

Capacity Building, Information and Awareness Raising towards Orderly Migration in the Western Balkans

Project Newsletter No. 1 – September 2008

Launch of the Migrant Service Centres

One of the greatest challenges that policy makers, governmental and non-governmental institutions in the Western Balkans are facing in the last two decades is the promotion of orderly migration from and within the region. In order to promote legal migration and to prevent irregular migration and trafficking, the IOM has launched the regional project “Capacity Building, Information and Awareness Raising towards Orderly Migration in the Western Balkans”, which is funded by the European Commission AENEAS 2006 Programme, the Swiss Federal Office for Migration, the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs/ Italian Development Cooperation and the Government of Liechtenstein. The project is implemented in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.



Migrant Service Centre in Kosovo



IOM staff providing information in Migrant Service Centre, Albania

The goal of the project is to enhance the dissemination of accurate and reliable information to potential migrants to support the regular migration procedures and minimize risks for exploitation and abuses. In order to achieve this goal, twenty-one Migrant Service Centres (MSCs) were established and launched in June 2008 in the region, in cooperation with national partners such as national employment offices and Ministries of Labour. The MSCs receive potential migrants daily and provide them with individualized assistance and group counselling sessions on the reality and risks of irregular migration and possibilities & procedures for decent work opportunities in the country and/or for legal emigration. The clients also receive referral services to relevant local institutions for individual skills development in view of improving employment potential both at home and abroad. Until August 2008, the MSCs have received approximately 1000 visitors.

Skills Development Sessions in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

In September 2008, the Migrant Service Centres in Skopje and Bitola have elaborated and implemented four sessions for the clients on “CV Preparation and Reinforcement of the Skills for Active Inclusion in the Local Labour Market”. More than 60 clients benefited from the skills orientation sessions either through individual counselling or through group sessions. The skills orientation sessions were based on the clients’ needs assessment and were implemented jointly by IOM and the Agency for Employment staff.



Practical exercise in CV preparation-Migrant Service Centre Bitola

The sessions included tips on how to find out about the labour market shortages for a purpose of better integration in the local labour market. Practical exercises in CV writing, a simulation exercise-interview with the employer and identification of job opportunities through Internet search were also organised.

Selected Statistics on the Users of Migrant Service Centres (MSCs) (June – August 2008)

IOM has been collecting statistics on the beneficiaries of the Migrant Service Centres since the beginning of the project. The total number of clients visiting the Migrant Service Centres during the first quarter of their operation (June-August 2008) was 1003, with the total number of visits totalling 1012. The majority of the clients were nationals, with a small proportion of queries coming from immigrants to these countries (6.7%). The following summary refers to the ‘national’ cases only (for a full statistical report, refer to the project’s website at www.migrantservicecentres.org).

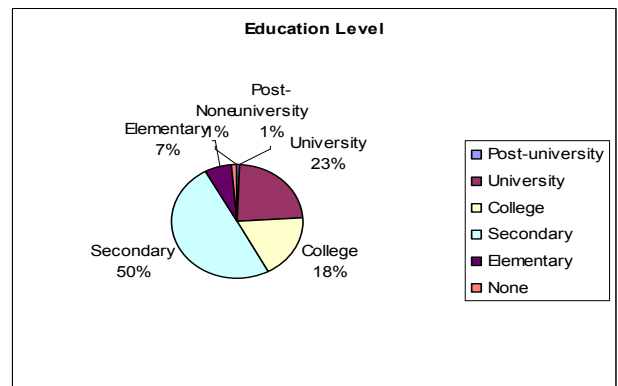
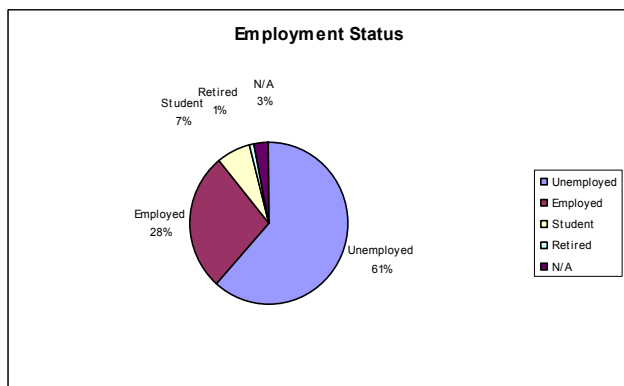
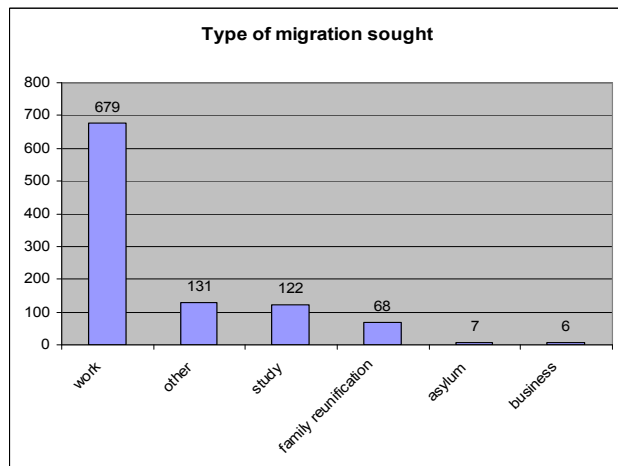
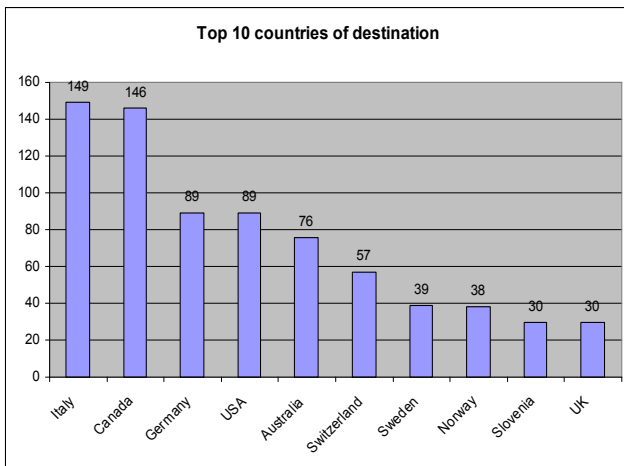
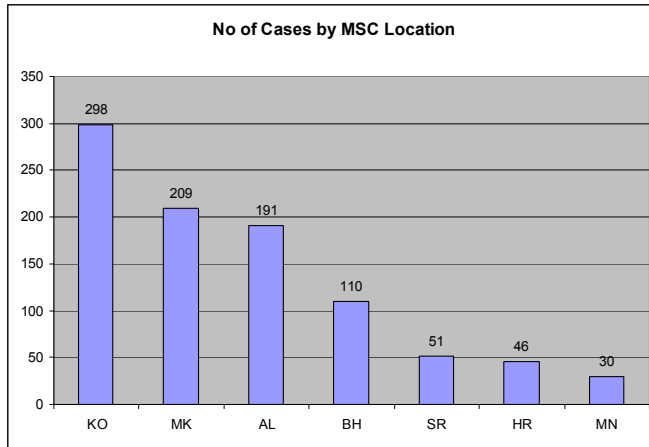
The highest number of visitors was registered in Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244, with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania also registering a high number of visitors. 75% of clients were men, on average in their early thirties. Majority of clients came from urban areas.

