

Newsletter #5 - October 2025

”Strengthening the regional cooperation on migration management between Western Balkans and neighbouring EU Member States in accordance with EU Acquis and international standards – MIRCO“



The project is implemented by the Swedish Migration Agency of the Kingdom of Sweden, as a Lead Partner in close collaboration with the partner the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia. The project is co-funded by the European Union and contracted by ICMPD through the Migration Partnership Facility.



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Baku Study Visit: Western Balkan Migration Authorities Explores Migration in Azerbaijan

Date: 29-31 July 2025

Location: State Migration Service,
Republic of Azerbaijan, Baku

From 29 to 31 July 2025, a delegation of the Western Balkans migration authorities and MIRCO project visited the State Migration Service (SMS) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Regional Training Centre on Migration (RTCM) in Baku. The visit aimed to learn from Azerbaijan's experience in establishing and operating the RTCM, exchange knowledge and practices in organising capacity-building activities at the regional level, and explore opportunities for future cooperation within the network of regional migration training centres.

During the sessions hosted at the State Migration Service, participants were introduced to the key areas of SMS work, including digitalisation and e-services in migration management, mechanisms for combating irregular migration, and the legal framework governing migration in Azerbaijan. Special attention was given to SMS's approach to staff training and professional development in the migration field. The visit also provided an opportunity for representatives of the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia (SCRM) to present the activities of the Regional Migration Training Centre in Plandiste, which serves as a good practice example of capacity building and professional training in the field of migration management in the Western Balkans region.

The delegation also visited the Regional Training Centre on Migration, where they learned about the Centre's facilities, training programmes, coordination mechanisms, and curriculum development process. The exchange offered valuable insights into the structure and operations of an established regional centre, providing useful inspiration for the ongoing development of similar initiatives in the Western Balkans.

On the final day, the WB delegation visited the IOM Office in Baku, where IOM representatives presented their programmes and activities in Azerbaijan, with a focus on migrant assistance mechanisms, reintegration support, anti-trafficking initiatives, and institutional capacity development in migration management. The focus of the discussion was put on the IOM's support in establishment of the RTCM of Azerbaijan.

The visit served as a successful example of international cooperation and knowledge exchange in the field of migration governance, reinforcing the ties between MIRCO partners and institutions in Azerbaijan.



Regional Training Centre on Migration, Baku, 30 July 2025

Regional Workshop in Skopje Defines Joint Training Priorities for Western Balkans Institutions

Date: 3 September 2025

Location: Ministry of Interior - Border Police, Skopje, North Macedonia

On 3 September 2025, representatives of the MIRCO partner institutions from across the Western Balkans gathered in Skopje for a regional workshop hosted by the Ministry of Interior – Border Police. The event, organised under the MIRCO project, aimed to strengthen regional cooperation in migration management training and to foster a more coordinated approach to capacity development across the region.

Building on previous work launched earlier this year, participants jointly defined training priorities

and activities for the final quarter of 2025, ensuring complementarity with other regional initiatives. The workshop also served as a platform for exchanging experiences, sharing good practices, and exploring ways to make future training more impactful and better aligned with institutional needs.

The next regional planning workshop will take place online in December 2025, where partners will review progress achieved and update the plan for the first quarter of 2026..



Ministry of Interior, Skopje, 3rd September 2025



Project Coordination Meeting: MIRCO Partners Review Progress and Set Priorities for the Next Phase

Date: 4 September 2025

Location: Ministry of Interior - Border Police, Skopje, North Macedonia

The sixth MIRCO Project Coordination Team meeting brought together project partners in Skopje to review progress achieved during the third quarter and set priorities for the next implementation phase.

Discussions highlighted key accomplishments— the development of three new training courses (one already digitalised), the successful Training of Trainers held in June, and the launch of the Regional Migration Training Centre (RMTTC) website and e-learning platform. Partners also reviewed the rollout of English language courses for staff across the Western Balkans and the organisation of recent study visits.

Looking ahead, the focus remains on strengthening institutional capacities through the development of four additional training courses, their translation and digitalisation, continued language training, and enhanced cooperation with regional migration centres.



Ministry of Interior, Skopje, 4th September 2025

The next coordination meeting will take place in December 2025 in Ljubljana, where partners will assess progress and outline priorities for 2026.

