WEBINAR on
The Impact of COVID-19 on Migrant and Refugee Health.

Dr. Santino Severoni, Director, Global Migration Health Programme
Office of the Deputy Director General
WHO, Geneva
severonis@who.int
According to the latest UN DESA International Migration 2020 Highlights, the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may have reduced the number of international migrants by around 2 million globally by mid-2020, corresponding to a decrease of around 27% in the growth expected from July 2019 to June 2020.

Most refugees and migrants face similar health threats from COVID-19 as the host populations but may have higher vulnerabilities due to:

- conditions of their journeys;
- poor food and nutrition status;
- limited access and livelihood opportunities;
- overcrowded and poor living and working conditions;
- inadequate access to water, sanitation and other basic services.

Migrants, in particular undocumented migrants, are often excluded from national programmes for health promotion, disease prevention, treatment and care, as well as from affording financial protection for health and other social protection services.
Challenges and health needs identified

- Some of the measures Member States put in place to fight the ‘second wave’ of the COVID-19 pandemic, disproportionately affected migrants, asylum seekers and refugees.\(^1\)

- Conditions in camps and camp-like settings are concerning. Basic public health measures, such as social distancing, proper hand hygiene, and self-isolation are thus not possible or extremely difficult to implement in refugee camps.

- Official statistics on refugees’ deaths due to Covid-19 are not clear and according to available data, fatalities in refugee camps have been far less than expected. As of December 2020, only 32,000 refugees worldwide had been registered as having the virus, out of 26 million and, for example, in the largest refugee settlement camp in Bangladesh, only 356 Rohingya refugees had contracted the virus from the 860,000 there.

- Lockdowns in camps are often stricter, with social integration limited by lack of work and the focus on prevention. Therefore, socio-economic consequences of COVID-19 seem the to be the ones affecting the refugee communities the most.\(^2\)

- The ability to access health-care services in humanitarian settings is usually compromised and exacerbated by shortages of medicines and lack of health-care facilities.

- Labour migrants face specific issues. They can be affected by income loss, health-care insecurity, as well as legal and social insecurity due to postponement of decisions on their legal status or reduction of employment, legal, and administrative services.

- There is also scarce culturally and linguistically accessible information about COVID-19. In Europe, for example, there are clear gaps in the availability of translated COVID-19 risk communications, excluding migrants from the COVID-19 response.\(^2\)

\(^1\) Coronavirus pandemic in the EU - Fundamental Rights Implications - Bulletin 6
\(^2\) 2020, refugees and Covid-19: an interwoven tragedy
\(^3\) Engaging the vulnerable: A rapid review of public health communication aimed at migrants during the COVID-19 pandemic in Europe
What does the available evidence say?

- **Data on COVID-19** cases and deaths are plentiful, but disaggregated data on COVID-19 by age, sex, or ethnicity and race are scarce and should be available routinely and automatically:
  - UNHCR reports some **38,500 cases of COVID-19** globally among forcibly displaced people, as of December 2020.¹
  - National Health Service health-care staff from ethnic minority groups seem to have died in disproportionate numbers from COVID-19.²
  - According to the latest OECD report³, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected migrants. They are twice as likely to contract the virus than the rest of the population.
  - Nearly half of Singapore’s migrant workers residing in dormitories have had COVID-19, indicating the virus spread much more widely among those living in these accommodations than the official case tally shows.⁴
  - Recent data showed that of the total health-care workers infected with COVID-19 in Spain and Italy, 72% and 66% respectively, were women.
  - In terms of mortality, in the U.K.⁴ the biggest relative increase was for people born in Central and Western Africa (4.5 times higher in 2020 than in 2014 to 2018). This group of countries includes Nigeria, Ghana and Somalia.
  - In Chicago, nearly 52% of deaths from COVID-19 were among African Americans, although they represent only about 30% of the city’s population.

