



World Federation of Occupational Therapists Statement

14-15 September 2020 70th Session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe

Statement on Migrant Health:

As the global organisation representing occupational therapists, the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT) welcomes the work outlined in the progress report on the Strategy and Action Plan for Refugee and Migrant Health in the European Region.

WFOT supports the priorities stated in the report, in particular the development of migrant sensitive health policies and multilateral social protection agreements that include benefits for health services. Such initiatives address interrelated economic, social and environmental factors that influence the health of refugees and migrants, as well as promote community inclusion and public health.

WFOT and its member organisations recognise at any time, in any country, people from any position within society can be displaced. Such displacement has direct and indirect consequences for occupational opportunities necessary to address human needs, access human rights and create and maintain health. WFOT works with the occupational therapy community to develop capacity for practitioners, researchers, educators, students and professional bodies to engage effectively with both the occupational causes and consequences of displacement.

Occupational therapists make a significant contribution to migrant and refugee health by enabling participation in valued occupations that help displaced individuals to bridge their former life to their current environment. Successful participation in everyday occupation, life roles and the fabric of society helps migrants move beyond the negative effects of displacement to strengthen inclusion, health and well-being.

In closing, WFOT and its member organisations remain deeply committed to working with governments at all levels, non-governmental organisations and persons affected to promote the health of migrants and refugees.