

IOM meets Minister of Health of Cyprus at the WHO Regional Committee in Copenhagen



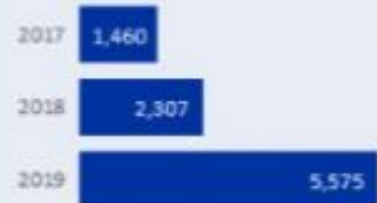
On 17 September IOM's Regional Director for the EU, Norway and Switzerland, Ola Henrikson, met with the Minister of Health of Cyprus, Constantinos Ioannou, on the sidelines of the 69th session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe in Copenhagen and discussed topics of common interest related to migration and health.

The national authorities of the Republic of Cyprus provided an overview of the current situation as regards migration, with a significant number of new arrivals by sea causing particular concern, in addition to those arriving by land in an irregular fashion.

IOM further elaborated on its work in the area of migration and migration health, including the IOM electronic-Personal Health Record, health mediation, training for healthcare workers, social workers and law enforcement officials, and a wider offer of support for other health-related areas.

Irregular Migrant Arrivals to Cyprus Increase in 2019

January - September 2019



For the period January to September 2019 a total of 5,575 migrants and refugees have arrived in Cyprus. This amounts to a 142% increase if compared to the same period in 2018 and a 282% increase if compared to 2017 when recorded arrivals were 1,460 for the same period.

More diverse nationalities are entering the country now. In Cyprus, Cameroon nationals comprised a 21% of irregular migrant and refugee arrivals in this period. The remaining 79% is distributed among 65 different nationality groups. Syria (18%) represented the second largest nationality group, followed by Bangladesh (12%), Pakistan (10%) and Georgia (5%).

IOM collects data from the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. [Read More](#)

IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF on Education for Refugee and Migrant Children



In Cyprus, free and accessible education is offered to all pupils, including refugees and migrants. The Ministry of Education and Culture of Cyprus promotes the implementation measures and policies to assist the smooth and effective social and educational integration of students with different migratory background. Despite efforts challenges remain to have effective access to education. 1040 children have lodged an asylum application in 2018 in Cyprus, among which 62% Syrian, 15% Iraqi and 5% Somali.

As indicated in the [report](#) published on 11 September by IOM, UNHCR, and UNICEF on access to education, early school leaving among children born outside EU+ including refugee and migrant children is almost twice as high compared to native born children. This gap is most pronounced in Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Italy and Spain.

UNHCR and IOM work closely with the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Cyprus to address the challenges for the integration of refugee and migrant children, some of which are insufficient financial resources, not enough school spaces, language barriers, lack of psychosocial support and limited catch-up classes. UNHCR, IOM and Civil Society Organisations continue to work on raising awareness and fostering empathy at school and local communities.

"Investing in inclusive and quality education will help us to meet our responsibility to ensure that no generation is left behind," said Manfred Profazi, IOM Senior Regional Adviser for Europe and Central Asia.

IOM IBM Mediterranean retreat



In September, IOM Cyprus participated in the IOM Immigration and Border Management Mediterranean retreat which took place in Athens, Greece.

The retreat, which brought together IOM colleagues working on both sides from the Mediterranean including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain, addressed a number of issues such as border management and trade, return and re-admissions, SAR (Search and Rescue) and disembarkation.

As part of the retreat, participants also visited the refugee camp in Ritsona, the management of which is supported by IOM, as part of the programme on Improving the Greek Reception System through Site Management Support and Targeted Interventions in Long-Term Accommodation Sites.