

Newsletter #6 - February 2026

”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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Strong Progress and Efficient Implementation Mark the Latest Project Coordination Team Meeting

Date: 11 December 2025

Location: Ministry of Interior - Ljubljana, Slovenia

During the Project Coordination Meeting organised in Ljubljana partners reviewed progress, aligned priorities, and confirmed the next steps for the upcoming implementation period.

Nearly half of the planned activities have been completed, with the remaining actions progressing steadily and on schedule. Beyond figures and timelines, the meeting demonstrated something equally important, strong ownership and commitment from all participating institutions. In this spirit, the project continues to advance with strong and consistent momentum, fully aligned with its objectives and planned activities.

As the project moves into the next quarter, partners remain focused on delivering sustainable solutions, strengthening institutional capacities, and reinforcing collaboration between the Western Balkans and neighbouring EU Member States in line with EU acquis

and international standards. With steady progress and shared commitment, MIRCO continues to translate partnership into measurable results for the region.



11 December 2025, Ministry of Interior, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Building Regional Expertise: Training of Trainers on Prevention of Torture among Migrants

Date: 28-30 October 2025

Location: Regional Migration Training Centre, Plandište, Serbia

As part of ongoing efforts to strengthen institutional capacities across the Western Balkans, a specialised Training of Trainers (ToT) session on the Prevention of Torture among Migrants was held from 28–30 October 2025 at the Regional Migration Training Centre in Plandište, Serbia.

The activity was organised in cooperation with the Swedish Migration Academy and the International Aid Network (IAN), bringing together experts and practitioners committed to enhancing the quality and sustainability of migration-related training in the region.

The Training of Trainers was delivered to seven future trainers from beneficiary institutions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia, contributing to the Western Balkans regional pool of trainers who will lead national and regional training initiatives.

The course materials were developed in close cooperation with IAN and aligned with accreditation standards of the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA). Participants received comprehensive and tailored training resources in advance, ensuring an interactive, hands-on, and engaging learning experience throughout the sessions.



RMTC, Plandište, Serbia, 29 October 2025

Participants expressed a high level of satisfaction with the organisation, content, and delivery of the training. Notably, this marked the first ToT activity implemented in cooperation with a local organisation, further strengthening regional ownership and initiative.

By combining adult learning methodologies with specialised technical knowledge, the project continues to build a sustainable network of qualified trainers capable of independently delivering high-quality migration-related training across the Western Balkans. The successful implementation of this ToT represents another important milestone in reinforcing institutional training capacities throughout the region.

Training of Trainers on Smuggling of Migrants

Date: 25-27 November 2025

Location: MIRCO Project Office, Serbia

From 25–27 November 2025, the MIRCO Project Office in Belgrade, Serbia, hosted a specialized ToT session on Smuggling of Migrants in Mixed Migration Flows. The training was organized in cooperation with the Swedish Migration Academy and the Sanremo Institute as part of MIRCO's ongoing capacity-strengthening efforts across the Western Balkans.

The ToT brought together participants representing key partner institutions, including Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Interior of North Macedonia, Ministry of Interior of Montenegro, Commissariat for Refugees and Migration of the Republic of Serbia, Swedish Migration Agency, Sanremo Institute and MIRCO Project Office. Among them, seven trainer candidates were nominated by

their respective institutions to become certified trainers under the MIRCO project framework.

The primary objective of the program was to strengthen institutional capacities by equipping selected professionals with the expertise and pedagogical tools needed to deliver high-quality, migration-related training at national and regional levels.

Facilitated by an expert from the Sanremo Institute, the two-day technical component provided participants with comprehensive knowledge on prevention and combating smuggling of migrants within mixed migration flows. At the same time this was the first ToT activity organized in cooperation with the Sanremo Institute — a partnership that will continue in 2026.



