



Migrants, refugees and mental health:  
a key theme for ENTER, a European network on  
training and research in mental health

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# The ENTER Network

## 17 institutions in 14 countries

1. Bosnia Herzegovina, Tuzla
2. Denmark, Zealand
3. Finland, Tampere
4. France, Paris
5. Germany, Essen
6. Greece, Athens
7. Ireland, Dublin
8. Italy, Rovigo
9. Lithuania, Vilnius
10. Norway, Bodø
11. Poland, Warsaw, IPIN
12. Poland, Warsaw, APS
13. Slovenia, Ljubljana
14. Spain, Barcelona
15. UK, London, Middlesex
16. UK, Mental Health Foundation
17. UK, Saint Andrews

To date, five major ENTER projects have been funded by the European Commission:

- OSCAR (2001-2004)
- ISADORA (2002-2005)
- EMILIA (2005-2010)
- PROMISE (2009-2012)
- CAMILLE (2013-2015)

And one by the Norwegian Government:

- Citizens Against Depression (2014-2016)

# Refugees and asylum seekers

## Europe has a real role to play

Remember: Europe only gets a tiny part!

World refugee survey 2002  
(Washington, D.C.: U.S. Committee for Refugees)

- 45 million refugees
- The major refugee burden is shouldered by non-Western countries (Middle East 46%, Africa 20% and Southern & Central Asia 18%).
- Relatively few of those seeking shelter are to be found in European countries (6,5%),
- the combined total for the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand is lower still (3,9%)

# Where displaced people are being hosted (UNHCR 2016)

- Africa: 30%
- Middle East & North Africa: 26%
- Europe: 17%
- Americas: 16%

# Where are refugees fleeing from?

UNHCR 2016: 55% of refugees come from three countries

- Syria 5.5m
- Afghanistan 2.5m
- South Sudan 1.4m

# Top hosting countries

- Turkey: 2.9 million
- Pakistan: 1.4 million
- Lebanon: 1.0 million
- Iran: 0.98 million
- Uganda: 0.94 million
- Ethiopia: 0.79 million

# 2017 figures in Europe

- In 2017, 650 000 first-time asylum seekers applied for international protection in the Member States of the EU.
  - 538 000 asylum seekers were granted protection status in the Member States of the EU.
  - Nearly half (46 %) of EU first instance asylum decisions resulted in positive outcomes.



# Citizenship of first-time applicants in the EU: most from Syria and Iraq

- Syria was the main country of citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU Member States in 2017, a position it has held each year since 2013.
- In 2017, the number of Syrian first-time asylum applicants in the EU-28 fell back to 102 000 from 335 000 in 2016, while the share of Syrians in the EU-28 total dropped from 27.8 % to 15.8 %. Despite this drop, Syria was the main country of citizenship in fourteen EU Member States.
- First-time asylum applicants
  - Syrians 16%
  - Iraqis 7 %
  - Afghanis 7 %
  - Nigerians 6 %
  - Pakistanis 5 %.

# A 2016 Literature Review on mental health of war refugees

What are the long term effects (5 years or more) after migrating/fleeing: 29 publications studied; 16 010 refugees overall.

- Depression : 2.3% - 80%
- PTSD: 4.4% - 86%
- Anxiety: 20% - 88%

But overall: > 20%

Bogic M, Jkoku A, Priebe S.

[Long-term mental health of war-refugees: a systematic literature review.](#)

*BMC International Health and Human Rights* 2015 15:29

# Risk factors

- Prevalence of these 3 disorders associated with
  - trauma before migrating
  - stress after migrating
- Depression associated with
  - socioeconomic status after migration (social exclusion + poverty/precarity)

# Conclusions of the WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2016

- The overall rates of mental disorders in refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants are similar to those in the host populations.
  - The exception is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), higher in migrants.
- The high absolute numbers of these populations can still constitute a significant challenge to health care systems.
- Some refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants are exposed to a number of risk factors for mental disorders:
  - The rates of depression and anxiety disorders tend to increase over time, and poor mental health is associated with deprived socioeconomic conditions, in particular social isolation and unemployment.
  - One cohort study also found an increased incidence of psychotic disorders in refugees after resettlement.

Priebe S, Giacco D, El-Nagib R. Public health aspects of mental health among migrants and refugees: a review of the evidence on mental health care for refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants in the WHO European Region. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2016 (Health Evidence Network (HEN) Synthesis Report 47).