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¹ UNHCR Global COVID-19 Emergency Response, 22 December 2020
² Sharpening the global focus on ethnicity and race in the time of COVID-19. Lancet. 2020
³ What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children?
Aims to capture voices of refugees and migrants

Collaboration with research centres led by Ghent University (Belgium) and the University of Copenhagen (Denmark)

Snowball sampling

Online questionnaire in 37 languages
  - Sociodemographic characteristics
  - COVID-19 health status
  - Daily stressors
  - Social well-being
  - Psychological well-being

Over 30,000 respondents from almost all WHO Member States participated to the first survey on COVID-19 pandemic impact on refugees and migrants.
Apart Together survey

- People living in more precarious housing situations had less sources of information on COVID-19
- 35% of migrants and refugees who indicate not seeking health care reported financial constraints prevented them from seeking health care, and a further 22% fear of deportation

Reasons for not seeking medical health care in case of (suspected) COVID-19 symptoms

- Lack of financial means (34.6%)
- Fear of deportation (21.9%)
- Lack of availability of health care (12.5%)
- No entitlement of health care (10.0%)
- Do not know where to find a doctor/health worker (4.2%)
- Lack of transport (4.0%)
- Don’t speak the language (5.4%)
- Only if symptoms get worse (2.8%)
- Don’t trust doctors/health workers (1.0%)
- I would self-isolate (1.4%)
- Afraid of getting infected at hospital/consultation room/health facility (0.8%)
- Don’t think the coronavirus is as bad (0.0%)

Notes: data from 1198 respondents.
Apart Together survey

- Refugees and migrants living on the street, in insecure accommodation or in asylum centres are at high risk of experiencing mental health problems in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- At least 50% of the respondents indicated that COVID-19 brought about greater level of depression, worry, anxiety and loneliness. One in five respondents also expressed deterioration of mental health in terms of drug- and alcohol-related issues.

Respondents identifying deterioration of mental health since the COVID-19 pandemic according to their housing condition.
Nearly 40% of those living in asylum centres, on the streets or in insecure accommodation indicated being affected the worst in terms of perceived discrimination.

COVID-19 has significantly impacted refugees and migrants on their access to work, safety and financial means.

Around 60% of the respondents living on the streets, in insecure accommodation and in asylum centres and irregular migrants suffered the worst impact of COVID-19 on their daily lives.
What we have learned

The coronavirus pandemic negatively affected more than 2.7 million migrants, particularly women and girls but new practices have emerged to protect those on the move:

- While some States have suspended returns owing to unsafe conditions, others have made efforts to ensure that those returning or who have been deported are supported.
- Initiatives by countries such as extending residence and work permits, regularizing the status of undocumented migrants, and pursuing alternatives to detention.
- The pandemic has highlighted the value of migrant labour, urging countries to recognize their contributions, by ensuring fair and ethical recruitment, decent work, and access to health care and social protection.
- National health policies and supporting legislative and financial frameworks should promote migrants right to health.
- Universal Health Coverage, as a universal right - Fewer than one in two countries (43%) provide access to health services to all migrants, regardless of their legal status. Refugees and migrants should be included in governments’ vaccine allocation and distribution plans and ongoing essential health services.
- Health systems should be sensitive to migrants needs, languages and problems.
- Strengthened health systems and increase resources for health, especially primary health care.
- Good health monitoring and data are needed to understand health needs and set priorities.
- Collaboration between countries and sectors is essential.
- Social inclusion and cohesion should be strengthened between host communities and migrants, and discrimination issues addressed.
Thank you

Dr. Santino Severoni
Director WHO Global Migration Programme
severonis@who.int
COVID-19, Public Health Orders and Migration and Health in the U.S.

