Immigrant populations in focus

A large number of Europe’s immigrant populations come from North Africa. Studying the impact of migration on health is vital in helping to improve their living conditions.

An EU-funded project, EUNAM (EU and North African migrants: Health and health systems), was unique because it looked at health conditions in both host countries and countries of origin. Participating countries from North Africa included Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia, and EU partner countries were Germany, France, Italy and Sweden.

Team members accessed a variety of survey and register materials relating to population migration health, disease patterns and healthcare systems. This information was useful for completing the overview of the participating countries.

The team successfully collected health information from France and Italy. They also examined the disease panorama of immigrants in Sweden in terms of many variables, including cardiovascular diseases related
to lifestyle, migration, heredity and environment; mental illness with interactions between genes, home environment and area of residence; preterm births; and frequency of hospitalisation for type 2 diabetes in first- and second-generation immigrants.

Other areas under study included healthcare utilisation by immigrants in France; surveys of population well-being and healthcare in Morocco and Tunisia; and an overview of the disease spectrum in Egypt, with topics studied including cancer, obesity and cardiovascular diseases. Project members conducted workshops to discuss the documents and draft policy statements.

This work has the potential to help researchers and policymakers better understand disease trends, with the goal of developing prevention strategies. By sharing information, countries in Europe can work together to combat disease, especially infectious diseases like AIDS and malaria.

Scientifically valid state-of-the-art evaluations and appropriate recommendations for scientific and health policy measures have been developed. These recommendations have been designed to improve the conditions for immigrants living in Europe.

**Keywords**

Immigrant populations, North Africa, migration, health, living conditions, disease

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