Migration and its impact on health

WHO/Europe project ‘Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe’ (PHAME)

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Why is migration a relevant public health matter?

How can public health improve the well-being of migrants and resident communities?

1. Migration and health in the WHO European Region – setting the scene.
2. Major challenges.
3. WHO/Europe work on migrants’ health.
1. Migration and health in the WHO European Region – Setting the scene

- 214 mil. international migrants worldwide + 740 mil. internal migrants (UNPD data).
- European Region undergoing important demographic and epidemiological changes.
- 53 Member States, 886 million people.
- 77 million are migrants = 8% of the WHO European Region’s total population are migrants.
1. Migration and health in the WHO European Region – Setting the scene

Migration acts as a social determinant of migrants’ health

Source: Regional Migration Report, Russian and Central Asia. European University Institute
Migration-related health issues:

- Public health implications of the migration process for migrants and resident community (exposure to hazards).
- Changing health profiles (CDs & NCDs).
- Challenging the health system capacity:
  - Overcoming health-system access barriers (cultural, social and linguistic).
  - Economic impact.
  - Public health data collection.
- Health as a key determinant for migrants’ integration and economic, social, political contribution to societies.

Inequities in health system access:

- Health systems have to be responsive to their respective populations.
- World’s population is becoming increasingly diverse: health systems need to find ways to adapt to this diversity.
- Different health needs require different health services (migrant-friendly health services).
2. Major challenges

Definition of the migrant

- Undocumented migrants
- Migrants in a irregular situation
- Trafficking victims
- Asylum seekers
- Economic migrants
- Migrants in a regular situation
- Refugees
Health and migration: a multisectoral agenda

- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Social Affairs
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Education

Synergy between sectors is needed to foster joint actions that improve migrants’ health and wellbeing.
Health is influenced by many policies run by institutions out of the health sector that do not always take into account the health impact of their actions.

Synergy between sectors is needed to foster joint actions that improve migrants’ health and wellbeing.

There is an increasing attention to immigration issues but the dominant emphasis is still on restriction, control and expulsion.
2. Major challenges

From an emergency focus to a comprehensive and systematic approach
Migration and health: increasing political and technical attention

2008: WHA adopts the Resolution WHA61.17 on the Health of Migrants:
- Migrant-sensitive health policies;
- Equitable access to services;
- Information systems to assess migrant health;
- Sharing information on best practices;
- Raising cultural and gender sensitivity and specific training of health service providers; and professionals;
- Bi/multilateral cooperation among countries; and
- Reducing the global deficit of health professional.


2011: High-level Ministerial meeting in Rome, Italy. Start of the project ‘Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe’ (PHAME), operating under the Health 2020 umbrella.
Technical support to Member States

- Developing and piloting the **Toolkit for assessing health system capacity to manage large influxes of migrants.**
- Conducted **joint technical assessments with MoH** in Italy, Portugal, Malta, Spain, Greece and Cyprus; upcoming in Bulgaria and Turkey.
- Assessment reports: Looking at **best practices** and **potential gaps** for future collaboration, strengthening **know-how transfer** throughout the region:
  - Scenario, stakeholders involved.
  - Health risk assessment.
  - Chain of command, communication flows.
- Outcome examples: **Regional Health Contingency Plan to manage large influxes of migrants in Sicily, Italy.**
Creating evidence on migrants’ health

- Producing HEN reports on asylum seekers, undocumented and labour migrants.

Advocating for migration and public health

- Quarterly newsletter on public health and migration.
- Multisectoral brief on health and migration.
## What’s next?

### September 2014: Technical briefing on Public Health and Migration at the WHO Regional Committee for Europe.

### December 2014: Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe approves the following two-year process:

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<th>2015</th>
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<td>• External and internal consultations to map out countries’ needs and priorities.</td>
<td>• Ministerial lunch.</td>
<td>• External and internal consultations to build consensus around a EURO action plan on migrant’s health.</td>
<td>• Submission of EURO action plan on migration and public health</td>
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<td>• Presentation of information document.</td>
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Thank you for your attention

Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe

Website:
http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/health-determinants/migration-and-health