HEALTH EVIDENCE NETWORK SYNTHESIS REPORT 42

Public health aspects of migrant health: a review of the evidence on health status for undocumented migrants in the European Region

Elisabetta De Vito | Chiara de Waure | Maria Lucia Specchia | Walter Ricciardi





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HEN and the WHO Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe project

At the fifth meeting of the WHO European Advisory Committee on Health Research (EACHR), which took place on 7–8 July 2014, EACHR agreed to form a subcommittee on migration and health to review the Public Health Aspects of Migration in Europe (PHAME) strategic framework. EACHR recommended that the Secretariat commission three HEN synthesis reports tackling the challenges of three distinct migrant groups: undocumented migrants, labour migrants, and refugees and asylum seekers.

This HEN synthesis report is therefore the result of a cross-divisional effort in the Regional Office between the PHAME project of the Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being and the Evidence and Information for Policy-making unit of the Division of Information, Evidence, Research and Innovation.

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Abstract

Undocumented migrants are people within a country without the necessary documents and permits. They are considered at higher risk for health problems because of their irregular status and the consequences of economic and social marginalization. A systematic review found 122 documents that suggested policies and interventions to improve health care access and delivery for undocumented migrants. Undocumented migrants mostly have only access to emergency care across Europe, and even in the countries where they are fully entitled to health care, formal and informal barriers hinder their access. This raises concerns for both public health and migrant care. On the basis of findings, policy options are suggested regarding data collection, research, entitlement to health care, information and communication, training and intersectoral approaches.

Keywords

DELIVERY OF HEALTH CARE, EVIDENCE-BASED HEALTH CARE, HEALTH POLICY, MIGRANTS, SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

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ABBREVIATIONS

CIS Commonwealth of Independent States

CORDIS Community Research and Development Information Service

EU European Union

EUR-lex EU law and other public EU documents

Eurostat Statistical Office of the European Union

HEN Health Evidence Network

HUMA Health for Undocumented Migrants and Asylum seekers Network

MIPEX Migrant Integration Policy Index

OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PICUM Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented

Migrants

PRISMA Transparent reporting of systematic reviews and meta-analyses

RESTORE REsearch into implementation STrategies to support patients

of different ORigins and language background in a variety of

European primary care settings

SOPHIE Evaluating the Impact of Structural Policies on Health Inequalities

and their Social Determinants, and Fostering Change

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