

Malta: assessing health-system capacity to manage sudden, large influxes of migrants



Joint report on a mission of the Ministry for Energy and Health of Malta, the International Centre for Migration, Health and Development and the WHO Regional Office for Europe

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Abstract

The area of migration and health is one of the topics to which the WHO European health policy framework – Health 2020 – has drawn particular attention, along with other issues related to population vulnerability and human rights. Health 2020 provides a comprehensive framework, as well as values and approaches to action that are much needed in public health work in the field of migration and health. Thousands of migrants have arrived on Maltese shores, posing new challenges to the preparedness of the country's health system to manage a potential large influx of displaced populations and inspiring investment in emergency management and effective multisectoral coordination mechanisms. With this in mind, an assessment of Malta's health-system capacity to manage large influxes of migrants was jointly conducted by the country's Ministry for Energy and Health and WHO. Assessment activities were conducted within the framework of WHO's Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe project, which supports the ongoing work of the WHO European Region to strengthen national and local capacities of Member States in order to address migrants' health needs, with a focus on public health. This report highlights the current Maltese capacity to manage this issue and suggests possible ways forward.

Keywords

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Abbreviations

AFM	Armed Forces of Malta
AWAS	Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers
BCP	border crossing points
CDC	United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CPD	Civil Protection Department
CPT	European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
DTaP-IPV-Hib	diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio and Haemophilus influenzae type b (vaccine)
dT-IPV	diphtheria, tetanus and inactivated poliomyelitis (vaccine)
ECDC	European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
EU	European Union
EuroSur	European Border Surveillance System
Frontex	European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union
IAMSAR	International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue
IDCU	Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Unit
IHR	International Health Regulations
IMO	International Maritime Organization
ICMHD	International Centre for Migration, Health and Development
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
GP	general practitioner
MHAS	Ministry for Home Affairs and National Security
MIPEX	Migrant Integration Policy Index
MMR	measles, mumps and rubella
NGO	nongovernmental organization
PHAME	Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe
PHC	primary health care
RCC	Rescue Co-ordination Centre
SAG	Special Assignment Group

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