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# The Link

IOM in Central and South-Eastern Europe

International Organization For Migration  
Regional Office in Budapest

Newsletter Issue No. 12  
October 2010

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**IOM in Hungary Launches a Project to Assist Unaccompanied Minors in Europe** 1

**IOM Supporting Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Community in Kosovo** 2-3

**Young People and Migration in Bosnia & Herzegovina** 3-4

**Risk Analysis Training for Border Services** 5

The European Union is experiencing an increase in unaccompanied minors, or children under age 18 who migrate to the EU and are without a parent or guardian. The exact number of these children is difficult to determine, but in 2008 over 11,000 applications for asylum were requested by unaccompanied minors in 22 European Member States. This is a 40% increase from 2007. Children end up in this situation for any number of reasons including: to escape from war, poverty or persecution; to join family members; to access education, health and other services; as a result of separation from caregivers during their travel to another country; and increasingly, children also are trafficked for sexual or labour exploitation.

As a response to this increasing trend, IOM has launched a new project "Best Practices for a Coordinated Approach to Assist Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers and Former Unaccompanied Minors in the EU Member States

## **IOM in Hungary Launches a Project to Assist Unaccompanied Minors in Europe**



(CAUAM)". This European Commission funded initiative brings together leading children's rights NGOs and relevant government partners to carry out assessments in ten European countries, which are experiencing high numbers of unaccompanied minors, namely Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Slovakia, and the UK. The project consists of three phases and seeks to identify gaps in assistance and outline which programmes have had the greatest impact and success in assisting unaccompanied minors. The 18-month project will conclude with an international conference to share the assessment findings and discuss a common European approach towards

assisting unaccompanied minors.

IOM office in Budapest hosted the first Assessment Coordination Meeting in September, bringing together the identified experts from the ten targeted countries, in order to present and fine-tune the methodology and agree on the parameters for carrying out the assessments in each country. A second Assessment Coordination Meeting will be organised in June 2011 to present and discuss the findings and prepare the groundwork for the report and recommendations.

This project builds on several initiatives that IOM has carried out in Europe to support unaccompanied minors and to build the capacity of non-governmental organizations that provide assistance to these vulnerable children.

"Unaccompanied children are especially vulnerable, as they have left all that is familiar to them - family, home, school, friends, language and culture", says Project Coordinator, Dana Graber Ladek. "This project is another important step to ensuring the rights of migrant children". ■

## IOM Supporting Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Community in Kosovo



Roma youth reading poetry accompanied by the sound of a violin playing Roma ballads. "A place under the sun" poetry book

"A Place under the sun" is a new book by a Kosovo Roma poet Bashkim Pacaku, which promotes Roma, Ashkali and Egyptians (RAE) culture in Kosovo, at the same time highlighting dangers of irregular migration, which is prevalent in among this community in Kosovo. The poetry calls upon the community to find their equal place in Kosovo and to engage in the Kosovo society.

The book was made possible within the framework of an IOM project "Capacity Building for the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian (RAE) non-government organizations (NGOs) in South-Western Kosovo and Public Information Campaign against Irregular Migration", funded by the Kingdom of Belgium. The poetry night in the beautiful city of Prizren was attended by Roma youth from the town, who recited poetry from the book. The author thanked IOM and the donor, Kingdom of Belgium, for enabling the implementation of this project specifically emphasizing that "Kosovo is our homeland and we have to stay here and work for a better future for all of us".

As part of the project, eight Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian non-government organizations (NGOs)

(Continued on page 3)

### Roma Girl

*Birth in the black and warm fist of Roma mother,  
A Roma blood that soul to soul has run,  
Bones to bones,  
Eyes to eyes.*

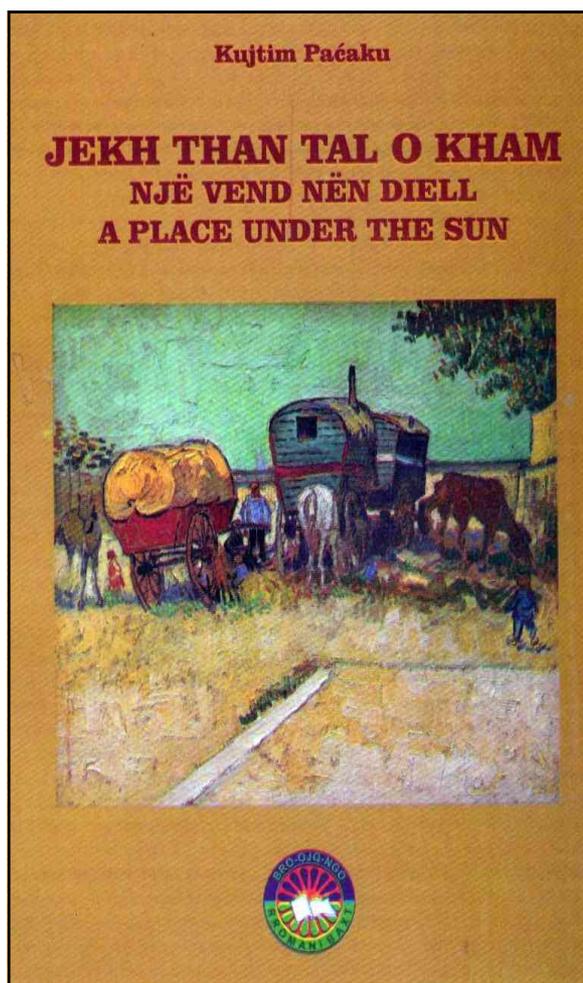
*In the morning the sun looked at you,  
A Roma girl with books under her arm-  
a road in our future.*

