



SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

REGIONAL STRATEGY
2020–2024

IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. As an intergovernmental organization, IOM acts with its partners in the international community to: assist in meeting the operational challenges of migration; advance understanding of migration issues; encourage social and economic development through migration; and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants.

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Cover photo: Students from Tece Cumhuriyet Primary School, on board an IOM-rented bus in Turkey's Mersin Province, participate in IOM's school transportation programme.
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FOREWORD

In November 2019, the IOM Strategic Vision was presented to Member States. It reflects the Organization's view of how it will need to develop over a five-year period, in order to effectively address complex challenges and seize the many opportunities migration offers to both migrants and society. It responds to new and emerging responsibilities – including membership in the United Nations and coordination of the United Nations Network on Migration – as we enter the Decade of Action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of the implementation of the Strategic Vision, I asked each of the Regional Offices to develop its own strategic priorities for the 2020–2024 period, integrating key elements of the Vision to respond to emerging needs within the region.

This regional strategy reflects the essential role that IOM plays in the field of human mobility: protecting, assisting and supporting migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics of migration, and serving as a key source of advice on migration policy, research, data and practice. It also highlights the critical work that IOM undertakes in emergency situations, developing the resilience of communities and mobile populations, and particularly those in vulnerable situations, while building capacity within governments to manage all forms and impacts of mobility.

Most importantly, this strategy highlights the current and future regional and cross-regional trends and challenges with respect to migration and situations of displacement, and outlines how IOM will seek to address them, including through collaboration with United Nations agencies and other partners.

I would like to thank colleagues at all levels of the Organization – and particularly at the regional and country levels – for their diligent and insightful work in developing this strategy, which places the global strategic objectives of IOM in context and sets out a course of action to achieve them. It is particularly timely, given the high salience of human mobility in public discourse, and as operational needs on the ground, particularly in the humanitarian sphere, are becoming more complex in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Under this strategy, IOM colleagues will engage with a wide range of stakeholders in all countries in the region, along with key regional bodies, including economic communities, consultative processes and multilateral forums, on the priorities it sets out. I and all my colleagues look forward to working with you over the next years to ensure that migration is safe, orderly and regular for the benefit of all. Together, we can respond to the needs and aspirations of migrants and displaced populations around the world, building societies fit for a modern, mobile and interconnected world.



António Vitorino
Director General
International Organization for Migration

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ACRONYMS

CCCM	camp coordination and camp management
COVID-19	coronavirus disease 2019
DRR	disaster risk reduction
DTM	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EaP	Eastern Partnership
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
IBC	issue-based coalition
ICT	information and communications technology
IDP(s)	internally displaced person(s)
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISCM	inter-State consultative mechanism
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNHCR	(Office of the) United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WHO	World Health Organization



1.

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION¹

IOM is an essential international actor in the field of human mobility, supporting migrants across the world, developing effective responses to the shifting dynamics of migration, and serving as a key source of advice on migration policy and practice. The Organization builds capacity within governments to manage all forms and impacts of mobility, and operates in development, emergency and humanitarian situations, strengthening the resilience of migrants, mobile populations and their host communities. The core values and principles of IOM are at the heart of its work. The Organization holds itself to high standards, guided by the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including upholding human rights for all. Respect for the rights, dignity, empowerment and well-being of all migrants and (associated) communities remains paramount. IOM has always assisted governments in their effective implementation of international standards in its programming and will continue to do so. In addition to the values enshrined in the IOM Constitution, the Organization continues to adhere to the core United Nations values of integrity, professionalism, equality and respect for diversity, as well as ensuring that it is accountable to its beneficiaries, and plays an active role in preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.

In 2020, the IOM region of South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia has been impacted by the global pandemic. While the short-term impacts are already being felt most acutely by vulnerable groups, the longer-term, socioeconomic, development-related and humanitarian consequences are yet to be fully determined. These outcomes will continue to impact the needs of migrants and other populations on the move, communities, and governments and must therefore be fully reflected in IOM programming, which has already shifted in response. This strategy should therefore be read in light of these developments and will be reviewed periodically to ensure the necessary response to address the ongoing and emerging impacts of the pandemic and other significant regional and global developments. IOM in the region has the technical expertise and operational capacity to support its Member States' efforts to balance health security² and public health, while ensuring that migrants are protected and well-informed, and that their communities are supported.

The IOM Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, based in Vienna, covers a vast area comprising diverse subregions, including 19 countries³ and Kosovo,⁴ and hosting a population of over 400 million people.⁵ It provides expertise on a broad range of technical areas, such as emergency and post-crisis, environment and climate

¹ For definitions of migration-related terminology used in this strategy, please consult: IOM, *IOM Glossary on Migration*, International Migration Law, No. 34 (Geneva, 2019). Available at www.iom.int/glossary-migration-2019.

² In this context, health security takes into account the World Health Organization (WHO) concept of "global public health security", which includes interventions addressing but not limited to "[...] acute public health events that endangers the health of people across geographical regions and international boundaries." The IOM concept of health security is centred on the concept of social security as articulated in paragraph 11 of the Global Compact on Migration.

³ Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Russian Federation (observer status), Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

⁴ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

⁵ The data used in this document have been available either through IOM direct data collection or by accessing open-source data repositories provided by governments, the United Nations or international agencies. Numerous data gaps and limitations were encountered when trying to obtain detailed, same-level data on specific migration and migration-related topics. While data may exist at the location, area or country level for a certain period in time, they are not available for all areas, countries or subregions covered by the Regional Office in Vienna or for the exact same time span, significantly hindering the possibility for comparative analysis. Hence, as the data and analysis in this document used to inform the specific objectives and actions is based on and is corroborated only by available data, no warranties are expressed or implied regarding the completeness of the information contained herein.

change, immigration and border management, labour migration and human development, migration health, and migrant protection and assistance.

1.1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The strategic priorities for the South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia region focus on addressing regional migration trends and challenges and are in line with broader development priorities. They are based on the IOM Strategic Vision⁶ and related IOM governance documents, such as the Migration Governance Framework⁷ (MiGOF) and the Migration Crisis Operational Framework (MCOF). The regional strategy draws on international instruments such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda), in particular, Target 10.7 to “facilitate orderly, safe, and responsible migration and mobility of people through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies” and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Reference documents include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

IOM will work toward achieving the following four key strategic priorities in the region, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Strategic priorities of IOM in the region

Resilience	Strategic priority 1: Empower migrants and communities to strengthen their resilience in situations of vulnerability, in particular, their ability to prevent, mitigate and adapt to risks without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.
	Strategic priority 2: Address drivers of migration, including adverse effects, such as environmental and climate change impacts, instability, poverty and exploitation.
Mobility	Strategic priority 3: Advance positive, sustainable and innovative development outcomes that are responsive to skill shortages, return dynamic, environmental and climate change impacts, and other emergent regional migration trends.
Governance	Strategic priority 4: Strengthen cooperative development and implementation of evidence-based and inclusive migration governance that addresses migration challenges, leverages opportunities and facilitates safe, orderly and regular migration.