Belgrade Office, Serbia, 26 November 2025



Belgrade Office, Serbia, 25 November 2025

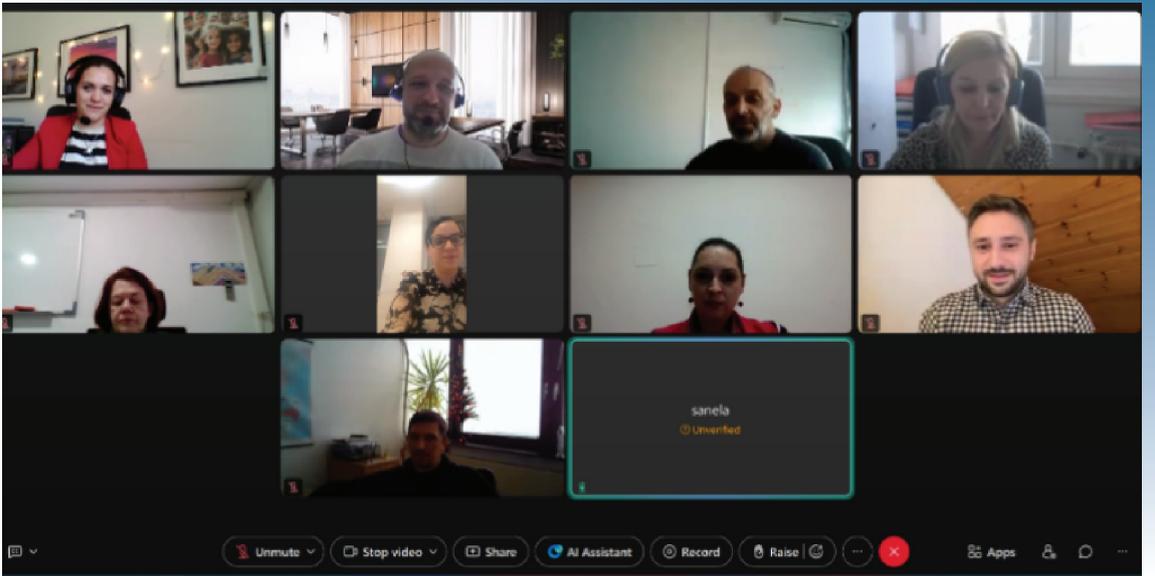
New Capacity-Building Modules in Development

The MIRCO project is further consolidating its role as a regional platform for strengthening professional capacities in migration management across the Western Balkans. By expanding its comprehensive training programme, the project continues to equip migration professionals with advanced knowledge and practical tools, while fostering closer regional cooperation and greater alignment with international standards.

The project is currently finalising training materials on the themes of Protection of the Rights of Victims of Human Trafficking and Children and Youth in Migration, which are specifically designed for digital learning. These e-learning courses are being de-

veloped to ensure flexible and accessible capacity-building opportunities for migration professionals throughout the region, enabling continuous learning beyond traditional classroom settings.

Building on the fruitful collaboration established in recent months with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law (Sanremo Institute), the training material on Smuggling of Migrants in Mixed Migration Flows is also being finalised. This cooperation has brought valuable international expertise and comparative perspectives to the development of the curriculum.



Co-creation Workshop on Human Rights, 23 December 2025

An important milestone has also been reached in the development of the “Migration and Human Rights” training curriculum. An online workshop was organised with the designated working group in cooperation with the Sanremo Institute, during which key components of the course were defined. The learning outcomes, duration, delivery modality, syllabus, and agenda have now been agreed upon, and draft course materials are currently under preparation. The collaborative approach adopted throughout this process reflects the strong partnership between the

project team and the Sanremo Institute, as well as the active engagement and ownership demonstrated by beneficiary institutions.

Through the development of these specialised modules and the introduction of blended learning formats combining in-person sessions and digital platforms, the MIRCO project continues to strengthen institutional capacities and promote harmonised, rights-based, and sustainable migration governance across the Western Balkans.

Regional Training Planning Workshop Held in Ljubljana: Capacity Building Planning

Date: 10 December 2025

Location: Ministry of Interior - Ljubljana, Slovenia

A regional training planning workshop was held on 10 December at the premises of the Ministry of the Interior in Ljubljana with the aim to further refine and update the regional training plan for the period January–March 2026.