*Eyes of people were staring at you,  
In your long hair down to the waist  
And a bit lower  
There they saw your depth.*

*A voice that recognized the birds in the sky,  
Gave wings to the children so that they could fly  
In your songs full of pain,  
Warm as the chest of birds,  
That sings your song.*

KOSOVA ËSHKË VËNDEJMI  
MIGRIMI I LEGAL NËK ËSHKË ZGJIDHJEJ  
I KOSOVA IS MORE THAN  
O ILEGAL MIGRUPEN NANA: ALOS RIPENI  
KOSOVO IS MY COUNTRY  
ILEGAL MIGRATION IS NOT THE SOLUTION

"Roma Girl" poem



*"A Place Under the Sun" poetry book*

were trained in project management, local vocational training and income generation opportunities, outreach and access to government services and benefits for community members, and how to raise awareness of realities of migration.

The public information campaign component of the project was designed in close cooperation with the representatives of Ministry of Internal Affairs – Department of Border, Asylum and Migration and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, and representatives of NGOs to alert the general population in Kosovo, as well as the RAE community in particular, and consequences of irregular entry, residing and working without permits in countries in Western Europe, in particular in Belgium.

The overall goal of the project was to build the capacity of existing Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian (RAE) non-government organizations (NGOs) in South-Western Kosovo (municipalities of Pejë/Pec, Gjakovë/Djakovica and Prizren) to enable members and volunteers (particularly youth) to advance their community's goals, as they relate to the general welfare of RAE communities in the region. In Kosovo, RAE communities often live isolated from society's mainstream, which results in a lack

of awareness regarding access to services and benefits they might be entitled to from local and central government structures. Similarly, not enough information is available to these communities about local resources for employment, training and self-employment, therefore, their exclusion is often a determining factor in seeking to emigrate. In general, 66 per cent of adult RAE community members are unemployed and 72 per cent of RAE youth are unemployed. RAE NGOs, as relatively new organizations, have not been able to offer their communities the level of services that might be expected, including advocacy on their behalf. This initiative seeks to strengthen their capacity to better serve their communities, and by gaining access to resources that would allow them to effectively assist community members. ■

## Young People and Migration in Bosnia & Herzegovina

In the late spring of 2010, IOM in Bosnia and Herzegovina began implementing the Youth Employability and Retention Program (YERP). IOM is working with four other UN agencies (United Nations Development Programme UNDP, UNICEF, United Nations Population Fund UNFPA, and United Nations Volunteers UNV) in order to improve the employment prospects of Bosnian youth. YERP interventions will address issues in education (UNICEF), the labour market (UNDP), volunteerism (UNV), and youth labour migration (UNFPA and IOM). YERP is a three year program (2010-2012) supported through the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund financed by the Spanish Government. IOM's part of the project will focus on maximizing the positive impact of youth migration and minimizing irregular migration.

The programme will establish 17 Youth Employment Resource Centres (YERC). IOM will focus on building YERC staff capacity to provide young people with information on foreign employment opportunities and counsel them on the pitfalls of irregular migration. YERC youth counsellors will be trained to provide support to young people planning a move abroad and act as a point of contact for potential returnees. Together with UNDP, IOM will support returning migrants by providing employment assistance and referral.

IOM will also aim to increase awareness amongst Bosnian youth, their families and the general public about the dangers of irregular migration and the benefits of regular migration. Posters, leaflets, public service announcements and television programs will be developed. Targeted outreach in schools will also be organized in cooperation with UNICEF.



*Participants at a recent meeting of the Youth Labour Migration Working Group. During the meeting, a mapping exercise was completed in order to identify institutional responsibilities in the process of legal labour migration.*

As part of the project, IOM will design and implement a pilot circular/temporary migration (TCLM) scheme for both skilled and unskilled youth. IOM will work through its worldwide network of missions to identify work and internship opportunities abroad and match foreign labour demand with local labour supply. Opportunities in interested destination countries for seasonal employment primarily in the agriculture or tourism sectors will be identified. In addition, young Bosnians will be linked with internship opportunities abroad that will allow them to gain skills and experience in their chosen field.

