

National Communicating with Communities (CwC) Working Group – April 28th2021 - Meeting Minutes

Date:	April 28th 2021	
Location:	WEBEX	
Participants:	Christina Christidou (IOM); Natalia Xouria (IOM HELIOS); Katerina Matakou (GCR Athens); Maria Zygouri (Hellenic Red Cross); Athina Vrakatseli (Migrant Integration Center, KEM, City of Athens); Konstantinos Vlastarakis (ACCMR Digital Platform); Nickolas Panagiotopoulos (IRC/ Refugee.Info); Stella Papasarafianou (Communications Officer, INTERSOS Hellas); Vangelis Tsilis (UNHCR, Public Health Associate); Yakinthi Menoudakou, ICRC; Sumita - Athens Volunteers Information and Coordination Group; Lefteris Papagiannakis(SolidarityNow). -only participants who submitted their name/org in the chat were recorded in this section.	
Chairs:	Alexandra Zavvos (Solidarity Now); Valia Gkeka (UNHCR)	
Agenda	<u>Agenda</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Previous Meeting Minutes • Health Working Group Update on Update on vaccination Process • Vaccination Taskforce (CwC) update • Advocacy Working Group • Partner Updates • AoB 	
Talking points	Discussion	Action Points
Review of last meeting Minutes	Last meeting minutes were reviewed and approved without any significant edits or concerns.	Minutes approved
Covid- 19 related Updates/ Covid Vaccinations 2021	<p>The coordinator of the Health Working Group joined the meeting to present updates regarding Covid-19, including the vaccinations for Persons of Concern (PoC).</p> <p>During the current period, the following groups are eligible for vaccination: (1) Front line workers in the healthcare and educational system; (2) People belonging to the age groups 30+; (3) People with high risk medical conditions such as transplantation, renal failure, cancer under treatment (undergoing cancer treatment since 1/1/2019) or hematological cancer (people diagnosed with hematological cancer since 1/1/2016), severe chronic respiratory diseases, serious heart or liver conditions, immunosuppression (autoinflammatory / autoimmune diseases or other diseases under immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory</p>	Please share Covid-19/vaccination concerns for the health-working group or EODY focal point with the

