

# Health and safety of low-skilled workers should be priority for migration policy

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In the fourth article in a six-part *PLoS Medicine* series on migration & health, Joan Benach from the Employment Conditions Network at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain, and colleagues discuss the health risks and policy needs associated with migration to destination countries, especially for low-skilled workers.

In destination countries, migrant [workers](#) often fill low- or semi-skilled positions in the labour market, which are often characterized by flexibility, insecurity, precarious employment, and long working hours with low pay. Undocumented or "illegal" migrants are especially vulnerable to exploitation since they fear losing their jobs, incarceration, and deportation.

The authors argue that "governments, unions, and international organizations should collaborate to implement fair labour standards for both legal and illegal labourers that are on par with citizen workers, standardise labour [migration](#) policies, and provide legal support for undocumented labourers to help eradicate human trafficking and other forms of extreme labour exploitation."

**More information:** Benach J, Muntaner C, Delclos C, Menéndez M, Ronquillo C (2011) Migration and "Low-Skilled" Workers in Destination Countries. *PLoS Med* 8(6): e1001043.

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