Project partners and beneficiary institutions, led by the MIRCO project team, engaged in in-depth discussions on the organisation of upcoming training sessions in their respective countries and institutions.

They reviewed progress to date, identified challenges encountered, and agreed on mitigation measures to strengthen capacity-building initiatives across the Western Balkans. In addition, the training plan for the next quarter was prepared, paving the way for coordinated implementation. At the outset, participants received a comprehensive overview of the mandate, structure, and key responsibilities of the Slovenian Ministry of the Interior as the host institution. Particular attention was given to its capacity-building framework, especially in the context of preparations for the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum.



Ministry of Interior, Ljubljana, 10 December 2025

Strengthening Migration Capacities Across the Western Balkans

Comprehensive capacity-building activities aimed at strengthening migration management systems across the Western Balkans have been successfully launched and implemented throughout the region. These activities are designed to enhance the knowledge, practical competencies, and institutional effectiveness of employees from partner institutions, as well as other relevant stakeholders engaged in migration governance.

To date, training sessions have been delivered in all project partner countries, ensuring broad regional coverage and inclusive participation. The programme has addressed key thematic areas of strategic importance, including Migration and Development, Migration and Gender, Global and Regional Migration Governance, and Prevention of Torture in the Context of Migration. These topics were selected to reflect both current migration challenges and evolving international standards, while promoting rights-based and evidence-driven approaches.

Through 12 dedicated and interactive training sessions, a total of 161 employees from Western Bal-

kan beneficiary institutions have upgraded their professional capacities. The trainings combined theoretical frameworks with practical case studies, peer exchange, and applied exercises, enabling participants to translate knowledge into concrete policy and operational improvements.

In addition to representatives of project beneficiary institutions, the sessions brought together participants from other national authorities, international organisations, and local civil society organisations. This multi-stakeholder approach fostered dialogue, strengthened professional networks, and encouraged cross-sectoral cooperation within and across countries in the region.

By promoting harmonisation with international and regional migration standards, these activities are contributing to improved policy coherence, enhanced institutional coordination, and stronger regional cooperation. Ultimately, the initiative supports the development of more resilient, responsive, and rights-based migration governance systems across the Western Balkans.



Ministry of Security, Sarajevo, BA, 22-23 December 2025

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

MIRCO project continues to make significant strides in strengthening regional learning capacities through digital innovation. The Global and Regional Migration Governance, Migration and Development, and Migration and Gender courses have now been successfully digitalised, translated into Serbian and Macedonian, and made fully available on the Regional Migration Training Centre eLearning platform.

This important achievement marks a major step forward in enhancing both the accessibility and long-term sustainability of professional training opportunities for migration practitioners across the Western Balkans and beyond. By offering high-quality con-

tent in three languages and in a flexible online format, the project ensures that knowledge can be accessed anytime and anywhere, supporting continuous professional development across WB project beneficiary institutions as well as to other migration stakeholders in the region and wider.

In addition, the Children and Youth in Migration course has been fully digitalised, and uploaded to the website. Once completed, this course will further expand the platform's comprehensive learning portfolio, reinforcing the project's commitment to inclusive, regionally tailored, and future-oriented migration training.

English Language Courses Successfully Completed

The English language training initiative for key professionals from Western Balkan partner institutions has started in January 2025 and has been successfully completed in January 2026, marking an important achievement in strengthening capacities for international cooperation in the field of migration management.

Delivered by dedicated service providers in each partner country, the tailor-made courses focused on enhancing practical language skills directly relevant

to the migration sector. In total, 42 professionals successfully completed the courses, demonstrating strong commitment and measurable progress in their communication competencies.

Given the clear benefits and positive outcomes achieved, it is recommended that similar English language training activities continue throughout the remaining duration of the project, subject to available resources, in order to further reinforce institutional capacities and sustain long-term impact.



SCRM, Belgrade, May 2025



Ministry of Security, Sarajevo, June 2025

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