IOM follows a people-centred approach that is gender- and child-sensitive. The Organization is committed to supporting governments and partners in upholding the human rights of migrants, regardless of their migration status, across all stages of the migration cycle, while endeavouring to eliminate all forms of discrimination against migrants and their families. IOM understands that persons with disabilities are among the most marginalized groups. It is further recognized that a person’s sex, gender and age shape every stage of the migration experience, whether forced, voluntary or somewhere in between. The roles, expectations, relationships and power dynamics associated with one’s gender significantly affect all aspects

⁶ IOM, *IOM Strategic Vision 2019–2023: Setting a Course for IOM* (Geneva, 2019). Available at <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/110/C-110-INF-1%20-%20IOM%20Strategic%20Vision.pdf>.

⁷ IOM, “Migration Governance Framework”, brochure (Geneva, n.d.), available at www.iom.int/sites/default/files/about-iom/migof_brochure_a4_en.pdf; IOM Council resolution 1310 on the Migration Governance Framework (C/106/RES/1310) of 4 December 2015, available at <https://governingbodies.iom.int/system/files/en/council/106/C-106-RES-1310%20MIGOF.pdf>.

of the migration process. It is therefore crucial to understand how gender interacts with migration and to respond accordingly. Given the gender-specific nature of migration, the following are central to the work of IOM: advocating for equal rights under the law in employment and mobility; addressing discriminatory migration practices; understanding how gender affects the type of migration undertaken; responding to how gender influences access to social services; economic growth, capacities, risks and vulnerabilities; promoting institutional reform; ensuring diversity and inclusiveness in consultations and participation in activities; and addressing how migration influences gender roles and relations.

While the regional strategy is intended for a five-year period (2020–2024), it is flexible and subject to periodic review, allowing for adjustments to new realities and emerging issues. IOM will stress complementary action and strive to implement this strategy in close cooperation and partnership with governments, donors, migrants, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders.

2.

POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION



2. POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION

The Regional Office in Vienna liaises with United Nations agencies and other international organizations based in the city. It engages with both United Nations agencies (e.g. the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)) and non-United Nations organizations (e.g. the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)) with headquarters in Vienna. IOM is committed to strengthening its role in all migration-related discussions in the region to advance regional and bilateral cooperation between governments, as well as a regular dialogue on migration. Several inter-State consultation mechanisms on migration (ISCMs) are active in the region and are important for shaping migration policy. IOM and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) provide the technical secretariat for the Almaty Process.⁸ IOM participates in meetings of the European Union's Eastern Partnership (EaP),⁹ the Budapest Process¹⁰ and the Prague Process.¹¹ IOM is involved in migration-related initiatives of international organizations and forums not strictly focused on migration, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization,¹² for the prevention of irregular migration.

Key opportunities for IOM in the region include the work with United Nations agencies and the United Nations development system reform, as well as initiatives and processes by Member States. These include China's Belt and Road Initiative, the United States Strategy for Central Asia, Germany's Green Central Asia Initiative and the Eurasian Economic Union, as well as European Union initiatives, processes and strategies, such as the EaP Panel on Migration, Mobility and Integrated Border Management, the European Union accession process, the European Union Strategy for Central Asia, and the European Green Deal.

As recognized in the 2030 Agenda and promoted in the IOM Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development,¹³ human mobility is inextricably linked with sustainable development. IOM has a clear responsibility to report on its activities to support Member States towards meeting the commitments in the 2030 Agenda and to contribute to regional discussions on migration and sustainable development. This regional strategy will guide the Organization's active engagement in the United Nations development system and hinges on building stronger partnerships within the United Nations system and beyond. The strategy brings greater coherence and development focus to IOM activities and allows for a joined-up approach to the way the Organization designs and delivers its operations. Engaging with national and regional United Nations platforms where migration can be a catalyst to development is therefore a priority for IOM, as United Nations country teams (UNCTs) and development groups aim to deliver on the United Nations Secretary-General's development system reform agenda through joint action led by empowered and more accountable Resident Coordinators. In the Western Balkans, for example, Regional Coordinators lead the implementation of a regional United Nations-wide action plan dedicated to sustaining

⁸ More information on the Almaty Process is available at www.iom.int/almaty-process.

⁹ More information on the Eastern Partnership is available at https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/neighbourhood/eastern-partnership_en.

¹⁰ More information on the Budapest Process is available at www.budapestprocess.org.

¹¹ More information on the Prague Process is available at www.pragueprocess.eu/en.

¹² More information on the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) is available at <https://en.odkb-csto.org>.

¹³ IOM, *Institutional Strategy on Migration and Sustainable Development* (Geneva, 2020). Available at <https://publications.iom.int/books/iom-institutional-strategy-migration-and-sustainable-development>.

peace through trust-building, dialogue and reconciliation. IOM will further support the work of the High-Level Panel on Internal Displacement across relevant areas of its work.

As a member of the regional United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and a core member of the Regional United Nations System Meeting for Europe and Central Asia (UNECE), IOM engages with and informs partners about developments in the area of migration. The Regional Office in Vienna is an active participant in the issue-based coalitions (IBCs) and similar United Nations coordination mechanisms, acting as co-chair of the IBC on Large Movements of People, Resilience and Displacement (IBC LMPRD), together with UNHCR and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).¹⁴ Furthermore, and in line with the ongoing United Nations Reform, the Regional Office will ensure migration is mainstreamed across the new United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs) – at the regional and national levels – and that migration is leveraged to support subregional and transboundary aspects which are highlighted as an important aspect of the United Nations Reform.¹⁵

The United Nations established a Network on Migration (or Migration Network) in 2019 to ensure effective, timely and coordinated system-wide support to Member States in the implementation, follow-up and review of the Global Compact for Migration. Within the region, 16 countries have voted in favour of the Global Compact.¹⁶ The establishment of regional and national platforms to mirror the Migration Network will bring together all relevant stakeholders to strengthen collective commitment to: (a) improving cooperation on international migration, (b) advancing the Global Compact for Migration and (c) supporting its follow-up and review. Country-level Migration Networks have been established in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo,⁴ Kyrgyzstan, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Turkmenistan, with more countries, including Albania and Armenia, currently preparing to launch their own. The establishment of these Migration Networks will provide an opportunity for IOM regional offices and country missions to be conveners and coordinators of migration initiatives with relevant partners, which will translate into strengthened cooperation and coherence.

