



**High-level Meeting on Health and
Migration in the WHO European Region:
Jointly Shaping the Vision for the Health
of Refugees and Migrants**

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17–18 March 2022

7 December 2021

Original: English

Istanbul, Turkey

Scope and purpose

Background

Globally, an estimated 281 million people live outside their country of origin, which is more than one in 30 people. The WHO European Region hosts approximately 36% of the global international migrant population; in 2020 international migrants made up over 13% of the total population in the Region, an increase from just under 4% in 1990.

As the current Strategy and Action Plan will expire in 2022, a high-level meeting will be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 17–18 March 2022. The meeting will bring together ministers, senior-level policy-makers, refugees and migrants, partner organizations and the main countries of origin and transit from the WHO African and Eastern Mediterranean Regions to generate political leadership, build momentum and mobilize a strong partnership for continued action on migration and health. The meeting will contribute to defining a new framework for health and migration focusing on addressing existing challenges and new and emerging priorities, such as climate change; reframing negative narratives; and improving modalities of collaboration, especially intercountry and interregional work.

The importance of engagement and collaboration by WHO with Member States to strengthen cooperation is supported further by the opportunity that this high-level meeting presents for networking and dialogue between ministries of health, European Union representatives and other subregional and regional partners, international organizations and the newly established WHO European Centre for Preparedness for Humanitarian and Health Emergencies, in Istanbul, Turkey.

Meeting objectives

The meeting has the following objectives:

- to generate political leadership and commitment and build momentum around key actions and initiatives by national governments, civil society and the international community that have high potential to impact refugee and migrant health;
- to comprehensively shape the vision for the future of health and migration along the whole migration route and for new global priorities and commitments to ensure policy coherence and alignment on health and migration at all levels of WHO;
- to develop and reach agreement on an outcome document from the meeting that will inform the future framework development in the WHO European Region with a view to presenting this to the WHO Regional Committee for Europe;
- to strengthen partnerships and create a coalition of partners to work together to address health and migration in the WHO European Region; and
- to share experiences and expertise across priority themes within health and migration.

Thematic highlights include specific areas of refugee and migrant health, including changing demographics and epidemiology; implementing the European Programme of Work and its four flagship policies; shaping narratives and finding innovative solutions to emerging challenges such as climate change; managing public health and emergency aspects of large movements of people; and the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting structure

The meeting will have two distinct segments: a high-level policy segment on day 1 and a technical segment on day 2. The high-level segment will open with remarks by high-level government representatives, the WHO Regional Director for Europe and a high-level representative of the European Commission. Two thematic sessions will be followed by a ministerial session with focus on the outcome document and the future of migration health work in a collaborative environment.

The technical segment (day 2) will feature parallel sessions on technical issues and intercountry collaborations and will be clearly linked to the priorities of the European Programme of Work and its flagship policies. The Programme provides a high-level pan-European framework for ensuring the health of refugees and migrants in the Region and prioritizes investing in the health of this large population group. The purpose of the technical segment will be to bring together technical focal points from ministries of health, civil society and international partners to discuss common public health issues, opportunities and challenges associated with health and migration.

Meeting details

17–18 March, 2022, Istanbul, Turkey.

This will be a hybrid meeting with both online and in-person participation. Technological solutions that capture the inputs and feedback from online participants and enable their participation will be made available.

The working language will be English, with simultaneous translation into Russian.

The venue of the meeting is the HILTON CONRAD Hotel, Cihannüma, Saray Cd No:5, 34353 Beşiktaş, Istanbul.

Participants

The meeting will be attended by high-level delegations from Member States in the WHO European Region. The participation of ministers and high-level government representatives will be complemented by senior-level participation from the European Commission, relevant United Nations agencies and pan-European nongovernmental organizations. The meeting will also host a number of countries from the WHO African and Eastern Mediterranean Regions to encourage interregional collaboration on issues of common interest. In order to involve key population groups in the discussion and its outcomes, refugee and migrant organizations are also invited to participate.