Paul Spiegel MD, MPH

Director, Center for Humanitarian Health
Professor of Practice, Department of International Health
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
March 20, 2020

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC)

ORDER UNDER SECTIONS 362 & 365 OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT
(42 U.S.C. §§ 265, 268):

AMENDMENT AND EXTENSION OF ORDER SUSPENDING INTRODUCTION OF
CERTAIN PERSONS FROM COUNTRIES WHERE A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE
EXISTS

I. Introduction

I am amending the Order Suspending Introduction of Certain Persons from Countries Where a Communicable Disease Exists, issued on March 20, 2020 (hereinafter, March 20, 2020 Order or Order) and extended on April 20, 2020 (hereinafter, April 20, 2020 Extension or Extension), to clarify that it applies to all land and coastal Ports of Entry (POEs) and Border Patrol stations at or near the United States’ border with Canada or Mexico that would otherwise hold covered aliens in a congregate setting. I am extending the duration of the Order until I determine that the danger of further introduction of COVID-19 into the United States has ceased to be a serious danger to the public health, and continuation of the Order is no longer necessary to protect the public health. Every 30 days, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shall review the latest information regarding the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health risks to ensure that the Order remains necessary to protect the public health. Upon determining that the further introduction of COVID-19 into the United States is no longer a serious danger to the public health necessitating the continuation of this Order, I will publish a notice in


LETTER TO DHS SECRETARY WOLF AND ATTORNEY GENERAL BARR SIGNED BY LEADERS OF PUBLIC HEALTH SCHOOLS, MEDICAL SCHOOLS, HOSPITALS, AND OTHER U.S. INSTITUTIONS

Alex Azar  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Robert R. Redfield, MD  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
1600 Clifton Road

Primary country: United States of America
Other country: Mexico
Source: Columbia University
Format: News and Press Release
Themes:


Security Bars and Processing

A Proposed Rule by the Homeland Security Department and the Executive Office for Immigration Review on July 09, 2020

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY
8 CFR Part 208
[Rule No: USCIS 2020-0013]

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Executive Office for Immigration Review
8 CFR Part 1208
[Dir. Order No. 11–2021]

Security Bars and Processing

AGENCY: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security ("DHS"); Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice ("DOJ").

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule would amend existing DHS and DOJ (collectively, "the Departments") regulations to clarify that the Departments may consider danger to the security of the United States. Finally, the rule modifies the process in expedited removal proceedings for screening aliens for potential eligibility for deferral of removal (who are ineligible for withholding of removal as subject to the danger to the security of the United States bar).

DATES: This final rule is effective January 23, 2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: FOR USCIS: Andrew Davidson, Asylum Division Chief, Refugee, Asylum and International Affairs Directorate, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, DHS; telephone 202–222–8377 (not a toll-free call). For EOIR: Lauren Alder Reid, Assistant Director, Office of Policy, Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice ("DOJ").

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Final rule.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:


Briefing: Coronavirus and the halting of asylum at the US-Mexico border

"Even if the coronavirus abates, we don’t really expect the administration to lift those restrictions."


COVID-19 public health orders should not target asylum seekers

Recommendations

- Strengthen public health decision-making, contingency planning and funding for public health authorities and humanitarian actors along border
  - Numbers crossing will have major impact on feasibility
- Improve non-pharmaceutical interventions (e.g. masks, distancing, hygiene)
- Adapt and reduce border processing to minimize delays
- Increase testing capacity
- Expand quarantine and isolation capacity
- Avoid/minimize holding persons in congregate facilities

- Stop abusing public health orders to further anti-migration and anti-refugee policies and discrimination
Migration Detention Standards Project

Project Aims:

1) **Collate** existing public health standards
2) **Conduct** a comparative analysis of minimum PH stds
3) **Document** current M&E and compliance mechanisms
4) **Examine** implementation of the standards

- **Focus Countries**: US, UK, Greece, Libya, Italy
- **U.S Detention Bodies**: ICE, CBP, ORR
- **Public Health Domains**: health, hygiene, shelter, food & nutrition, protections, M&E
COVID-19 and migrants, refugees and asylum seekers stranded in Greece

Dr. Apostolos Veizis . Director of Medical Operational Support Unit
Greece

- Total Population: 10,816,286 (census 2011)
• 120,000 asylum seekers and refugees following the “refugee crisis” 2015
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<th>LESVOS</th>
<th>CHIOS</th>
<th>SAMOS</th>
<th>LEROS</th>
<th>KOS</th>
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CAP.  CAPACITY
OCC.  OCCUPANCY
R.I.C. RECEPTION AND IDENTIFICATION CENTRE
N.C.S.S. NATIONAL CENTRE FOR SOCIAL SOLIDARY
P.D.C. PREDEPARTURE DETENTION CENTRE
Refugees and migrants are generally in good health...