Regional Train-the-Trainer: Advancing Migration Training in the Western Balkans

Date: 17-18 September 2025

Location: Regional Migration Training Centre, Plandiste, Serbia

From 17 to 18 September 2025, the project continued with the training activities by organizing the second Train-the-Trainer sessions from 17–18 September 2025 at the Migration Training Centre in Plandiste, Serbia, in collaboration with UNU-MERIT. The sessions brought together 14 future trainers from migration and security institutions across Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and North Macedonia, with the goal of promoting harmonized and effective migration management in the region.

Two parallel ToT sessions focused on the following topics of Legal Migration and Migration and Security.

Delivered by international UNU-MERIT experts, the workshops combined interactive exercises, group discussions, and plenary sessions to build participants' practical skills. Training materials were carefully tailored to each module, aligned with MCP Med TI certification standards and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), and designed to support the roll-out of national and regional training activities.



RMTC, Plandiste, Serbia, 17th September 2025

The workshops provided participants with the opportunity to exchange experiences, explore effective training methodologies, and strengthen peer learning. Beyond technical knowledge, the ToT program fosters a skilled network of trainers capable of delivering high-quality migration training across the Western Balkans.

This achievement reflects MIRCO's ongoing commitment to building institutional capacity, promoting regional cooperation, and aligning migration management practices with EU standards. With additional training modules underway, the project continues to enhance long-term regional expertise in migration governance.



RMTC, Plandiste, Serbia, 18th September 2025

New Training Courses Underway

The MIRCO project continues to expand its regional training program, aimed at equipping migration professionals across the Western Balkans with essential knowledge and skills. Building on the successful collaboration with Maastricht University (UNU-MERIT), the project has recently finalized two courses, **Legal Migration Pathways** and **Migration and Security**. Both courses are finalized and ready for delivery, with Train-the-Trainer sessions held in September 2025.

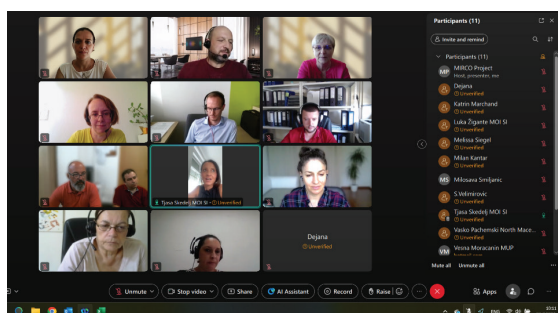
In collaboration with the International Aid Network (IAN), the project developed the training material on the topic **Prevention of Torture and Protection of Migrants' Rights**, with the Train-the-Trainer session scheduled for 29–30 October.

Looking ahead, the project is advancing four more courses that address key regional challenges in migration management and protection such as training being developed by the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA), **Protection of the Rights of Victims of Hu-**

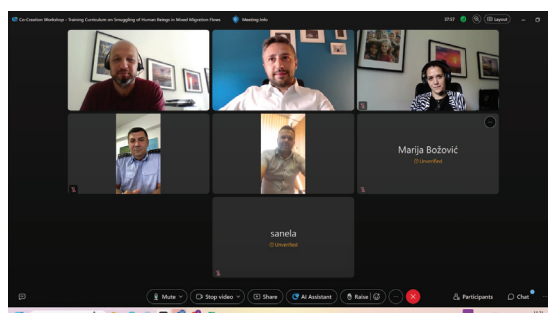
man Trafficking and **Youth and Migration**. These e-learning courses are being developed to provide flexible, accessible training for migration professionals across the region.

The MIRCO project has established fruitful collaboration with the Sanremo Institute with the aim to develop two courses. Development of the training material on the topic **Smuggling of Migrants in Mixed Migration Flows** started with the co-creation workshop with project beneficiaries on 15 September and is progressing well with the ToT planned for November. The final training will focus on the topic **Human Rights and Migration** which development will start in November.

These modules reflect the MIRCO project's commitment to tackling complex migration challenges and promoting harmonized regional approaches. Training will be delivered through both in-person sessions and a digital learning platform, ensuring broad accessibility for all participants.