YERP will also utilize opportunities to create links between the Bosnian migrant communities abroad and their home country, not only as a first step toward return but as a way to encourage “brain gain” through transfer of skills and knowledge. YERP will support the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees’ Diaspora Sector in identifying concrete methodologies and projects that will reconnect young Bosnians abroad with their country. In addition, YERP will organize roundtables and interviews with young Bosnians who have recently returned, to identify the opportunities and obstacles in the process of reintegration. A guide will be created for YERP staff to help them support the reintegration of returnees. ■

## Risk Analysis Training for Border Services

As part of the IOM’s “**Strengthening Integrated Border Management in the Western Balkans and Turkey**” project’s training programme, seven specialised Risk Analysis training courses for mid-level management border, customs officials and veterinary and phytosanitary inspectors, have been carried out in Pristina, Skopje, Ankara, Tirana, Podgorica, Sarajevo and Zagreb between July and September 2010.

Risk analysis and risk adjusted control operations are an integrated part of any modern border management concept and are essential for the Western Balkan states and Turkey, as these countries cope with increased cross-border movement of persons and goods.

The ultimate goal of risk analysis is to maximize the effectiveness of controls while concentrating on those areas, where the highest risk for criminal activities might be found, while diminishing the current extensive waiting periods required for goods and persons to cross the borders.

“Taking into account limited resources, a policy of checking 100 per cent of the cross-border traffic is both impracticable and inefficient. Application of risk analysis allows resources to be allocated where unintentional or deliberate violations are most likely to occur, while at the same time minimizing the disruption to trade and traffic flow”, said IOM’s Regional Representative, Jeffrey Labovitz, opening the training course in Ankara, Turkey.

The training curriculum topics included risk management, intelligence/information collection, analysis and dissemination, risk profiling, intra/interagency communication and tactics and techniques of surveillance, and was delivered by experts from Polish Border Guard, Lithuanian Customs, and the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

The project is supported by the European Commission’s IPA Regional Programme 2007 and the Minister for Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, and managed by IOM in partnership with Italian Customs Agency, Polish Border Guard, Customs Department under the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania, State Border Guard of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Rural Development of Hungary, Finnish National Board of Customs, National Criminal Police of Sweden and Frontex as an associate partner. ■

## Health Education for Migrants in Poland

Within the project „Educational campaign to improve medical services for asylum seekers in Poland”, co-financed by European Refugee Fund, IOM Warsaw has conducted 48 health education workshops for over 600 asylum seekers.

The aim of these workshops was to improve the quality and efficiency of medical services provided to asylum seekers in Poland through raising their awareness on prevention and treatment of communicable diseases, reproductive health, medical care during pregnancy and child care. Workshops were conducted by medical experts, trainers and cultural experts (coming from the same national group as the majority of asylum seekers).

All participants received a medical pocket reference handbook developed under the project. The handbook covers the themes of communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases, prenatal and obstetrical care, medical care for newly born and small children, medical and insurance system in Poland.

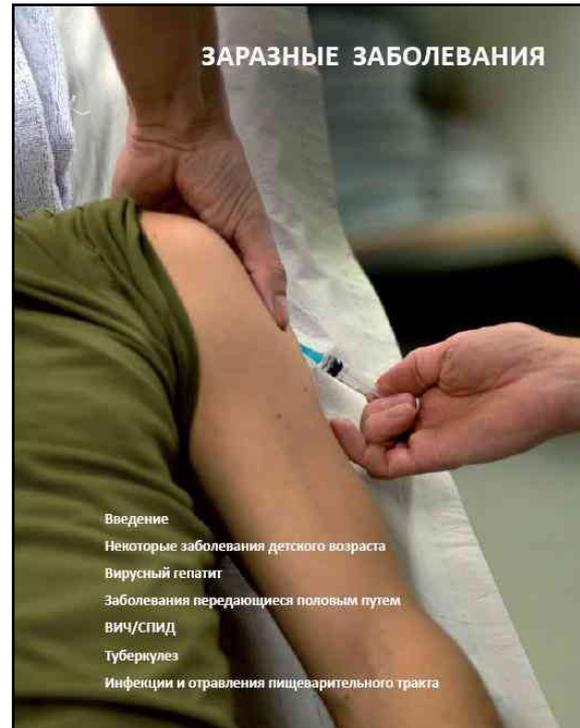
Both, medical handbook and workshops programme, were developed on the basis of a qualitative research among asylum seekers. The research was carried out to identify obstacles related to access to healthcare services and utilization of these services by asylum seekers, arising both from the Polish medical system and the foreigners themselves.

Healthcare providers have also been trained to better understand the cultural differences and their prejudices which can influence their attitudes toward patients from different cultures. Five workshops for healthcare providers were conducted by a psychologist specializing in cross-cultural issues.

The second phase of the project will also expand the educational campaign to adolescent asylum seekers.

The project responds to the urgent need to facilitate communication between healthcare providers and migrant patients in order to overcome barriers preventing adequate medical treatment.

This two-way approach will enhance mutual communication between healthcare providers and patients and will further lead to improving the quality of medical services for migrants. ■



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IOM Regional Office for Central and South-Eastern Europe provides support to IOM missions and offices in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Montenegro, Poland, Romania, the Republic of Serbia, Kosovo under UNSCR no 1244, Slovakia and Slovenia.

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