But they are at risk of falling sick in transition or while staying in new countries due to, for example:

- poor living conditions
- inadequate food and water
- increased stress
- lack of integration

REPORT ON THE HEALTH OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS IN THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION
Proportion of most common reasons for MH consultations

Depression | PTSD | Anxiety

January | February | March | April | May | June | July | August | September | October | November | December
Main morbidities, Moria clinic, paed. cs, Q1-Q2 2019

- URTI
- LRTI
- Diarrhoea - watery
- Gastro intestinal - other
- UTI
- Skin diseases – Chickenpox
- Skin diseases – Lice
- Skin diseases – Scabies
- Skin diseases – other
- Injury -accidental
- Chronic diseases
- Mental Health
- Other
Hygiene related morbidities, Moria clinic, Jan-June 2019

- Jan: 533
- Feb: 413
- Mar: 409
- Apr: 458
- May: 454
- Jun: 357
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<th>Morbidity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>% of Patients</th>
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<td>Hypertension</td>
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<td>Pregnancy induced HT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diabetes type I</td>
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<td>4.3%</td>
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<td>Diabetes type II</td>
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<td>Gestational diabetes</td>
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<td>COPD/Asthma</td>
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<td>17.5%</td>
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<td>Epilepsy</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>21.8%</td>
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<td>Heart failure</td>
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<td>Total morbidities</td>
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طرق الوقاية من فيروس الكورونا

1. نظافة اليدين: استخدم صابونًا وطبقًا للطهي أو التنظيف الجيد لل اليدين.
2. الابقاء على المسافة: ابقى على مسافة لا درجات حرارة أكثر من أخرى.
3. الابقاء على المسافة: ابقى على مسافة لا درجات حرارة أكثر من أخرى.
4. الابقاء على المسافة: ابقى على مسافة لا درجات حرارة أكثر من أخرى.
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9. الابقاء على المسافة: ابقى على مسافة لا درجات حرارة أكثر من أخرى.
10. الابقاء على المسافة: ابقى على مسافة لا درجات حرارة أكثر من أخرى.

prévention du coronavirus

1. se laver les mains
2. en cas d’éternuement
3. yeux, nez, bouche
4. garder une distance sociale
5. si vous êtes malade
REFUGEE CAMP

SUPERMARKET

JAVIRROYO
Restrictions on movement in the country’s migrant reception centers March 17th, 2020 following a joint decision of many ministries and the National Committee for the Protection of Public Health against COVID-19

COVID-19 in reception and detention centres for migrants and refugees

1. There is no evidence to suggest that transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 is higher amongst migrants and refugees. However, environmental factors such as overcrowding in reception and detention centres may increase their exposure to the disease.

2. All principles of physical distancing applied in the community should be applied in migrant reception and detention settings. If physical distancing and risk-containment measures cannot be safely implemented, measures to de-congest and evacuate residents should be considered.

3. There is no evidence that quarantining people in reception and detention settings effectively limits transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 or, provides any additional protective effects for the general population outside those that could be achieved by conventional containment and protection measures.

4. Providing free and equitable prevention, testing, treatment and care to migrants and refugees in settings of reception and detention is critical at all times.