¹⁴ IOM is an active participant in the IBC on Health and Well-being; the IBC on Gender Equality; and the IBC on Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience; and the new IBC on Environment and Climate Change, as well as the new Regional United Nations Coordination Group on Data and Statistics, which builds on the previous IBC on Sustainable Development Data and Monitoring.

¹⁵ The following countries and territories are expected to initiate an UNSDCF in 2020 and finalize by 2021: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo,⁴ North Macedonia, Serbia, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

¹⁶ The following countries in the region have voted in favour of the Global Compact for Migration: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

3.

MIGRATION OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION



3. MIGRATION OUTLOOK FOR THE REGION

The vast region covered by the Regional Office in Vienna features diverse economic, environmental, demographic, political, social and migratory contexts and trends. Notwithstanding, subregional migration dynamics connect the region together and are characterized by similar challenges and opportunities. Issues and challenges identified in the region include demographic shifts, skills and labour gaps, human trafficking and stranded migrants, inadequate access to health care, environmental and climate change impacts, transitioning from ongoing and protracted conflicts to peace, preparing for and responding to emergencies, irregular migration, and return and reintegration, as well as unaccompanied and separated children. Opportunities, which include mainstreaming migration and development policies, labour mobility, diaspora engagement, the use of remittances for sustainable development, facilitating cross-border mobility through optimized border management and visa policies, and (green) investment, will be part of the strategic approach within the region.

While the economic fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions imposed by governments have resulted in massive shifts in the labour market, as well as a significant decline in demand and rising unemployment, labour mobility is expected to continue to grow in the long term, both from and within the region, given the projected longer-term labour shortages in destination countries, as well as longer-term demographic trends. Most of the countries within the region have experienced significant levels of emigration over the past decades, the main destinations being European Union Member States in both Eastern and Western Europe. The vast majority of migration occurs intraregionally, with the Russian Federation as the main country of destination.¹⁷

Labour migration plays a role in alleviating unemployment and stimulating development through remittances, diaspora engagement and the establishment of transnational networks that can generate livelihood opportunities. While some economies in the region are challenged to generate the jobs needed to accommodate people entering the labour market, others face labour market shortages and negative population growth due to emigration, among other factors. For example, Central Asian economies struggle to create sufficient job opportunities for youth entering the labour market, as nearly a third of the population is below 15 years of age.¹⁸ Eastern Europe faces a trend of youth emigration that has left major gaps in the domestic labour market.¹⁹ The depletion of skilled labour pools is an important issue for countries like Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Moldova. The resulting “brain drain” challenges labour market and economic development, as well as the delivery of quality public services such as health care and education. It increasingly affects semi-skilled occupations, such as those as construction and services. Traditional countries of emigration are therefore entering an era where they will increasingly rely on immigration to meet their own labour market needs. In this regard, “youth employment and employability” is a critical area for cooperation between the European Union and Eastern European countries.²⁰

¹⁷ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), Population databases 2019. Available at www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/publications/database/index.asp.

¹⁸ Paul Stronski and Russell Zanca (for the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace), “Societal change afoot in Central Asia”, article, available at <https://carnegieendowment.org/2019/10/18/societal-change-afoot-in-central-asia-pub-80086>; IOM, *External Youth Migration in the Countries of Central Asia: Risk Analysis and Minimization of Negative Consequences* (Astana, 2019), available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/external_youth_migration_en.pdf.

¹⁹ Philip Oltermann, Sam Jones, Jennifer Rankin and Pamela Duncan, “Germany and Spain scramble to reverse the flight of youth”, *The Guardian*, 2 March 2020. Available at www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/02/germany-spain-scramble-reverse-the-flight-youth-eastern-europe.

²⁰ European Commission, “Eastern partnership – Regional conference on youth transitions to work”, Events section. Available at <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=85&eventId=1543&furtherEvents=yes>.

Several of the region's economies depend heavily on international remittances, particularly in Central Asia, with Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan among the world's top ten remittance-dependent countries.²¹ With the socioeconomic impacts of COVID-19 resulting in significant declines in remittances, families and communities heavily reliant on remittances will face considerable financial challenges and increasing poverty rates. These developments are expected to increase the need to review migration policies. Central Asian countries have revised policies regulating intraregional migration, including through the analysis of demographic change.

Governments are increasingly recognizing the need to protect the human rights and dignity of migrants. This is an urgent need, as shown by the fact that migrant workers of all genders from Central Asia are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, particularly within informal employment, which is a high risk in construction, agricultural and domestic work. Human trafficking is of great concern within the region, and IOM provides assistance to almost 2,000 trafficked persons annually. Over 50 per cent of these cases involve trafficked men (56% in 2018; 63% in 2019), which reflects the need to enhance assistance provisions in general and specifically for this group, especially as trafficked men remain disproportionately underserved globally. Governments in the region will need further strategic support for the development of counter-trafficking legislation and regulations, as well as in setting up national referral mechanisms to identify, protect and assist trafficked persons and prosecute traffickers. Internal trafficking constitutes a particular concern in Central Asia and thus demands targeted action. Concurrently, countries in the region will have to create preventive and protective interventions to tackle the specific challenges faced by migrants in vulnerable situations, especially children on the move. Children and adults from minority groups, such as the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities in the Western Balkans, are especially vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation, as they often experience exclusion and a lack of access to services. Counter-trafficking stakeholders have also observed expanding informal labour recruitment strategies that can result in exploitative patterns connecting Eastern Europe as a region of origin to the European Union as a region of transit and destination. Due to COVID-19, trafficked persons receiving assistance, such as accommodation, medical care and psychosocial support, will likely face disruptions due to decreased staff capacity, movement restrictions and stay-at-home orders. These factors may undermine victims' recovery, including by compelling them to pursue risky options to sustain themselves, which could result in revictimization or increased exposure to COVID-19.

Unaccompanied migrant children have become a recognized feature of international migration. While there are no accurate statistics on the number of unaccompanied migrant children, it has been steadily increasing in the past years. Despite progress across the region, children on the move face heightened risks of violence, including gender-based violence, exploitation, abuse, and human trafficking in countries of origin, transit and destination. This is largely due to insufficient and substandard reception capacities, lack of child-sensitive registration systems, lack of alternative care opportunities, inadequate access to health and education, overwhelmed asylum and child protection systems, rising xenophobia, and national legislation, policies and resource allocation that are not aligned with international best practices. The provision of voluntary return and reintegration assistance to unaccompanied migrant children presents particular challenges for IOM. While the international legal and institutional architecture to protect children is robust, it is not always well-adapted to the context of international migration; in addition, standards and practice of care and protection vary significantly between countries. In December 2019, IOM, through its Regional Office

²¹ World Bank and KNOMAD, *COVID-19 Crisis through a Migration Lens*, Migration and Development Brief No. 3 (Washington, D.C., World Bank, 2020). Available at www.knomad.org/sites/default/files/2020-05/Migration%20and%20Development%20Brief%2032.pdf.

in Brussels, Regional Office in Vienna, and UNICEF signed a regional memorandum of understanding to strengthen their relationship and shared commitment towards improving the lives and well-being of children and families.

