



# APART TOGETHER

Everyone counts

THE PSYCHO-SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

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# 1. Introduction

- Disruption of daily lives
- Important research gap → refugees and migrants
- Numerous stressors
  - Discrimination
  - Poor-living conditions
  - Distress
- Health care + protective services

## 2. Method

- 37 languages
- Self-reported responses
  - Quantitative + qualitative data
- Collected data around the world

**Over 30 000  
respondents**





- **Sociodemographic characteristics**

- Age, gender, education, residence status, housing situation, work situation, family size in the household, time living in current country of residence

- **COVID-19**

- Self-reported health status related to COVID-19, understanding of and ability to follow government-initiated measures, the ability to follow said measures

- **Daily stressors**

- Financial means, housing, access to food and clothes, support from NGO's , sense of safety, access to medical care

- **Mental health**

- Feelings of depression, anxiety, loneliness and anger, unpleasant reminders, psychological stress reactions, irritation, hopelessness, sleep problems, substance use, worries

- **Social well-being**

- Connectedness, experiences of discrimination, sense of belonging/solidarity, coping mechanisms

# 3. Results

Variable	N	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	14 278	55.5%
Female	11 403	44.4%
<b>Residence status</b>		
Citizen	6892	29.5%
Permanent documents	6071	26.0%
Temporary documents	8611	36.9%
No documents	1755	7.5%
<b>Housing situation</b>		
House/apartment	20 903	88.8%
Refugee camp	586	2.5%
Asylum center	1744	7.4%
On the street/insecure acc.	317	1.3%



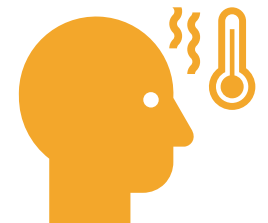
# 4. Pandemic behavior

- Seeking health care

- Less likely: undocumented, living on the street or insecure accommodation, in African region, and no schooling
- 5% would not seek healthcare
  - lack of financial means (35%)
  - fear of deportation (22%)

- Sources of information

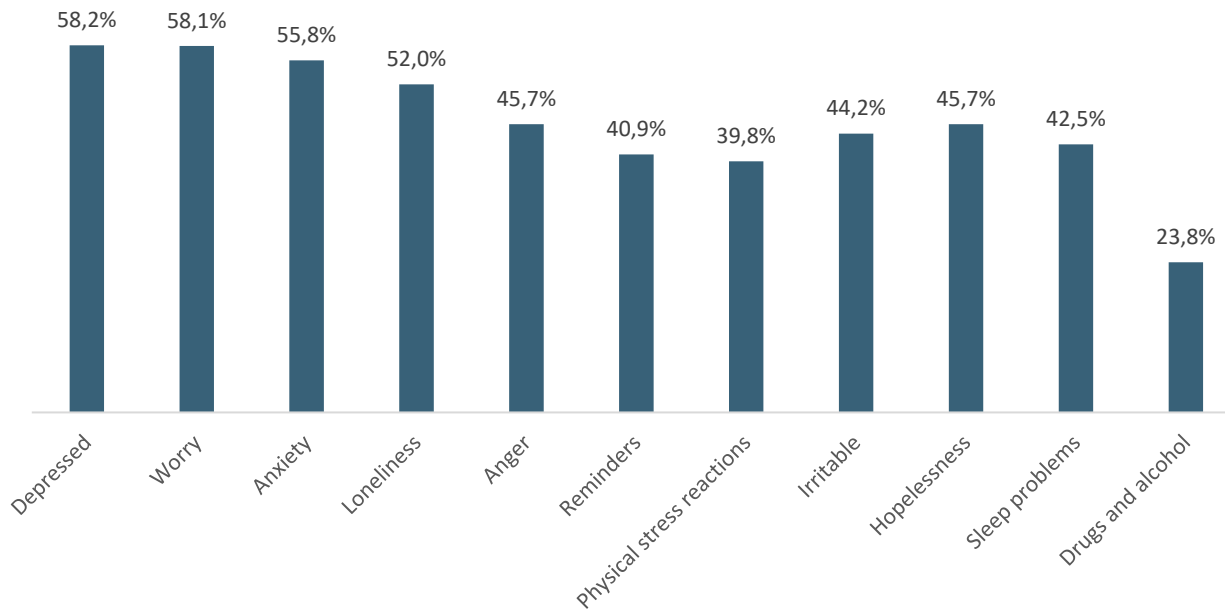
- Same tendencies for all age groups
- News from the country they live in + social media
- Don't understand or trust



