Promoting Vaccinations among Migrant Populations in Europe (PROMOVAX)

Project Aims:
The PROMOVAX project aims to promote immunisations among migrant populations in Europe, thus contributing to the elimination of vaccine-preventable diseases in the region and reducing health inequalities.

PROMOVAX is intended to complement EU policies on disadvantaged groups by adding to the knowledge of barriers that prevent migrants from being immunised, providing recommendations for policy-makers on the immunisation of migrants and developing educational material for both health professionals and migrants.

Summary of the project

General objectives

The main objectives of the project are to:

- evaluate migrant access levels to primary health care by examining immunisation practices
- record migrant immunisation policies and practices in the participating countries
- identify and exchange best practices on migrant immunisation
- enhance health care professionals’ knowledge of the immunisation of migrants
- improve migrants’ knowledge of immunisation

Results achieved and expected

The consortium is currently developing a Health Worker Tool Kit, with step-by-step guidance and tools for assessing and addressing the immunisation needs of migrant populations. It is also compiling educational material for migrants which
provides general immunisation information and addresses misconceptions surrounding vaccination.

A report has been drafted on the status of migrant immunisation in the EU, including migrant immunisation policies, legislation and practices in participating EU countries and factors that may influence the acceptance of immunisation among 10 selected migrant ethnicities11.

The migrant immunisation practices evaluation tool has been developed by the project consortium with contributions from selected experts12.

An index of the best migrant immunisation practices has been drawn up. Practices were identified in consultation with national ministries and international organisations and based on reports from EU and other projects and a literature search. A total of 33 practices were identified and evaluated and the index was compiled13.

Based on the best practice index, recommendations for migrant immunisation were made14.

**Measurable outcomes at national and European level**

In most EU countries, there exist few services that are provided by trained and culturally sensitive health care professionals and tailored to migrants’ needs. The PROMOVAX project addresses this by developing the Health Care Worker Tool Kit to give health workers caring for migrants step-by-step guidance and tools for assessing and addressing migrants' immunisation needs. The material will be available for download and use in eight languages from the project website.

Immunisation of migrants is a priority for the EU health programme as part of its work to reach disadvantaged groups. The report on the status of migrant immunisation and the recommendations of the PROMOVAX group will support the development of legislation and policy in this field. Through the promotion of best practice and spill-over effects, the project will improve migrant health in the EU in general by opening communication channels between health care providers and migrants and increasing migrants’ trust in health systems.

- The project aims to increase immunisation levels among migrant populations and cut the incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases among migrants and indigenous populations.
- It should increase migrants' trust in health systems and produce educational material for migrants on immunisation that can be easily reproduced and transferred between EU countries.
- Migrant representatives and cultural mediators have participated in the development of the educational material and the Health Worker Tool Kit, by attending project meetings, reviewing the material and providing input.
- With the Health Worker Tool Kit, the project should strengthen the skills of health workers providing immunisations to migrants and enhance cultural sensitivity among healthcare providers.

11 [http://www.promovax.eu/index.php/promovax/vaccination/vac1](http://www.promovax.eu/index.php/promovax/vaccination/vac1);
Main public health benefits for the target group and the impact on Member States' health policies
The ultimate aim of the project is to increase immunisation rates among migrants in the EU, thus promoting migrant health. This should play an important role in achieving the measles and congenital rubella elimination targets set by the WHO, maintaining the EU's polio-free status and keeping other vaccine-preventable diseases under control.

Most of the partner countries have neither migrant immunisation legislation nor immunisation requirements for working migrants based on their occupation. The report on the status of migrant immunisation and the accompanying recommendations will help policy makers to develop legislation in this field.

Use of the project results for further development of public health programmes in participating countries
The report on the status of migrant immunisation and the recommendations of the PROMOVAX group will assist policy makers in developing migrant immunisation legislation.

Dissemination of the project
The dedicated website with information in all consortium languages explains the project content and is the main tool for the dissemination of information about activities and results. It also hosts a feedback form and provides details of publicity generated by the project, including journal articles, other publications and conference presentations.

Each partner has sent the coordinator a list of contacts to whom material is sent throughout the project's lifetime. Contacts are entered into a database and regularly receive newsletters and updates. Further dissemination has come through scientific announcements, presentations and publications to reach migrants, professionals working with migrants, health providers, doctors and other health workers caring for migrants, local health authorities, the scientific community and policy makers.
**Administrative details**

**Main beneficiary:**
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**Collaborating partners**
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- WHO/Europe Communicable Disease Unit, Denmark
- IOM-Migration and Health Division, Belgium
- European Center for Disease Prevention and Control, Sweden
- Alpert Medical School of Brown University, USA
- Public Health Institute, Albania
- Baskent University, Turkey
- Hospital de Sabadell, Universitat Autonoma de Barcelona, Spain
- Institute of Occupation Health, Serbia
- Institute of Epidemiology, Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Greece
- National School of Health, Spain
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**Duration:**
- 36 Months

**End date:**
- 21/02/2013