The region faces many public health challenges, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Among them are the increasing burden of infectious and chronic diseases, emigration of health workers, under-resourced health systems and medical institutions, as well as a lack of public health and epidemiological data on migrants to support programming and policy development. Of particular concern are the increased HIV and tuberculosis risks and vulnerabilities faced by migrants, linked to the lack of access to prevention, treatment and care in host countries. In addition, travel restrictions for people living with HIV remain in place in various countries.²²

Addressing the impacts of climate change and natural hazards, disaster risk reduction (DRR) and climate action need to be priorities for this region.²³ Environmental shocks and stressors, including the adverse impacts of climate change, shape human mobility in different forms in the region. These include, but are not limited to, displacement, labour migration, pastoralism, planned relocation and evacuation. The region is prone to rapid-onset, as well as slow-onset, natural hazards. For example, Central Asia is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, with warming levels projected to be higher than the global mean.²⁴ These changes will adversely affect food and water security, livelihoods and biodiversity. The inadequate infrastructure and a dependency on hazard-prone sectors make several countries in the region extremely vulnerable to climate-induced extreme weather events. It is estimated that 6.6 million people in Kyrgyzstan will be at risk of the impacts of climate change by 2050.²⁵ In addition, the region has several vulnerable ecosystems, such as the Caspian Sea and Aral Sea, the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube River basin. Air pollution is one of the most serious environmental risks, with major socioeconomic consequences for the entire Western Balkans.²⁶ This region is prone to rapid-onset natural hazards, such as earthquakes and floods, with significant displacement as one of the consequences. Most recently, 14,000 inhabitants were displaced in the aftermath of the November 2019 earthquake in Albania,²⁷ while a reported 70,000 people were evacuated from their homes after a dam breach and heavy rains caused floods in Uzbekistan in May 2020.²⁸ Mainstreaming climate change into migration policies and programmes and migration into climate change policies and programmes, supported by preparedness measures agreed between governments and communities are key.

²² UNAIDS and UNDP, "Still not welcome: HIV-related travel restrictions", pamphlet (Geneva, UNAIDS, 2019). Available at www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/hiv-related-travel-restrictions-explainer_en.pdf.

²³ It is important to note that globally there are no firm estimates of how many people have moved or will be moving as a result of climate change and other environmental factors. Even when climate change does play a role, it remains difficult to determine the extent of its influence. There is considerable evidence that migration is not solely driven by climate change. It is instead influenced by a mix of climatic, socioeconomic, cultural and political factors.

²⁴ Christopher P. Reyer, Ilona M. Otto, Sophie Adams, Torsten Albrecht, Florent Baarsch, Matti Carlsburg, Dim Coumou, Alexander Eden, Eva Ludi, Rachel Marcus, Matthias Mengel, Beatrice Mosello, Alexander Robinson, Carl-Friedrich Schleussner, Olivia Serdeczny and Judith Stagl, "Climate change impacts in Central Asia and their implications for development", *Regional Environmental Change*, 17(6):1639–1650. Available at <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10113-015-0893-z>.

²⁵ UNDP, 2018 statistical update: Human development indices and indicators. Available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update>.

²⁶ United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Air Pollution and Human Health: The Case of the Western Balkans* (Geneva, 2019). Available at www.academia.edu/40901393/AIR_POLLUTION_AND_HUMAN_HEALTH_THE_CASE_OF_THE_WESTERN_BALKANS.

²⁷ Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), *GRID 2020: Global Report on Internal Displacement* (Geneva, 2020), p. 63. Available at www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2020.

²⁸ Catherine Putz, "70,000 evacuated after breach in Uzbek dam, investigation into failure launched", *The Diplomat*, 4 May 2020. Available at <https://thediplomat.com/2020/05/70000-evacuated-after-breach-in-uzbek-dam-investigation-into-failure-launched>.

Geopolitically, competing interests are, and will remain, a significant determinant of migratory movements from, through and within the region. The region hosts over 6 million forcibly displaced persons, with over 4 million refugees and migrants hosted by Turkey alone²⁹ Several active and so-called frozen conflicts have produced an estimated 2.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs), with most of those forcibly displaced as a result of the conflict in eastern Ukraine.³⁰ With a number of protracted and so-called frozen conflicts in the region, as well as active conflicts in countries in neighbouring regions, forced displacement will continue to play an important part in the migration landscape of the region. Moreover, the region is challenged by the existence of radicalization and violent extremism. Governments grapple with the high numbers who have travelled to join up with violent extremist groups in conflict zones, including in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq,³¹ and have or will return with their families to countries of origin. This potentially creates long-term security challenges, compounded by inadequate resources and the threat posed by different violent extremist groups. In light of future potential instability, governments and communities alike will need support in taking a human rights-based approach, fostering peace and social cohesion and avoiding stigmatization, and complementing the justice and security aspect. A holistic response to rehabilitation and reintegration integrates further prevention efforts, contributing to reduce re-engagement, recidivism or further recruitment.

Sudden influxes of migrants and refugees, as those experienced in the region in 2015, have the potential to overwhelm the emergency response capacity of national authorities and civil society, and may lead to increased xenophobia and tensions between migrant and host communities, particularly in communities with limited previous experience with immigration. IOM implements numerous activities throughout the region to build social infrastructure and programming designed to enhance relations and social cohesion between migrant and host communities.

In the region, increased mobility, irregular migration and large-scale mixed migration flows in recent years have demonstrated gaps and needs in immigration and border management, in particular, developing and implementing national integrated border management strategies, and reforming border management institutional frameworks, training structures, standard operating procedures, information management and relevant infrastructure. Nevertheless, the region has demonstrated drive in meeting relevant international standards (such as those set by the International Civil Aviation Organization³²), leading search and rescue efforts in key migration maritime routes, exploring alternatives to immigration detention and South–South cooperation on readmission. COVID-19 has exacerbated the need for health-proof border management and cross-border mobility continuum. Various visa facilitation and liberalization regimes have had an impact on both regular and irregular movements towards the European Union, for example, from the South Caucasus. Given the European Union’s proximity and its attractiveness as a destination for migrants in search of opportunities, irregular migration through the region is bound to continue, along with increasingly sophisticated migrant-smuggling networks, routes and *modi operandi*.