Unemployed constituted a large proportion of MSC clients (61%). A multitude of employment sectors was represented.

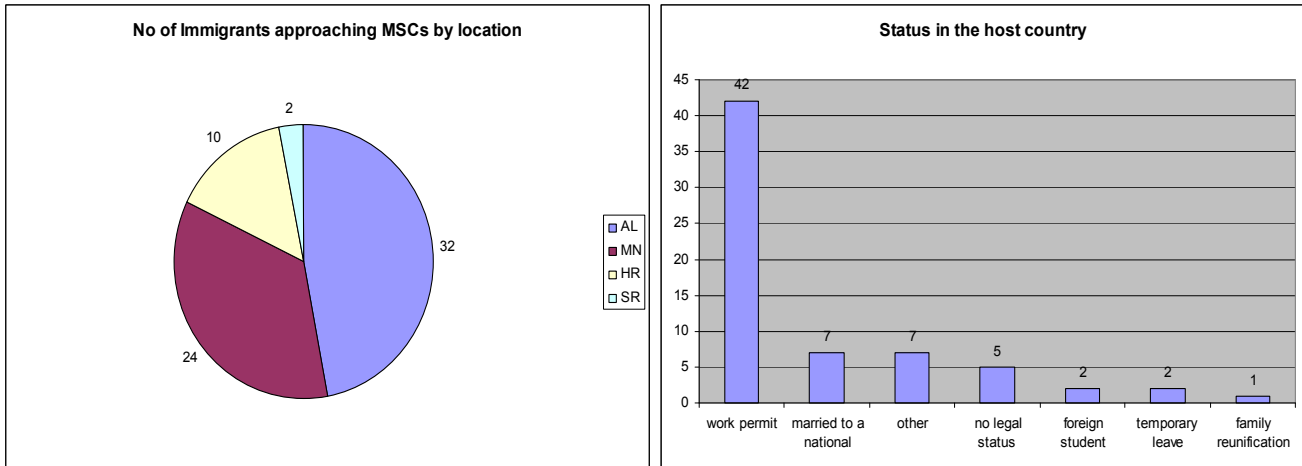
Almost half of the visitors had previous experiences of migration, with a majority migrating for asylum and for work. Among those who migrated before, Germany, Italy and Greece were the most popular destination countries.

The majority of the clients were interested in labour migration, declaring Italy, Canada, Germany, USA and Australia their preferred destinations. The assistance provided by the MSCs was mainly information provision (84%) followed by counselling and referral, constituting, respectively, 10% and 6% of the service provided.

Statistics Based on Information received by MSCs:



The total number of immigrants approaching MSCs was 68. The highest number of immigrant visitors were registered by Albania, Montenegro and Croatia, with Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosovo under UNSCR No 1244 and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia not receiving any immigrant queries. The majority of visitors were work permit holders and employed.



<p><u>Steering Committee Meeting Schedule:</u></p> <p>February 2008 – Belgrade</p> <p>September 2008 – Sarajevo</p> <p>February 2009 – Tirana</p> <p>July 2009 - Zagreb</p>	<p>Destination Guides for Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo (under UNSCR No 1244), Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States are now available at:</p> <p>www.migrant-servicecentres.org/index.php?page=1</p>
---	---

For more information on project partners, events, latest news, and more statistics, visit:

www.migrant-servicecentres.org



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



Federal Office
for Migration
and Refugees