Co-creation Workshop on Legal Migration, 23 July 2025



Co-creation workshop on Smuggling of Migrants in Mixed Migration Flows, 15 September 2025

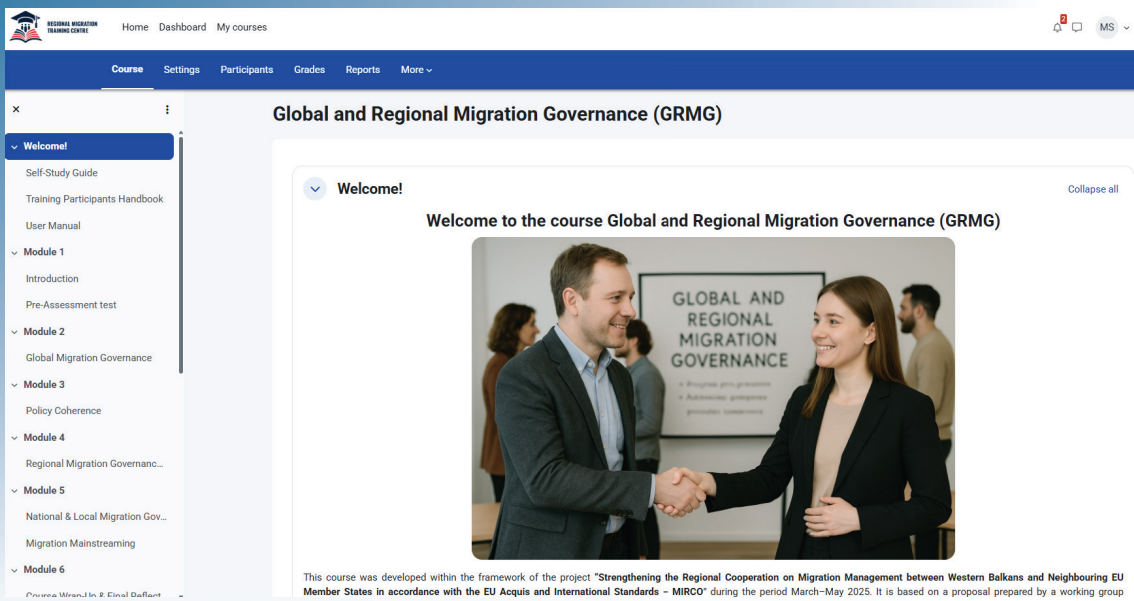
Digitalised Courses for the Use of WB Migration Authorities at eLearning Platform

The Global and Regional Migration Governance and Migration and Development courses, developed under the MIRCO project, have been successfully digitalised and will soon be available on the Regional Migration Training Centre eLearning platform. This marks an important moment in enhancing the accessibility and sustainability of training opportunities for migration professionals across the Western Balkans.

Through its digital format, the courses will enable continuous learning and knowledge sharing among officials involved in migration governance, policy development, and implementation. In addition to par-

ticipants from Western Balkan migration authorities, the courses will also be accessible to professionals from EU Member States and partner training institutions and centres with which the project cooperates, fostering regional and interregional exchange of expertise and best practices. These courses will be available in English, Serbian and Macedonian.

Over the coming months, eight more courses will be digitalised, ensuring that capacity-building opportunities are available for Western Balkans migration authorities to complete at their own convenience.



Digitalised course at the RMTC eLearning Platform

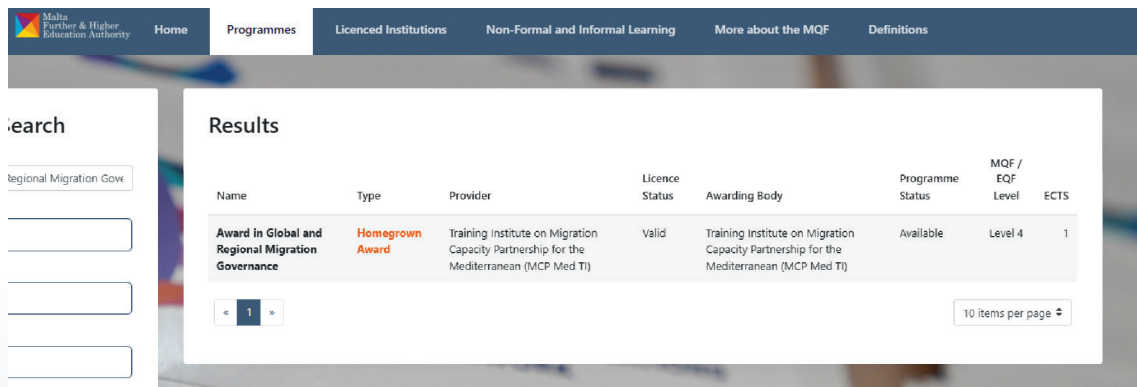
First Training Course under the MIRCOC Project Receives Official Accreditation