²⁹ UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2019* (Geneva, 2019). Available at www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019.

³⁰ IDMC, *GRID 2019: Global Report on Internal Displacement* (Geneva, 2019). Available at www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2019.

³¹ The Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq are covered by the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa.

³² In particular, this includes revised Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation (“Chicago Convention”), which stipulates that each Contracting State shall establish an Advance Passenger Information system.

Return migration will continue to increase to and from the region. Assisted voluntary return and reintegration (AVRR)³³ will be a critical area of work, specifically in the context of transit migration, as beneficiaries include stranded migrants in distress – whether in a regular or in an irregular situation – and who are often destitute, or who lack the means to continue their journey. The region features a comparatively high number of returnees. In 2018, the region represented 27.6 per cent of all global voluntary returns assisted by IOM (total in 2018: 60,316), thus the second highest number after the IOM region of West and Central Africa, with 30.8 per cent. Beneficiaries in vulnerable situations returning to the region represented 21 per cent of the total caseload in 2018, making it the region of origin with the second highest number of migrants in vulnerable situations assisted.³⁴ With such numbers, it is evident that addressing and reducing migration-related vulnerabilities in the region will remain a priority, especially given the impact of COVID-19. Against this background, reintegration support is essential for addressing returnees' vulnerabilities. Governmental actors are important in setting up structural programmes which address and encompass the needs of returnees. In particular, medical and psychosocial assistance is important for supporting the reintegration of migrants with health-related and social needs related to substance abuse and exclusion from the social protection system. IOM advocates the adoption of sustainability-oriented reintegration policies that respond to the economic, social and psychosocial needs of returning migrants while benefiting communities of origin and addressing structural challenges to reintegration.³⁵

³³ The regional strategy has been written in accordance with the definitions, mandates and strategies applied at the time of writing. For a more concrete definition of the term "returnee" and other terms please consult the *IOM Glossary on Migration* (see footnote 1).

³⁴ IOM, *2018 Return and Reintegration Key Highlights* (Geneva, 2018). Available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/avrr_2018_kh.pdf.

³⁵ IOM, *IOM Reintegration Handbook* (Geneva, 2019). Available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/iom_reintegration_handbook.pdf.

4.

REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



4. REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES³⁶

4.1. RESILIENCE

Strategic priority 1: Empower migrants and communities to strengthen their resilience in situations of vulnerability, in particular, their ability to prevent, mitigate and adapt to risks without compromising long-term prospects for sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.

In order to empower migrants and communities to strengthen their resilience in situations of vulnerability, IOM provides protection assistance for those vulnerable, or who have been subjected, to violence, exploitation and abuse, following the Determinants of Migrant Vulnerability Model and its associated programmatic framework.³⁷ IOM will strengthen cooperation and dialogue in the area of combating trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants through regional exchange of knowledge, experiences and best practices between governments, the international community and civil society. IOM will provide support to national referral mechanisms in order to identify, protect and assist trafficked persons, and prosecute traffickers. International standards in the field of countering trafficking and assisting the victims will remain the benchmark for IOM engagement in this field, contributing to enhancing the rule of law and applying a victim-centred and human rights-based approach. IOM abides by the non-discrimination principle and ensures that adults and children of all genders have equal access to assistance and protection programmes. In addition, the Organization will support counter-trafficking stakeholders in the region to ensure that the services available to victims of trafficking are age- and gender-sensitive. One of the greatest challenges in developing targeted counter-trafficking responses and measuring their impact is the lack of reliable, high-quality data and, as such, further engagement on data strategies will be sought. Additional emphasis is placed on child protection, especially unaccompanied migrant children, in line with the IOM mandate to protect migrant children and their needs on the ground.³⁸ In particular, IOM will provide services to migrant children and work with governments to better mainstream child migrants into national child protection systems.

IOM supports the facilitation of safe and efficient crossing of borders, addressing transnational organized crime, such as migrant smuggling, and the protection of the rights of migrants across the entire mobility continuum. In the region, IOM supports governments' responses to migrants transiting to Europe. This includes building capacities in migration crisis management, with the expansion and improvement of emergency shelter capacity, as well as return and reintegration. IOM assists in ensuring identification of vulnerabilities and access to relevant support. The response entails enhancement of border and law enforcement agencies towards protection-sensitive and humanitarian border management.

³⁶ These strategic priorities respond to the pillars described in the IOM Strategic Vision. The IOM Strategic Results Framework (SRF) and its four objectives – humanitarian response and resilience (SRF Objectives 1 and 2), mobility (SRF Objective 3) and governance (SRF Objective 4) – capture the areas highlighted in the Vision. The strategic priorities in this strategy will be tackled through coordinated cross-thematic approaches to contribute to the broader regional goals.

³⁷ For more information on the model, see: IOM, *IOM Handbook on Protection and Assistance for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse* (Geneva, 2019), pp. 5–8. Available at www.iom.int/iom-handbook-migrant-protection-and-assistance.

³⁸ For more information on the mandate, see: IOM, *IOM Handbook on Protection and Assistance for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse* (Geneva, 2019), pp. 21, 22, 27, 37 and 198. Available at www.iom.int/iom-handbook-migrant-protection-and-assistance.

To address health risks and vulnerabilities, IOM assists governments and development partners in improving migrants' access to health and social services. This is achieved through health promotion and provision of technical assistance to mainstream migration health into the public health approaches of governments using evidenced-informed programmes and policies. IOM provides direct health-care assistance to crisis-affected populations and migrants in vulnerable situations.

IOM assists Member States and at-risk communities in managing the adverse effects of environmental shocks and stressors, including impacts of climate change-induced extreme weather events. IOM will work together with partners to create enabling conditions that help unlock the adaptive potential of migration and to develop evidence on how human mobility contributes to climate change adaptation and resilience-building. IOM will provide technical support, assist capacity development and foster cross-sectoral collaboration among stakeholders to help develop innovative interventions that harness different human mobility pathways and their consequences, as part of planned climate action and resilience-building. These interventions include leveraging remittances and diaspora funding for financing planned climate action, skills-building and entrepreneurship development among migrant workers to enable them to support urban resilience or the green economy, and improving access to information, institutions, markets, ICT-based services and extension services among women staying behind and pastoralists to help them participate in local climate change initiatives. IOM will work with Member States to ensure access to climate-related technologies is equitable and that measures are considered to avert, minimize and address displacement as Member States strive to attain their greenhouse gas emission targets.

