers of Drug Abuse Among At-Risk Vulnerable Groups in Georgia” (2017) which was financed by INL.

Download: https://publications.iom.int/books/substance-use-primary-prevention-campaign-effectiveness-measurement-survey-report

IOM BELARUS

Migration and HIV in the Republic of Belarus (2019)

This publication presents the results of a study conducted by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in the Republic of Belarus in 2018 within the project “Study on nexus between migration and HIV in Belarus” with financial support from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

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. Awareness was shown to be low among the focus groups. Low awareness in its turn leads to higher behavioral risks. The results point to a need for large-scale innovative preventive activities aimed at informing the target groups about the risks and safety measures. Moreover, the study has revealed that migrants face certain difficulties in accessing HIV testing and ARV treatment services, that needs to be addressed through the effective policies.

Download: https://publications.iom.int/books/migration-and-hiv-republic-belarus