# 5. Mental health



- Worse since COVID-19



- Women > men
- Older > younger than 20
- Lost job or sent home without pay

# 6. Social well-being

- **Social isolation: 1 (not at all) to 10 (extremely)**
  - M=6.7
- **Loss of connectedness**
  - Living in asylum center and on the street/insecure > house/apartment
  - Much worse for people with no documents and permanent documents
- **Experienced discrimination**
  - 13% - 27%
  - Risk groups





# Mental health: the role of daily stressors and perceived discrimination

**Table 7.** Structural equation modeling—regressions.

	$\beta$	SE	t	df	p
<b>Mental health—anxiety and depression</b>					
Age	−0.003	0.001	−3.487	1508.506	0.001 **
Male	0.110	0.018	6.142	79.775	0.000 ***
House or apartment	0.238	0.063	3.781	993.853	0.000 ***
Refugee camp	0.523	0.070	7.500	309.989	0.000 ***
On the street—insecure accommodation	0.167	0.099	1.677	259.769	0.095
Permanent documents	−0.094	0.024	−3.978	104.899	0.000 ***
Temporary documents	−0.205	0.022	−9.239	399.862	0.000 ***
No documents	−0.119	0.037	−3.192	35.623	0.003 **
Discrimination	0.336	0.027	12.418	9.297	0.000 ***
Daily stressors—basic needs	0.520	0.023	23.020	1867.066	0.000 ***
Daily stressors—social needs	−0.411	0.069	−5.919	9.840	0.000 ***
Daily stressors—medical needs	0.255	0.045	5.614	15.463	0.000 ***
<b>Mental health—hyper-arousal</b>					
Age	−0.002	0.001	−2.647	487.040	0.008 **
Male	0.068	0.017	3.909	135.512	0.000 ***
House or apartment	0.281	0.058	4.831	1352.808	0.000 ***
Refugee camp	0.428	0.065	6.630	1045.357	0.000 ***
On the street—insecure accommodation	0.131	0.095	1.386	218.742	0.167
Permanent documents	−0.088	0.023	−3.792	58.559	0.000 ***
Temporary documents	−0.198	0.022	−9.193	118.909	0.000 ***
No documents	−0.167	0.036	−4.616	188.655	0.000 ***
Discrimination	0.410	0.023	17.835	44.130	0.000 **
Daily stressors—basic needs	0.369	0.021	17.941	20.073	0.000 ***
Daily stressors—social needs	−0.203	0.058	−3.516	95.743	0.001 **
Daily stressors—medical needs	0.160	0.039	4.108	676.817	0.000 ***

\*\*  $p < 0.01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

## 7. Conclusion

GROUPS THAT ARE AT **INCREASED RISK** ARE:

- **UNDOCUMENTED** MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
- MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES **LIVING ON THE STREET/IN INSECURE ACCOMMODATION**
- MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES LIVING IN AN **ASYLUM CENTER OR REFUGEE CAMP**
- MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES LIVING IN THE **AFRICAN REGION**

**22%**

OF THE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS REPORT THAT **DISCRIMINATION** BASED ON THEIR ORIGIN HAS WORSENERD SINCE THE BEFORE THE PANDEMIC.

→ MENTAL HEALTH

**OVER 50%**

OF THE RESPONDENTS REPORT ACCESS TO **WORK, SAFETY AND FINANCIAL MEANS** TO BE WORSE THAN BEFORE THE COVID-19-PANDEMIC.

→ MENTAL HEALTH

**60%**

OF THE REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS REPORT MORE FEELINGS OF DEPRESSION AND WORRIES SINCE COVID-19 **MORE THAN 50%** REPORTS TO FEEL MORE ANXIOUS AND LONELIER.

# Mental health: the role of daily stressors and perceived discrimination

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## 8. Way forward

- Equity in policy responses
- Ensure access to healthcare
- Ensure access to information

# 6. References

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