

Over 28m Iranians screened for hypertension, diabetes: *National Health Survey*



Social Desk

Since the implementation of Iran's National Health Survey on November 11, 2023, the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education has announced that over 334,000 people have been identified as possibly having diabetes. The survey, which will run from November 11, 2023, to January 5, 2024, aims to screen individuals over the age of 18 for blood pressure and diabetes. The Ministry plans to create health records for all participants as part of this nationwide initiative, as reported by IRNA. According to the Ministry of Health's announcement, as of Friday, December 29, 2023, a total of 28,305,718 individuals have been screened for high blood pressure and diabetes in the National Health Survey. Of those, 558,896 people were identified as possibly having hypertension, and 334,190 people were identified as possibly having diabetes. Further-

more, in the 24 hours before that date, 1,302,529 individuals were screened, with 20,588 people identified with the possibility of high blood pressure and 10,866 people with the possibility of diabetes. Based on a previous announcement by the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Education, 65 percent of men and 35 percent of women have participated in the National Health Survey thus far. The Director General of the Non-Communicable Diseases Management Office, Kourosh Etemad, noted that over five million Iranians have been identified in the pre-hypertension phase, while over 1.9 million people have been identified in the pre-diabetes phase through the survey. Etemad emphasized the importance of timely intervention to prevent or manage diabetes and high blood pressure in these individuals. Etemad also encouraged greater participation from women, stating that the current 35

percent coverage is promising but can be improved. He highlighted that the most active age group in the survey has been 35-45 years old, and he urged all individuals over 18 years old in the country to participate to achieve the survey's objectives. In terms of screening numbers, the provinces of Fars, Mazandaran, East Azarbaijan, Kermanshah, and Urmia have been the most active, with over one million people screened since November 11. In terms of population coverage, the cities of Behbahan, Iranshahr, Shahrekord, and Bushehr have shown the highest participation rates in the survey. The main goal of this campaign is to provide free care for diabetic and hypertensive patients within the framework of the family health program. By creating electronic health records, healthcare providers and doctors will be able to monitor and provide necessary tests and medications on a monthly or quarterly basis to those in need.

Migration cannot be wished away



By Ali Amiri
Staff writer

On October 22, 2023, *The Wall Street Journal* published an article titled "Illegal Immigration Is a Bigger Problem Than Ever," which raises concerns about the current situation of increased migration to the United States. The article specifically focuses on the number of families and children entering the country illegally. Almost a year before that, CNN ran a story titled "No Immigration 'Fix' and Congress Isn't Really Trying," with its headline framing immigration as a problem the US is facing and blaming Congress for not taking action.

This kind of fearmongering is not limited to *The Wall Street Journal* and CNN alone. Immigration has become one of the most divisive debates of our era, and the rise of right-wing politicians in the West can, at least partially, be attributed to the anti-immigrant sentiments propagated by both legacy media and the politicians and parties benefiting from it.

However, Hein de Haas, a distinguished migration scholar,

sociologist, and Professor of Sociology at the University of Amsterdam, has recently published a book titled 'How Migration Really Works'. This authoritative and myth-busting book comprehensively examines the issue of immigration in three distinct sections. De Haas debunks 22 myths about immigration that are deeply rooted in the popular discourse on the matter, making it an excellent read for anyone seeking a genuine understanding of immigration.

"This book," writes de Haas, "will show that the ideas on both sides represent partial, simplistic and often outright misleading views on migration, which crumble in the face of evidence." In an attempt to "overcome an increasingly polarized debate," de Haas offers "evidence that challenges simplistic pro- and anti-migration narratives."

In an opinion piece published by *The Guardian*, de Haas summarizes his core ideas and begins by questioning the popular term "immigration crisis." He writes, "There is no scientific evidence to sustain the claim that global migration is accelerating," pointing to the fact that

international migrants account for approximately 3 percent of the world's population. "This percentage," he authoritatively states, "has remained remarkably stable over the past half-century."

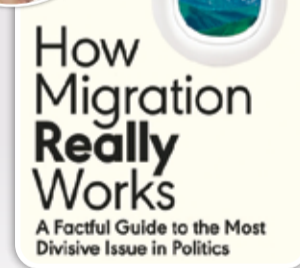
De Haas goes on to explain that similarly, the scale of refugee migration is much smaller than what politicians and media portray. Approximately 10 percent of all international migrants are refugees, which accounts for only 0.3 percent of the global population. While the number of refugees may vary significantly due to regions and conflicts, there is no concrete evidence of a long-term upward trend.

He further discredits the myth that illegal migration is spiraling out of control. "In fact," he notes, "the large majority of migrants who move from the global south to the global north continue to move legally."

Turning to the "common understandings of the causes of migration," de Haas presents them in a completely novel and different way, supported by evidence. He suggests that the conventional view of "south-

to-north migration" is primarily rooted in the assumptions that poverty, inequality, and violence in origin countries drive people to migrate. This perspective leads to the belief that addressing poverty reduction and promoting development in the countries of origin could potentially offer a long-term solution to migration.

However, this assumption



tion does not withstand evidence that demonstrates how migration increases as poorer countries experience economic growth - like the cases of Mexico and India, both middle-income countries. This is because as income and education levels

improve, along with infrastructure development, people's abilities and aspirations to migrate also rise. Contrary to the common perception of migration as a result of a desperate escape from misery, the reality is that migration is often an investment in the future well-being of families and demands substantial resources.

"Poverty actually deprives people of the resources required to move over long distances, let alone to cross continents," he writes.

In the final part of the book, de Haas underlines "the elephant in the room of migration debates: persistent labor demand," which is a central aspect of his perspective on migration. He presents this as the underlying reason why all the "ill-conceived immigration restrictions have [...]

backfired." These restrictions have resulted in sudden surges in migration, where individuals feel compelled to migrate immediately or risk losing the opportunity. Consequently, established patterns of movement have been disrupted, leading migrants to settle permanently in new locations. These circumstances have also contributed to an increase in illegal migration, as people are forced to take greater risks when crossing borders and rely on smugglers to evade detection. "The misleading assertion that poverty causes migration," de Haas writes in his opinion

piece, "conceals the fact that labor demand has been the main driver of growing immigration to Western countries since the 1990s."

The rise in educational attainment, progress in women's rights, and the aging population have led to labor shortages, particularly in Western countries. Consequently, there is a growing demand for migrant workers in sectors such as agriculture, construction, cleaning, hospitality, transport, and food processing. This demand arises from the lack of local workers who are both willing and qualified to fulfill these positions, which are often regarded as precarious employment. If there were no ongoing labor shortages, the majority of migrants would not have decided to migrate.

Asserting that there are "no simple solutions for complex problems," de Haas urges politicians to gather the courage to tell an honest story about migration. In his book, he demonstrates that migration benefits the wealthy in host communities more than the migrants themselves and emphasizes that it is a phenomenon that is here to stay.

De Haas concludes his book by saying that any genuine debate on migration should "inevitably be a debate on the type of society we want to live in."

