



## “Migration, Health and Medicine”: access to health care is not the same reality everywhere in Europe

**Though international declarations acknowledge the right to health, migrants do not have proper access to care in each European country. European Academies of Medicine organize a workshop on “Migration, Health and Medicine” in Brussels. They want to help governments to know the exact needs in health care for migrants, their limited costs and their benefits for displaced and local populations.**

**Contrary to the widespread vision, migrants are usually people in good health.** Among the reasons: their cultural level and the strength required to make a long and perilous trip. *“Authorities are often unaware of the real health situations of migrants and of the health-related problems caused by these populations moves. This creates anxiety, fear for the spread of AIDS, Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis and other infectious conditions suspected to be imported by migrants”*, explains Professor Jean-Michel Foidart, Perpetual Secretary of the Royal Belgian Academy of Medicine (ARMB).

Acknowledged in many international declarations, the right to health care is recognized in European countries. However, access to health care for migrants is a national competence and depends on legal status, creating a **paradox** between humanitarian right and national legislation. On the road and once arrived, **access to care can be problematic**. *“Appropriate and accessible health care for migrants is essential to facilitate integration in the EU. EU Member States and the European Commission are working side by side to facilitate better health for all”*, says John Ryan, Director Public health, country knowledge and crisis management at the European Commission.

**If post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety and depression are more frequent among refugees than in native populations, it is not the case of other diseases.** *“Migrants face challenges covering all aspects of health and social deprivation compounded by the physical and mental stresses many of them experience”*, explains Professor George Griffin, President of the Federation of European Academies of Medicine (FEAM). Furthermore, specific needs exist for some migrant populations as, for instance, teenagers, women, particularly when pregnant, children and elderly people.

Cost of access to health care for migrants and refugees is an issue European countries are facing: *“Governments are afraid of the increased Public Health financial burden. This may create inadequate political decisions or lack of decisions. Physical and psychological support may be offered to large groups at limited costs for the reciprocal benefits of local and migrants”*, states Professor Jean-Michel Foidart, Perpetual Secretary of the Royal Belgian Academy of Medicine (ARMB).

**Aware of these problems, FEAM (Federation of European Academies of Medicine), ALLEA (European Federation of Academies of Sciences and Humanities, and the French and Belgian Academies of Medicine have**

decided to gather international experts for a workshop on *Migration, Health and Medicine*. Experts will objectively assess the present health situation and problems caused by this massive immigration and will delineate objective parameters of assessment that may help authorities to take adequate actions, when objectively informed.

#### **JOIN US**

Conference “*Migration, Health and Medicine*”- 22/11/2019 (9am- 5.30pm)  
Palace of The Academies, Brussels.

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