

## **Forced Displacement, Refugees, and Mental Health**

### **Course description**

By the end of 2021 UNHCR estimated that nearly 90 million persons were forcibly displaced due to wars, armed conflicts, persecution and human rights violations, and related poverty and trauma. As a result, above one per cent of the world's population is now forcibly displaced.

Mental health problems that forcibly displaced people (IDPs, refugees and asylum seekers) experience constitute a serious public and mental health problem. There is increasing evidence that a large proportion of refugees and asylum seekers residing in different parts of the whole world suffer from the consequences of traumatic events and exhibit psychological problems or develop mental disorders including, but not limited to, trauma related disorders, e.g., Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Furthermore, people who have been forcibly displaced or who are stateless have been among the hardest-hit groups of during the Covid-19 Pandemic and Climate change is also driving displacement and increasing the vulnerability of those already forced to flee, facing increased food and economic insecurity as well as challenges to access health and protection services.

The World Psychiatric Association (WPA), as emphasized in its Action Plan 2020-2023, considers as one of its major tasks to raise awareness on this important public health problem and outline strategies for how its member societies and the psychiatric profession at large may contribute to managing these challenges.

This course aims to increase awareness, basic knowledge and skills of the psychiatrists and other mental health workers related to forced Displacement and its mental health consequences.

The following issues will be addressed during this course: (i) basic nosology/terminology related to the forcibly displaced people (i.e., IDPs, refugees, asylum seekers); (ii) facts and

statistics on the current dimensions of problem; (iii) physical and psychological traumas, related to the displacement process; (iv) mental health situation and needs of specific risk groups among the forcibly displaced people; (v) current evidence on the mental health consequences and related psychiatric disorders; (vi) culturally sensitive clinical interview and assessment techniques; (vii) evaluation of the current situation of mental health care provision including a review of the opportunities and limits of existing mental health services for the forcibly displaced people.

### **Educational intentions/objectives of the course**

1. This course aims to provide basic knowledge on the nosology/terminology related to the forcibly displaced people (i.e., refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs, and etc.);
2. It aims to provide basic knowledge on the current dimensions of problems;
3. It aims to examine physical and psychological traumas, including sexual abuses and human trafficking, related to the displacement process;
4. It aims to examine mental health situation and needs of specific risk groups;
5. It aims to provide basic knowledge on the mental health consequences and related major psychopathological states from an integrative humanistic perspective;
6. It has the goal of helping students develop knowledge on the special aspects of culturally sensitive clinical interview and assessment techniques for the forcibly displaced people;
7. It aims to provide basic knowledge on the current situation of mental health service delivery and requirements for quality service standards for the forcibly displaced people in Europe.

### **Learning Outcomes of the course**

1. Learn the main nosology/terminology related to forcibly displaced people (i.e., refugees, asylum seekers, and etc.);
2. Describe the clinical patterns of the major psychopathological states that forcibly displaced people experience;
3. Identify the main traumatic events and risk factors that forcibly displaced people face;

4. Identify the special risk groups among forcibly displaced people, and their particular needs;
5. Evaluate and compare the characteristics of mental health problems that forcibly displaced people experience;
6. Explain the opportunities and limits of existing mental health services for forcibly displaced people in Europe;
7. Discuss scientific, ethical and psychosocial issues related to mental health problems that forcibly displaced people experience.

**Level of the course**

The professional level of psychiatrists, trainees, early career psychiatrists and clinical psychologists

**Prerequisite knowledge required for attending the course:**

General knowledge of description, explanation and treatment of mental disorders and related psychosocial risk factors

**Target audience of the course**

Psychiatrists, trainees, early career psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, mental health workers

**Methods and materials of the course**

Lectures, interactive discussions, role play, video scenes, and discussions of selected related international statement papers.

**Course director's / speaker's educational experience and expertise in the related field**

The course directors / speakers are well experienced in the field and are mostly members of the "WPA Working Group on Providing Mental Health Care for Migrants and Refugees", besides other similar international task forces. This is an updated and developed version of previous similar courses organized during various international congresses with a high positive feed-back.

## Contact details of the course director and speakers

Course directors / Speakers:

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## Some recommended readings (pre- and post-course)

\*Abbara A, Coutts A, Fouad FM, et al. Syria Public Health Network. Mental Health among displaced Syrians: findings from the Syria Public Health Network. *J R Soc Med.* 2016 Mar;109(3):88-90.

\*Anagnostopoulos DC, Heberbrand J, Eliez S, et al. European Society of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: position statement on mental health of child and adolescent refugees. *Eur Child Adolesc Psychiatry.* 2016;25(7):673-6.

\*Bhugra D, Gupta S, Schouler-Ocak M, Graeff-Callies I, Deakin NA, Quershi A, Dales J, Moussaoui D, Kastrup M EPA Guidance Paper 2014.