<p>Updates from the Advocacy WG</p>	<p>therapy), other diseases (such as down syndrome or after special application of the competent doctor). For the moment for the age group 30-44 only the Astra Zeneca vaccine is available. However, according to official statements, by the beginning of June all vaccines will be available for all individuals above 18 years of age.</p> <p>The Minister of Migration and Asylum has announced that asylum seekers in RICs and mainland Sites will be vaccinated inside the facilities. The modality remains to be clarified while in the meantime, SMS staff are registering eligible adults in a registration of interest exercise in Sites. According to shared information, in Kos and Leros RICs, the number of the eligible POCs has been registered/ estimated, in Samos the relevant effort is ongoing while in Lesvos the exercise had not started yet. A similar exercise on registering the numbers of POCs eligible for vaccination is ongoing in the mainland Sites. An official message from the MMA/MoH to the population is pending.</p> <p>On the other hand, PoCs residing in the urban environment will have to register for vaccination, similarly to the rest of the population. Asylum seekers in the urban setting who have a PAAYPA number (and not an AMKA), can book an appointment for vaccination through a KEP or a pharmacy. For asylum seekers in the urban setting who do not have either a PAAYPA not an AMKA, a temporary AMKA (PAMKA) will be issued automatically (a relevant Ministerial decision is pending). This is still the case as of the 21st of May.</p> <p>Official guidance regarding the vaccination of pregnant women and women lactating is still pending at the time of the CwC WG meeting.</p> <p>Lefteris Papagiannakis from SolidarityNow joined the meeting to present updates regarding the objectives and the work of the Advocacy WG. The following five priorities were presented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing of services by POCs especially access of migrant children to school is one of the main priorities of the WG; a relevant open letter addressing the Prime Minister as well as other competent official was signed by 21 NGOs on 9 March (see relevant press release here https://ddp.gr/anoichti-epistoli-quot-ola-ta-paidia-echoyn-dikaioma-sto/) while on 28 February a meeting was held with the Ministry of Education (see here https://www.minedu.gov.gr/news/47938-28-02-21-synantisi-genikon-grammateon-me-20-mko-me-thema-prokliseis-stin-ekpaidefsi-paidion-prosfygon-metanaston). • COVID-19 Vaccination process: Participants to the Advocacy group attend the work of the Technical Committee established by the MoH, which is working on a separate plan for the vaccination of the 	<p>CwC coordinators</p> <p>Feedback from actors who have helped PoC enrol in the vaccination platform: both qualitative and quantitative information welcome.</p>
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	<p>asylum seekers in Sites and RICs and the issuance of a PAMKA. The Advocacy WG is advocating for the inclusion of undocumented migrants in the National Vaccination Campaign, noting that undocumented migrants might also be working in jobs related to tourism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A joint Action for the creation of an initiative of more than 40 NGOs in relation to push-backs was announced on 30 March 2021, asking for (a) The immediate end of illegal push-back practices that endanger the Rule of Law and fundamental human rights; (b) The establishment of an independent mechanism for the systematic recording and substantiation of reported push-back cases; (c) The protection of the victims and the facilitation of their access to justice for the substantial investigation of their complaints; (d) The protection of the organizations and citizens that record and publicize incidents of push-backs. See GCR press release here https://www.gcr.gr/en/news/press-releases-announcements/item/1682-joint-action-for-the-creation-of-an-initiative-of-organisations-in-relation-to-push-backs.• Following the proposals on the New Pact on Migration and Asylum in September 2020, several Organizations have submitted comments, including GCR. The Advocacy WG is following up all developments. Noting the complex political environment in Europe currently and the different political blocs (i.e. Visegrad countries, Nordic countries, Med5 countries etc) there are concerns that discussions for the adoption of the Pact might not progress as anticipated.• Integration: The Government has announced that a new National Strategy for the Integration of Migrants and Refugees will be issued soon. This Strategy should be seen in the context of the ongoing political developments such as the New Pact on Migration and Asylum, the European Strategy for Integration (2021-2027), the approval of the new budget of the EU (2021-2027) as well as the approval of the Recovery Fund. It is very important that the Government supports with its relevant Strategy a long-term policy for the integration of migrants and refugees and does not only aim at targeting specific AMIF funds.• Upon a question on whether the Advocacy Group could advocate for uploading for information in all languages on the official websites of the MoH, EODY etc, especially in relation to COVID-19, Mr Papayannakis agreed that this point could also be included in the WG's advocacy agenda, noting however the relevant challenges as State authorities require that a document is officially translated before it is shared through the official websites.	
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<p>CwC Partners Updates</p>	<p>UPDATES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated messaging on the COVID 19 is available on Refugee info website here. • The Hellenic Red Cross carried out a second research targeting to understand the perception of migrants on COVID-19 vaccinations, and more specifically whether migrants wish to receive the vaccination and if not, why. This survey comes after the HRC first research that targeted mainly the perception of migrants regarding their information needs and gaps on health-related issues, their attitudes and emotions in relation to the existence of COVID19, their preferred communication channels and other main issues of their concern. • IRC/ Refugee Info shared updates in relation to the issuance of Survival Guides. More specifically, Refugee Info in coordination with UNHCR are issuing in June two new Survival Guides, one for Attica region and one for Thessaloniki. The Survival guides are expected to be ready by end June. • On 15 April the Government announced that as of 1 July CBI assistance for asylum seekers not residing in state run accommodation facilities will be abolished (the announcement is available here https://migration.gov.gr/en/katarghsh-oikonomikou-voithimatos-se-aitoyntes-poy-de-stegazontai-se-domes-toy-ypoyrgeioy/). The same announcement noted that asylum seekers residing in the urban environment, who wish to continue receiving cash assistance, should submit an accommodation request to the competent actors. However, considering that such requests for accommodation must be submitted to the competent actors with the assistance of urban NGOs, participants in the WG representing NGOs, expressed their concerns about the increased backlog of relevant cases. In Thessaloniki KEM an increased number of requests for accommodation referrals had already been noticed. Likewise, the Athens Volunteers Information and Coordination Group noted a similar trend. An increased number of people is also approaching Athens KEM with queries on accommodation; KEM refers these cases to other actors. Similar concerns were expressed by GCR which reported they are receiving a steadily increasing number of requests for assistance, especially for accommodation. • On a different note IRC and Thessaloniki KEM noted that during the last few months they have noticed cessation of HELIOS financial support to recognized beneficiaries of international protection who fail to 	

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	<p>attend language classes. IOM explained that after the establishment of the e-platform for language courses, attending languages classes has become obligatory for all registered in the Programme; so, some individuals, who were previously exempted from the obligation to attend classes (ex. due to geographical distance from the classes), are now seeing their cash assistance being interrupted as they fail to register and follow their courses in the e-platform.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEM Athens announced that in-person classes will re-start in KEM by the end of May. Online courses will be stopped. Currently, new posters are issued, and she will share them when available. 	
<p>Taskforce to address Gaps (vaccination)</p>	<p>The CwC Task force is working on finalizing a document with FAQs they have been working on regarding COVID-19 vaccination, these will be translated and shared with the rest of the working group.</p>	<p>Other members interested in joining taskforce please reach out.</p>
<p>AoB</p>	<p>An employability mentorship online event-looking for mentors and beneficiaries who would like to become mentees and receive mentorship (for any aspect of their job trajectory) https://www.facebook.com/rewip1/photos/a.458734284921166/908850569909533/.</p>	