We are pleased to announce that the first training course developed under the MIRCOC Project, titled “Award in Global and Regional Migration Governance,” has officially received accreditation from the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

The course was developed in collaboration with the United Nations University – Maastricht Economic and Social Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU-MERIT), bringing together academic expertise and practical experience from across the region to

strengthen professional capacities in the field of migration governance.

This represents a significant milestone for the project, achieved through the joint efforts of the Swedish Migration Agency, regional partner institutions, ICMPD, and MCP Med Training Institute. Work is already underway to ensure that the remaining courses planned within the MIRCOC training programme will also receive accreditation by the end of the project.



Joint Webinar on Integrated Border Management in Collaboration with African Capacity Building Centre

Date: 16 October 2025

Location: Online

On 16 October 2025, a joint webinar on “Integrated Border Management and One Stop Border Post Implementation Model” was successfully organized in collaboration with the African Capacity Building Centre (ACBC). The webinar brought together around 20 participants from across the Western Balkans, Sweden, the Regional Centre on Migration of Azerbaijan, and IOM Serbia, fostering an exchange of perspectives and experiences between regions.

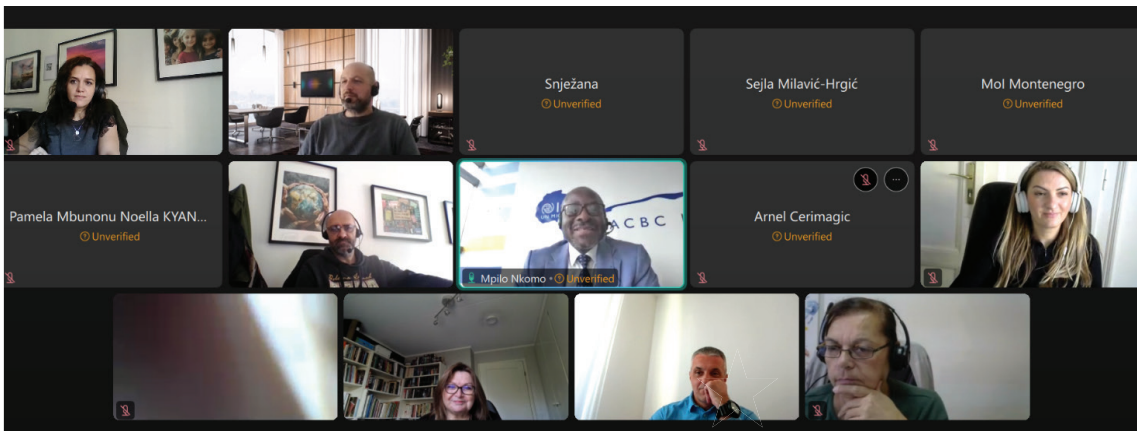
The session focused on integrated border management, a long-standing and significant topic, especially in the context of African States’ pursuit of continental integration, streamlined border operations, and balancing security and public health considerations. One-stop border posts, as a central operational element of this approach, offer promising opportunities for facilitating safe and efficient migration and trade.

Particular attention was given to exploring how African experiences in implementing one-stop border post

models could be adapted and applied to the Western Balkans, where enhanced regional cooperation and harmonized border procedures remain key priorities.

This event forms part of a broader series of international joint workshops organized under the MIRCO Project, focusing on key migration-related themes such as migration trends, return and reintegration, and border management. Today’s session continues these collaborative efforts, following the first joint training on Intercultural Communication, organized earlier this year in partnership with the Swedish Migration Agency.

The training was delivered by Mr. Nkomo Mpilo from the African Capacity Building Centre, who shared valuable insights into the implementation of one-stop border post models and best practices from the African context. Participants expressed great interest and satisfaction with the session, highlighting the relevance of the topic and the value of exchanging experiences between Africa and the Western Balkans.



Online Joint Webinar, 16 October 2025

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