

# Undocumented migrants may suffer from severe psychological distress

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Undocumented migrants are an especially vulnerable group with regard to their health status, living conditions, and barriers to access to health care and social welfare. In a study that explored 90 undocumented migrants' mental health care needs, the level of psychological distress was extremely high.

In the *Journal of Clinical Nursing* study, leaving their home country because of war or persecution, economic strain, homelessness, hunger and having experienced abuse were linked with psychological distress in the undocumented migrants. Contrary to what was predicted, having family and work were not significantly associated with a reduction of [psychological distress](#), perhaps because having family entails great responsibilities and work implies exploitation.

"Improving public health has to benefit the least-advantaged members of society. We need to rethink citizenship, due to globalization generally and accelerated migration specifically, if nurses are to play a role in the strive for securing basic needs for people with a precarious juridical status in society," said Associate Professor Trine Myhrvold, lead author of the study.

**More information:** Trine Myhrvold et al. The mental healthcare needs of undocumented migrants: an exploratory analysis of psychological distress and living conditions among undocumented migrants in Norway, *Journal of Clinical Nursing* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/jocn.13670](https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.13670)

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