IOM helps strengthen the resilience of migrants by facilitating access to services, the labour market and social protection systems, and by strengthening capacity of relevant institutions. IOM promotes safe labour migration practices through the improved regulation of recruitment, as well as by supporting training opportunities to facilitate matching of supply and demand for specific skills. The Organization's migrant training programmes, such as pre-departure orientation, and the Migrant Resource Centres inform workers about the risks and realities of labour migration, thereby empowering them to make better decisions. Recognizing the far-reaching potential of labour migration, both before and in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, IOM will facilitate the development of policies and programmes that are in the interest of migrants and society, providing effective protection and assistance to labour migrants and their families.

IOM supports partners to address displacement-related challenges by helping to build capacities to ensure that IDPs and affected populations are protected from and are resilient to causes and factors that uprooted them from their homes, such as violent conflicts, gross violations of human rights, natural hazards and other traumatic events. This will be achieved through several key interventions, utilizing the Organization's global tools and methodologies, particularly in the areas of DRR, camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), as well as emergency response. IOM will provide training, tools and technical assistance in DRR and disaster risk management, CCCM, and information management to national and local government partners. To the extent possible, IOM programming in the region will integrate transition and recovery initiatives from early on in the response, bridging the gap between humanitarian, climate change and development programmes.

IOM addresses the potential for xenophobia and tensions between migrants, refugees and host communities through evidence-based social cohesion programming in partnership with State institutions, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Strategic priority 2: Address drivers of migration including adverse effects, such as environmental and climate change impacts, instability, poverty and exploitation.

Through its programmes, IOM supports governments, communities and partners to address the adverse drivers of migration throughout humanitarian, climate change and sustainable development planning and at all stages of the migration continuum. IOM designs and implements evidence-based and people-centred programmes and policies to strengthen resilience, including responses to environmental and climate change impacts, and to contribute to the stabilization of communities. With the further rollout of its data-gathering and analysis methodologies, IOM aims to enhance the programming of the humanitarian community, as well as programmes bridging relief with development efforts, in line with the humanitarian–development–peace nexus. Furthermore, the Organization’s approach is firmly rooted in the needs identified by local communities and ensures accountability to the crisis-affected populations it serves. IOM addresses the consequences of conflict in Ukraine and in the Syrian Arab Republic,³⁹ including crisis-induced displacement, through humanitarian relief operations, while working on progressively resolving protracted displacement situations, as well as addressing the underlying factors that cause or maintain crises. IOM will assist in enhancing the capacity of governments, civil society and communities to transition from emergency to recovery by adopting integrated approaches to social cohesion, access to justice and economic recovery. Furthermore, IOM will boost the preparedness capacity of governments in the region to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of environmental and climate change, as well as conflict-related scenarios. This can include emergency preparedness cycle activities in partnership with other relevant actors, including risk analysis and monitoring, building scenarios and contingency plans, and testing these through simulation exercises. In some cases, people may be displaced across an international border or may be unable to return from another country in the aftermath of a disaster. IOM will work with Member States to examine the viability of humanitarian visas and temporary protection status to address such situations.

Acknowledging the importance, both operationally and politically, of return migration to and from the region, IOM will provide return and reintegration assistance to migrants. IOM is adopting an integrated approach to address the needs of individual returnees, as well as their communities, in a mutually beneficial way while responding to the structural factors at play. The sustainable reintegration of migrants represents the main goal of IOM interventions when supporting returnees in their countries of origin, so that returnees can reach levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity.⁴⁰ Specifically, with regard to addressing vulnerabilities, there is growing acknowledgement of the violence, exploitation and abuse experienced by migrants. As such, appropriate programmatic and structural interventions will be designed to reduce vulnerabilities associated with migration, making use of the Determinants of Migrant Vulnerability Model, developed to guide the design of projects.⁴¹ The advancement of efforts

³⁹ The Syrian Arab Republic is covered by the IOM Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa.

⁴⁰ IOM, *IOM Reintegration Handbook* (see footnote 36).

⁴¹ IOM, *IOM Handbook on Protection and Assistance for Migrants Vulnerable to Violence, Exploitation and Abuse* (Geneva, 2019). Available at https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/avm_handbook.pdf.

to counter trafficking and exploitation in humanitarian settings will remain a priority, building upon the experience already achieved by IOM and its partners in crisis settings, especially in Ukraine, Turkey and the Western Balkans.

IOM will further use its expertise in the field of prevention of violent extremism by developing programming that addresses the contextually specific drivers of radicalization, which include individual incentives to join violent extremist or terrorist groups, with the aim of reducing recruitment into these groups and strengthening peaceful processes that help prevent and resolve conflict-induced migration. In addition, IOM will include prevention efforts in its comprehensive support to governments to rehabilitate and reintegrate returning foreign terrorist fighters and their families, once due process has been gone through. As there is growing attention to the nexus between trafficking in human beings and violent extremism worldwide, with several United Nations Security Council resolutions addressing the issue of terrorist groups profiting from transnational crime, IOM can draw upon its expertise from both fields, counter-trafficking and prevention of violent extremism, to support governments in developing a nuanced response.

4.2. MOBILITY

Strategic priority 3: Advance positive, sustainable and innovative development outcomes that are responsive to skill shortages, return dynamic, environmental and climate change impacts, and other emergent regional migration trends.

In line with global skills partnership launched by the International Labour Organization (ILO), IOM, UNESCO, the International Organization of Employers (IOE) and the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Regional Office in Vienna and country missions in the region are developing tools that address the increasing structural shortage of labour in some communities versus the structural excess of labour in others. Particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, the mobility programming of IOM will be crucial. IOM will thus enhance migrants' contributions to sustainable development processes through skills partnerships and diaspora mapping and engagement, as well as efforts in integration and social cohesion. IOM will support the development of bilateral and regional labour agreements that can increase opportunities for human development by facilitating movement, protecting migrants' rights and adapting to the adverse effects of climate change. While looking broadly at the challenges and opportunities related to increased labour mobility in the region, IOM will focus on specific labour migration corridors, such as that between Central Asia and the Russian Federation, as well as the growing labour mobility from the region towards Eastern European Union countries, as key areas of interest and support. IOM supports labour migration programmes and policies that facilitate alignment of training programmes and matching of prospective migrants in countries of origin with labour market needs and with both existing and projected employer demand in countries of destination. Engagement of migration authorities and building understanding among governments and other stakeholders to promote the creation of alternative and safe pathways will be emphasized. IOM promotes ethical recruitment and strategic pre-departure communication tools that encourage prospective migrants to make informed decisions regarding migration plans and the use of remittances towards their livelihood objectives, including increasing savings and investments. IOM will move towards fostering an integrated and inter-thematic approach to reintegration; thus, facilitating the return and reintegration of migrants for the advancement of the well-being of migrants and their societies is essential. To harness the development potential of migration in countries of destination and countries of origin, IOM will empower migrants and diaspora communities to contribute to development

through trade, skills transfer, philanthropy and (green) investment. IOM strongly supports the implementation of the United Nations Youth Strategy by assisting Member States and other partners to strengthen efforts towards decent work for young people by focusing on evidence-based, scalable, participatory and innovative solutions and alliances.