#COVID19
New health security map COVID-19 for Greece Asylum seekers and refugees that are living in facilities in the yellow (A) zone can move out 15% of people per facility, max 750 a day. Asylum seekers and refugees living in facilities in the red (B) zone can not move out of facility.
No doctors/irregular visits at Grevena, Katsika, Lavrio, Vaiochori, Veria, Volvi, Pyrgos camps, Samos RIC, Chios RIC
Chalkida Hospital continues to refuse to see patients coming from Oinofyta, Ritsona camps without COVID 19 negative test. They don't do that for the local population. There have been reports to the Ombudsman, Ministry of Migration and Asylum, Ministry of Health. Apartheid 2020, EU
COVID-19

- Adapting the current programme
- Call for evacuation of vulnerable people
- “Green zone”
- Improving WASH
- Contribution to COVID-19, triage, isolation
- Testing?
- Quarantine of camps...??!!
## Updated data of COVID-19 Risk Groups in the Islands RICs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Island</th>
<th>Risk Groups</th>
<th># of Individuals Risk Group</th>
<th># of Households</th>
<th>Total # Individuals including family members</th>
<th>Total # Individuals with Geographical Restriction (as of 29 Nov 2020)</th>
<th>Total # Individuals without Geographical Restriction (as of 29 Nov 2020)</th>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (5 RIC Islands)</td>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>218</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>645</td>
<td>603</td>
<td>42</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Geographic restriction information is based on data available as of 29th November.
Covid-19 and refugees (1st epidemic wave)

New confirmed cases of Covid-19 in refugee open camps and facilities, Greece (26 Feb - 30 May)

- Total confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Greece, by date of testing
- New arrivals to Lesvos island
- Kranidi refugee facility
- Gerakini (Malakasa) open refugee camp
- Ritsona open refugee camp

Πηγή δεδομένων: ΕΟΔΥ – Εκθέσεις επιτήρησης σε σημεία φροντίδας προσφύγων
Επεξεργασία και ανάλυση των δεδομένων: ΚΕΠΥ- The Centre for Research & Education in Public Health, Health Policy & Primary Health Care [CEPH]
Covid-19 and refugees (2nd epidemic wave)

New confirmed cases of Covid-19 in refugee camps and facilities, Greece (26 Feb - 29 Nov)

Total confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Greece, by date of testing
- Total confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Greece, by date of testing
  - Refugee New Arrivals
  - Refugee Facilities (Greek mainland)

New weekly cases by type of refugee facility
- Refugee New Arrivals
- Refugee Facilities (Greek mainland)

Πηγή δεδομένων: ΕΟΔΥ – Εκθέσεις επιτήρησης σε σημεία φροντίδας προσφύγων
Επεξεργασία και ανάλυση των δεδομένων: ΚΕΠΥ
Covid-19 and refugees in Greece

Total Covid-19 confirmed cases by type of refugee facility, Greece (26 Feb - 29 Nov)

- Refugee Reception and Identification Centers (Greek islands and borders)
- Refugee Facilities (Greek mainland)
- Refugee New Arrivals

Πηγή δεδομένων: ΕΟΔΥ – Εκθέσεις επιτήρησης σε σημεία φροντίδας προσφύγων
Επεξεργασία και ανάλυση των δεδομένων: ΚΕΠΥ
Covid-19 and refugees in Greece

Covid-19 confirmed cases per 100,000 population, Greece (26 Feb – 15 Nov)

General population

Refugees residing in open refugee facilities

Refugees residing in reception and identification centers

Πηγές δεδομένων: (1) ΕΟΔΥ – Εκθέσεις επιτήρησης σε σημεία φροντίδας προσφύγων (2) ΓΕΕΘΑ. Εβδομαδιαίες ανακοινώσεις | Επεξεργασία και ανάλυση των δεδομένων: ΚΕΠΥ | Σημείωση: ο υπολογισμός της επίπτωσης του Covid-19 σε ΚΥΤ και λοιπές προσφυγικές δομές έγινε βάσει του μ.ο. του πληθυσμού σε αυτές τις δομές κατά την υπό εξέταση χρονική περίοδο
17/09/2020

- Almost half of COVID-19 patients hospitalized in Attica are from hosting sites and the city center.
- Sotiria hospital, out of 103 patients, 40 are refugees.
- Evaggelismos, 36 out of 66 patients are refugees.
- Amalia Fleming, 10 out of 20 are refugees.
- Attikon, 26 out of 26 are refugees.
- At least 10 refugee patients have escaped from hospitals.
THE RIGHT TO HEALTH MEANS LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

