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European Immunization Agenda 2023 (EIA2030)

Statement by

International Organization for Migration

Distinguished Chair, Director General, Honourable Ministers, Excellencies, Colleagues,

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) commends WHO EURO and its Member States for their continued leadership in advancing the European Immunization Agenda 2030.

IOM welcomes the progress achieved to date and wishes to highlight one essential point: the vision of EIA2030; *to leave no one behind* cannot be achieved unless migrants, refugees and people on the move are fully included in national immunization strategies.

We wish to emphasize the critical importance of ensuring that migrants, refugees, people on the move are explicitly incorporated into national immunization strategies, policies, and data systems. Their inclusion is not only a moral and human rights imperative, but a public health necessity, integral to realizing the Agenda's objective of "leaving no one behind."

Across the Region, we continue to observe persistent immunity gaps among migrant populations. Peer-reviewed studies have consistently shown that migrants and refugees in Europe are under-immunized against key vaccine-preventable diseases. This is especially evident for those arriving from war-torn and conflict-affected countries, where national immunization programmes have been disrupted, infrastructure destroyed, and vaccine supply chains severely strained. Meta-analyses indicate that immunity levels for measles, mumps, rubella, and diphtheria remain below herd immunity thresholds. These disparities and suboptimal vaccination uptake are not only rooted in vaccine refusal but in structural and social barriers, including limited access to health systems, lack of health entitlements, language and cultural obstacles, misinformation, and fragmented service delivery.

Despite clear public health concerns, people on the move remain largely invisible in national immunization data. In many countries, routine health information systems, including District Health Information System (DHIS)-based registries, either count migrants under national aggregates or exclude them altogether if they lack formal registration or identification. This data invisibility leads to an underestimation of coverage gaps and missed opportunities to effectively target interventions.

Without disaggregated data by migration or displacement status, it becomes impossible to measure equity — a cornerstone of EIA2030. IOM therefore calls for strengthened collaboration between national immunization programmes, migration authorities, and partners to establish mechanisms that ethically and securely capture migrant health data while protecting privacy and legal status.

IOM's Contribution to migrant-inclusive immunization:

As the leading UN agency on migration, IOM has been working with governments and partners to support the vaccination uptake among selected refugee population where possible, that strengthen both public health and health security.

Through the Vaccine Demand and Confidence Initiative, implemented in collaboration with WHO and national counterparts in countries such as Poland, Moldova, Egypt and Thailand, IOM developed tailored communication toolkits addressing migrant and refugee concerns. These toolkits, co-created with community members and health providers, have enhanced trust and increased willingness to vaccinate among targeted groups.

In addition, the Health Access Contact Center, first launched in Poland, has provided multilingual information to migrants and refugees on vaccination record translation and service locations, demonstrating how digital and telehealth platforms can be utilized to reach those who might otherwise be excluded.

IOM stands ready to continue fostering strong collaboration with WHO EURO, its Member States, and the key stakeholders to support the implementation of EIA2030 at country level, through technical assistance, capacity building, behavioural research, and operational support.

Ensuring equitable access to immunization for all — including those on the move — is not only a moral imperative, but a strategic investment in the health security and resilience of the entire Region.

Thank you.

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