IOM will work with States to ensure that no one is left behind during the transition to a low-carbon economy. Measures adopted by governments for this transition will have wide-ranging impacts on the lives and livelihoods of their people, their major trade partners, and countries from which they receive migrant workers. On the one hand, these changes will create new income and investment opportunities across different sectors of the economy. On the other hand, workers in some regions (e.g. economies dependent on extractive activities) and resource-intensive sectors (e.g. textiles, construction and plastics) will need support to adjust to these changes. IOM will work with Member States to strengthen social protection measures and the re-skilling of the workforce, of which migrants constitute a significant proportion. Such initiatives will pay special attention to people living in vulnerable ecosystems (e.g. mountains, coasts, and semi-arid or arid areas) and those employed in vulnerable sectors or in the informal sector in urban areas.

IOM is committed to reducing health inequities for migrants by advocating for migrant-inclusive health policies that focus on increasing health coverage and, specifically, aiming for universal health coverage, ensuring equitable access to health care and promoting financial risk protection, through advocacy, implementation, research and partnerships. IOM will invest in developing innovative solutions and tools to support health-care delivery and continuity of care for migrants and their families, including returned migrants. IOM will promote coordination among governments and development partners for cross-border and regional policy development on health, including in the areas of health-care worker migration management and health insurance portability.

4.3. GOVERNANCE

Strategic priority 4: Strengthen cooperative development and implementation of evidence-based and inclusive migration governance that addresses migration challenges and leverages opportunities, in order to facilitate safe, orderly and regular migration.

IOM is an important partner for governments, be it in terms of delivering services, developing government capacity, or supporting the development and implementation of national migration strategies in the region. There is growing recognition by governments of the importance of undertaking proactive migration policies and programmes to protect the rights and dignity of migrants, as well as their families and communities. In the region, IOM aims to support governments to strengthen policy coherence and coordination by mainstreaming migration into government policies and strategies, especially development strategies at the local, national and regional levels. This will allow governments to leverage migration as an accelerator for the achievement of the SDGs. In certain policy areas, IOM is moving towards assuming an advisory role. One of these areas is return and reintegration, which is of particular interest in the region. IOM mainstreams protection-sensitive procedures into Migrant Reception Centres and identification mechanisms, in line with international standards. IOM will build capacities of governments to facilitate regular migration and address irregular migration and counter transnational organized crime, particularly smuggling of migrants, human trafficking, corruption and terrorist threats. IOM will support governments in addressing the links between migration, the environment and climate change via policy development, capacity development and evidence-gathering.

Throughout its work, IOM ensures a whole-of-society approach, strengthening partnerships with governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations, ISCMs, academia, non-governmental bodies, the private sector, migrant civil society and other stakeholders. As such, IOM will strengthen State and non-State actors' awareness of the nexus between climate change and migration, work towards the integration of migration in key environmental and climate change policies and programming at the regional, national and subnational levels, including by advancing recommendations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Task Force on Displacement, and by developing capacities of relevant actors.

To overcome the challenges of fragmented data from mixed migratory routes and improve evidence-based programming, IOM will promote and facilitate the collection and use of data on migrants' vulnerability to exploitation and abuse, including human trafficking. This contributes to risk-based prevention efforts, enhanced migrant protection and disruption of transnational organized crime. Additionally, IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix (DTM) tools are applied along selected migratory routes towards Europe, in cooperation with governments, in crisis, post-crisis and preparedness contexts to track the mobility and evolving needs of population groups on the move. As COVID-19 affects global mobility, IOM will maintain a global mobility database to gather, map and track data on these restrictive measures that impact movement at key points of entry. Regarding public health concerns, the development of multisectoral networks of expertise at the country and regional levels to inform migration health policy and governance will be explored.⁴² IOM will focus on improving health management information system capacities of Member States to provide reliable and accurate data on the health of migrants. The Organization will also ensure the comparability and standardization of migrant health data across migration pathways in the Western Balkan corridors through innovation and the use of digital technologies, as exemplified by the electronic Personal Health Record (e-PHR) project. Where appropriate, migration health research, through baseline mapping and operational research, will underline health interventions to inform programmes and policies that promote the health of migrants.

IOM will work towards strengthened immigration border management frameworks, systems and capacities. Taking an overall integrated border management approach, IOM will support Member States in the region in strengthening document security and identity management, including by promoting the safe use of biometrics and digitalization efforts; data management and systems, such as risk analysis and passenger data exchange (through tools such as Advance Passenger Information and Passenger Name Record), with due regard to data protection standards; search and rescue; border security, including maritime security; cross-border trade, including by strengthening customs capacities; supporting the implementation of readmission agreements; and promoting regularization and alternatives to immigration detention. IOM will do so by ensuring that countries have up-to-date, human rights- and gender-sensitive integrated border management strategies in place, an optimized institutional setup, procedures, training, information management and border infrastructure.

⁴² In line with the WHO Resolution on Migrant Health, as well as the Resolution on Promoting the Health of Refugees and Migrants: World Health Assembly (WHA) Resolution on the Health of Migrants 61.17 (available at https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA61-REC1/A61_REC1-en.pdf) was adopted in 2008 and the WHA Resolution on Promoting the Health of Refugees and Migrants 70.15 (available at https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA70/A70_Div3-en.pdf) was adopted in 2017.

5.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT





5. INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

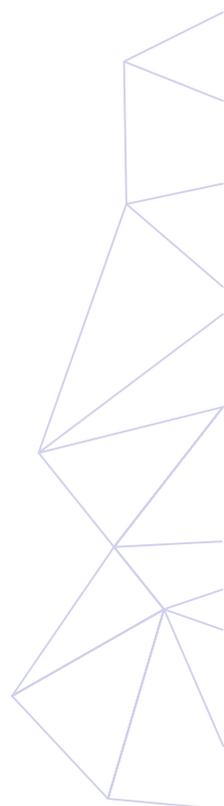
5.1. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND DATA

With the continued growth of IOM, its entry into the United Nations system and its role in global strategic frameworks, continuously addressing data and knowledge management is more urgent than ever. The Regional Office in Vienna commits to building a knowledge management and knowledge-sharing culture across the region and between regions. To do so, IOM will invest in strengthening its evidence base on migration by improving and investing in the collection, analysis and dissemination of accurate, reliable and comparable data, ensuring that this data fosters research, guides coherent and evidence-based policymaking and well-informed public discourse, and allows for effective results-based monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of commitments over time.