Refugees’ and migrants’ health should never be considered separate from the overall health of the population

#StandUp4HumanRights

World Health Organization
LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND

Without real action, it’s just a slogan
GREECE HAS BENEFITED FROM €2.81 BILLION OF EU SUPPORT SINCE 2015
VACCINÉ CONTRE l’indifférence
How to ensure equitable access to vaccination during the current and future pandemics? The Council of Europe Committee on Bioethics has made today a number of recommendations. 22/1/2021
CORONAVIRUS

REFUGEE
SITUATION
IN GREECE

(DOBLE USE MASK)

julita
bichabolita
The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on persons in mobility in Latin America: the case of Mexico

Ietza Bojorquez, PhD
Department of Population Studies
El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Mexico
Main points

• Health systems in Latin America need to adapt to respond to the changes in mobility (characteristic, patterns)

• The COVID-19 pandemic is an added challenge

• The response in Mexico (so far) focuses on the emergency situation

• A long term vision based on integration is required
Traditionally:
• S-N flow (US-bound)
• Intra-regional & cross border flows
• Internal displacement

More recently:
• New forms of transit (“caravans”)
• Venezuelan exodus
• Increased extra-regional flows
• From transit to permanence
Mexico: an uncertain mobility pattern

Factors:

• Impact of US migration policies
  • ... and the response of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras

• Violence (criminal, political)

• Climate change (disasters)
Mexico: an uncertain mobility pattern

- Mexico-US migration
- Migrants in transit vs immigrants/refugees
- “Caravans”

More women, children, families. Different languages, cultural differences. Persons with evolving migration projects.
Mexico: impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

• Interruption of movement
  • Border closures
  • Increased controls in the US-Mexico border

• Asylum process
  • Delays in Mexico (and US)

• Basic needs
  • Work, income
  • Shelter, housing
  • Education, etc.

• Disjoint between migration policies and health policies and agencies

• Health system
  • Rapid response by CSOs
  • Emergency response by international organizations

• Governmental response/policies
  • Migrants and refugees are entitled to health services, but administrative barriers remain
  • Unequal distribution of access to care, made worst during pandemic
  • Implementation gap in health policies for migrants/refugees
Main points

• Health systems in Latin America need to adapt to respond to the changes in mobility (characteristic, patterns)

• The COVID-19 pandemic is an added challenge

• The response in Mexico (so far) focuses on the emergency situation

• A long term vision based on integration is required
Why do social determinants of health matter more than ever in the pandemic? The case of Turkey
The migration flow that started in 2011 as a result of the conflict in Syria has been described by UNHCR as the greatest migration wave seen in recent history.

Turkey still hosts the largest number of refugees in the world.
Turkey hosts around 3.7 million registered Syrian refugees under the temporary protection regime.
- 99% live in urban settings.
- Nearly half (47%) are under the age of 18.

As of April 2020, there were around 455,000 irregular migrants mainly from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Syria.

According to UNHCR, there were an additional 370,000 asylum seekers and refugees under international protection, most of whom were from Afghanistan and Iraq.
Health Care for Refugees in Turkey

- Persons with temporary protection status and other registered refugees have legal access to public health care.
- The MoH has established a national network of migrant health centers, which act as publicly owned primary health care centers for refugees living in urban areas.
- In recent years, the MoH has employed more than a thousand refugee health workers who help in decreasing the language and cultural barriers in health service provision for refugees.
In April 2020, the Turkish Government published a circular announcing that ‘COVID-19 related health services’ will be provided under the emergency service category for free regardless of registration status, facilitating access to health services for all.