\*Ceri V, Özlü-Erkilic Z, Özer Ü, et al. Psychiatric symptoms and disorders among Yazidi children and adolescents immediately after forced migration following ISIS attacks. *Neuropsychiatr.* 2016 Sep;30(3):145-150.

\*Eurostat (2016b) [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum\\_statistics](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_statistics). Retrieved on September 29, 2016

\*Hassan, G, Kirmayer, LJ, MekkiBerrada A., et al. Culture, Context and the Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing of Syrians: A Review for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support staff working with Syrians Affected by Armed Conflict. Geneva: UNHCR, 2015.

\*Heeren M, Mueller J, Ehlert U et al. Mental health of asylum seekers: a cross-sectional study of psychiatric disorders. *BMC Psychiatry;* 2012; 17;12:114.

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\*Hocking DC, Kennedy GA, Sundram S. Social factors ameliorate psychiatric disorders in community-based asylum seekers independent of visa status. *Psychiatry Res.* 2015 Dec 15;230(2):628-36.

- \*Hollander AC, Dal H, Lewis G, et al. Refugee migration and risk of schizophrenia and other non-affective psychoses: cohort study of 1.3 million people in Sweden. *BMJ*. 2016 Mar 15;352:i1030.
- \*Jefee-Bahloul H, Bajbouj M, Alabdullah J, et al. Mental health in Europe's Syrian refugee crisis. *Lancet Psychiatry*. 2016 Apr;3(4):315-7.
- \*Kazour F, Zahreddine NR, Maragel MG, et al. Post-traumatic stress disorder in a sample of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. *Compr Psychiatry*. 2016 Sep 24;72:41-47.
- \*Küey L. Trauma and Migration: The Role of Stigma, in *Trauma and Migration* (ed: Schouler-Ocak Meryam) Springer, 2015, pp: 57-69.
- \*Laban CJ, Komproe IH, Gernaat HBPE, et al. Impact of a long asylum procedure on quality of life, disability and physical health in Iraqi asylum seekers in the Netherlands. *Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol*. 2008;43:507-515.
- \*Nicolai T, Fuchs O, von Mutius E. Caring for the wave of refugees in Munich. *N Engl J Med*. 2015;373:1593–95
- \*Pace P. The right to health of migrants in Europe. In: Rechel B, Mladovsky P, Devillé W, Rijks B, Petrova-Benedict R, McKee M, eds. *Migration and health in the European Union*. Maidenhead: Open University Press 2011: 55–66.
- \*Porter, M. and N. Haslam, Predisplacement and postdisplacement factors associated with mental health of refugees and internally displaced persons. A meta-analysis. *Jama*, 2005. 294(5): p. 606-612.
- \*Priebe S, Giacco D, El-Nagib R. Public health aspects of mental health among migrants and refugees: a review of the evidence on mental health care for refugees, asylum seekers and irregular migrants in the WHO European Region. Copenhagen: WHO RO-Europe; 2016 (Health Evidence Network (HEN) Synthesis Report 47).
- \*Psarros C, Malliori M, Theleritis C, Martinaki S, Bergiannaki JD. Psychological support for caregivers of refugees in Greece. *Lancet*. 2016 Jul 9;388(10040):130.
- \*Schouler-Ocak M, Graef-Calliess IT, Tarricone I, Qureshi A, Kastrup M, Bhugra D. EPA Guidance on Cultural Competence Training. *Eur Psychiatry* 2015 Mar;30(3):431-40.
- \*Schouler-Ocak M, Wintrob R, Moussaoui D, Villasenor S, Zhao X, Kastrup M. 2016 Background Paper on the Needs of Migrant, Refugee and Asylum Seeker Patients Around the Globe. *Int J Cult Ment Hlth* 2016; 9(3):216-232

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- \*Sifaki-Pistolla D, Chatzea VE, Vlaschaki SA, Melidoniotis E, Pistolla G. *Who is going to rescue the rescuers? Post-traumatic stress disorder among rescue workers operating in Greece during the European refugee crisis. Soc Psychiatry Psychiatr Epidemiol*. 2017; 52:45-54.
- \*Slewa-Younan S, Uribe Guajardo MG, Heriseanu A, Hasan T. *A Systematic Review of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Depression Amongst Iraqi Refugees Located in Western Countries. J Immigr Minor Health*. 2014 Jun 5. [Epub ahead of print]
- \*UNHCR 2021. *Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2020*.  
<https://www.unhcr.org/flagship-reports/globaltrends/>
- \*UNHCR 2022. *Global Trends Forced Displacement in 2021*.  
<https://www.unhcr.org/62a9d1494/global-trends-report-2021>
- \*Wasserman D, Hoven C, Wasserman C, Wall M, Eisenberg R, Hadlaczky G, et al. *School-based suicide prevention programmes: the SEYLE cluster-randomised, controlled trial. The Lancet*. 2015 Apr 18; 385(9977): 1536-44.