The Regional Office will work to forge stronger partnerships and collaboration with other United Nations agencies on data initiatives, such as through the Regional United Nations Coordination Group on Data and Statistics, and, at the country level, through UNCTs and Regional Coordinators. The Regional Office will build on the IOM institutional Migration Data Strategy and use capacities built and lessons learned through IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), the DTM and the Counter-Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC). The Regional Office will cooperate closely with other IOM regional offices to ensure interoperability, comparability and harmonization of data, to the extent feasible. It will also build IOM regional staff capacities through access to training opportunities and sharing of good practices and lessons learned and equip offices with the migration data analysis and policy support needed to support United Nations and government partners to mainstream migration in the relevant frameworks, in line with the vision in the Global Compact for Migration to establish a Knowledge Platform and Connection Hub.

5.2. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

As a key component of both results-based management and knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation helps IOM to understand, learn from and communicate in evidence-based ways about achievements and shortcomings of interventions, thereby promoting continuous improvements, as well as accountability to donors and beneficiaries. The Regional Office in Vienna will invest in improving knowledge, skills and practices in line with norms and standards in monitoring and evaluation, to enable more robust assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, impact and sustainability of its projects, programmes, strategies and policies. At the regional level, the Regional Office will also work with United Nations and other partners to promote more joined-up, collaborative and innovative approaches to monitoring and evaluation.



5.3. INNOVATION

The Regional Office will focus efforts on enabling IOM staff to develop and implement innovations to address migration issues in the region. It will support the Organization-wide development and application of tools to support IOM missions to innovate during project development and resource mobilization, taking into consideration the changing donor priority and stakeholder landscape in the field of migration in the region. The Regional Office in Vienna will engage closely with field offices to identify, develop and communicate best practices and innovations created in the field offices. An example of an innovative approach are the supply chain management systems developed by IOM Turkey, which ensure that the proper quantities of appropriate-quality materials are delivered at the right time and at a reasonable cost. It features commodity-tracking systems to manage delivery and prevent diversion of goods to ensure IOM fulfils its commitments to donors. The Regional Office will continue supporting IOM missions in the development and implementation of their country and/or subregional strategies and keep IOM missions updated on donors' priorities and strategies on migration at the national and subregional levels.

Big data, onomastic analysis and strategic partnerships will enable complementary initiatives to be developed regarding diaspora engagement through, for example, financial investments and business partnerships, social remittances, and skills and expertise transfer, as well as the (temporary) return of qualified nationals, to support sustainable development and resilience-building in countries of origin. IOM will invest in developing innovative solutions and tools, such as digital identity, scenario-building and digital health technologies, to support effective and efficient delivery of services to migrants, including migrant workers and their families, returned migrants and immigrants for resettlement.

Building upon the past initiatives with the private sector in the region, the Regional Office will reinforce and continue exploring new partnerships with think tanks, universities, foundations, private companies and research institutions in emerging areas such as health and migration, environment and climate change, and in countering xenophobia and supporting social cohesion. Lastly, training will be ensured to enhance missions' capacities in the implementation of the IOM Private Sector Partnership Strategy.

ANNEX 1. IOM IN SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPE, EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

The [Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#) oversees, plans, coordinates and supports IOM activities within the region. The Regional Office is responsible for project review and endorsement and provides technical support to country offices, particularly in the areas of project development, project implementation, monitoring and evaluation, resource mobilization, resource management, and liaison coordination with regional and subregional governments, United Nations agencies and other key partners.

Table A1. The region in numbers

Number of countries and areas covered	Staff in the region*	Offices and sub-offices in the region	Annual budget for the region (2019)	Number of projects implemented (2019)	Number of donors (2019)
20	>1,600	48	USD 234 million	371	36

Note: * As of May 2020. Staff with special contracts, including consultants, interns and hourly contract holders, are not included in the staff count.

IOM offices in the region (as of May 2020)

Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Georgia	Israel	Kazakhstan
Tirana	Yerevan	Baku	Minsk	Sarajevo	Tbilisi	(Covered by the Regional Office)	Nur Sultan
		Mingachevir		Bihac	Batumi		Almaty
				Banja Luka	Kutaisi		
				Mostar	Poti		
				Prijedor	Telavi		
				Tribinje			
				Zenica			

Kosovo ⁴	Kyrgyzstan	Republic of Moldova	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Russian Federation	Serbia	Tajikistan
Pristina	Bishkek	Chisinau	Podgorica	Skopje	Moscow	Belgrade	Dushanbe
Gijlan		EUBAM*				Pirot	
Peja							
Prizren							

Turkey	Turkmenistan	Ukraine	Uzbekistan
Ankara	Ashgabat	Kyiv	Taskhent
Adana		Dotnetsk	
Gaziantep		Kramatorsk	
hatay		Luhansk	
Istanbul		Lyiv	
Izmir		Odessa/EUBAM*	
Sanliurfa		Sievierodonetsk	

	Country/Territory
	Main office
	Sub-office

Notes: * EUBAM – European Union Border Assistance Mission

Country Offices with Coordinating Functions for Central Asia (Kazakhstan) and the Western Balkans (Bosnia and Herzegovina) help address specific subregional migration issues and emerging trends and promote increased IOM membership in the subregion. The country missions establish priorities for project development and resource mobilization, and stimulate, direct and support project development in the cluster of offices in the context of subregional strategies, policies and consultative processes.

Country offices and **sub-offices** implement a wide range of projects addressing specific migration needs. These offices keep abreast of and analyse migration issues and emerging trends in the country in order to develop appropriate responses and contribute to regional strategies and planning.

ANNEX 2. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS RELATING TO MIGRATION

Table A2. International conventions relating to migration and their ratification status in individual countries of the region

	Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Georgia	Israel	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Montenegro	North Macedonia	Republic of Moldova	Russian Federation	Serbia	Tajikistan	Turkey	Turkmenistan	Ukraine	Uzbekistan	
1949 Convention concerning Migration for Employment																				
1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees ("The Refugee Convention")																				
1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons																				
1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness																				
1966 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)																				
1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)																				
1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)																				
1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees																				
1975 Convention concerning Migrations in Abusive Conditions and the Promotion of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment of Migrant Workers																				
1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)																				
1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment ("Convention Against Torture" (CAT))																				
1989 Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC)																				
1990 International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families																				
2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime																				
2000 Protocol against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air ("Smuggling Protocol")																				
2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)																				
2007 International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED)																				
2007 International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (ICPPED)																				

Ratified  Not ratified 



International Organization for Migration (IOM)
Regional Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia,
Liaison Office for UN Agencies and other International Organizations based in Vienna

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