According to the circular, every individual who approaches a health care center with a suspected case of COVID-19, regardless of their health coverage under the social security system, shall be granted access to testing and treatment free of charge.
Problems in Primordial and Primary Prevention

- Increased unemployment and decreased income
- Need to continue working under risky conditions for the infection
- Problems with shelter and living environment (overcrowded houses with 4-5 families, problems with social distancing and sanitation)
- Problems in accessing healthy food, nutritional deficiencies
- High prevalence of tobacco use and chronic diseases

Karadag Caman, 2021
Problems in Primordial and Primary Prevention

- Stress provoking factors (higher levels of uncertainty, increased stigma and discrimination during the pandemic)
- Problems in access to reliable COVID-19 information and information about available services (despite efforts)
- Problems in accessing personal protective equipment
- Interruptions and delays in outreach and field work of NGOs
- Problems in accessing social services because of language barriers, lack of knowledge about continuing services, and limited number of phone-based or online services in multiple languages.

Karadag Caman, 2021
While the right to access healthcare may be guaranteed by legislation, migrant groups experience several barriers in access to health care including language barriers, cultural barriers, lack of knowledge about how the health system functions, difficulties in accessing internet, and various socioeconomic factors.
The virus itself does not discriminate, but social determinants of health do!

- Morbidity and mortality are not simply based on infections or other biological reasons.

- There are underlying social, economic and cultural factors which in turn conditions the biological, physical and chemical factors so as to cause diseases (causes of causes).

(Braveman & Gottlieb, 2014)
COVID-19 Evolving into a Social Disease

It would not be wrong to say that COVID-19 has evolved into a worldwide social disease subsequent to infectious diseases such as tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS that are also associated with social factors.

Considered from this point, social determinants of health are linked to the prevalence of the infection.

Moreover, viewed from the consequences of the infection and public health measures, the social effects of the pandemic manifests itself more distinctively in disadvantaged groups.

(Karadag Caman, O and Karabey, S. "What a Pandemic Reveals: Health Inequalities and Their Reflection on Policies" TESEV Briefs 2020/12)
Following his examination of a typhus epidemic among coal mine workers and their families in Germany in 1848, Virchow, as the father of social medicine defined “artificial epidemics” (Kuntz et al., 2019; Taylar & Rieger, 1985).

Virchow who revealed the importance of social factors in the emergence and spread of epidemics concluded that despite the biological causality, the underlying causes of epidemics are the problems in political and social structuring and that disadvantaged groups are particularly vulnerable to both of these problems and the epidemics themselves (Rosen, 1974).
In the current COVID-19 pandemic, we clearly see this as most countries are experiencing “artificial epidemics” among disadvantaged groups including migrants and refugees.

- Migrants’ health should be on the agenda of policy makers and practitioners for a comprehensive and effective COVID-19 response because;
- Physical, mental and social dimensions of health cannot be separated.
- All three dimensions are strongly linked to social determinants of health.

Karadag Caman, 2021
Key Interventions

- Linguistically and culturally appropriate health education and risk communication
- Adequate supply of personnel protective equipment
- Ensuring Universal Health Coverage including full access to services
- Effective outreach approaches (community leaders, cultural mediators, hotlines, social media interventions, telemedicine including mHealth technologies, mobile services...)
- Closing the digital divide
Key Interventions

- Decreasing stigma and discrimination
- Increasing community participation
- Sufficient funding and social protection programs
- Modifying surveillance and reporting systems to analyze population groups according to different vulnerabilities
- Increasing intersectoral collaboration for more holistic, interconnected and gender sensitive policies and practices

«Health in All Policies»

Karadag Caman, 2021
International migration is not a problem to be solved, but a human reality that needs to be managed.

Migration related policies should be protective, inclusive and participatory, and at the same time should aim for independent and productive migrants with access to educational and occupational opportunities.

Karadag Caman, 2021
Population groups are interdependent with respect to health, wellbeing and peace

Health and wellbeing of migrants and refugees are not only important for migrants and refugees themselves, but also important for:

- Health and wellbeing of host societies
- Human and financial resources of host countries
- Building and maintaining peace

Karadag Caman, 2021
Considering the inequalities that the pandemic made more visible and the artificial epidemics created by human beings rather than the virus itself...

All countries need to have a human rights based and inclusive approach that leaves no one behind to control the pandemic and to promote health at the country and global level.

Karadag Caman, 2021