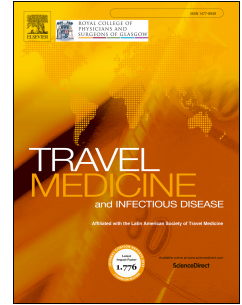


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Infectious Disease Profiles of Syrian and Eritrean Migrants Presenting in Europe: A systematic review

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Abstract

Background: In the past decade, a large influx of migrants presented in Europe. Their country of origin was mainly either Syria or Eritrea. Public health institutions in host countries in Europe are challenged to screen and care for migrant populations with regard to infectious diseases.

Methods: We performed a systematic literature review (according to PRISMA guidelines) to define the infectious disease profile of migrants originating in Syria and Eritrea.

Results: The search resulted in 825 papers of possible relevance for infectious diseases in migrants from Syria, of which, after screening, we included 35 in the systematic review. A further 265 papers of possible relevance for infectious diseases in Eritrean migrants were screened, of which we included 27 in the systematic review.

In migrants from Syria, leishmaniasis was the most frequently reported infectious disease. In addition, colonisation with drug resistant, Gram-negative bacteria was reported. In the Eritrean migrants the infectious disease most described in the selected papers was louse-borne relapsing fever. Other frequently reported infectious diseases were scabies and *Plasmodium vivax* malaria.

Conclusion: Our systematic analysis defines the profiles of infectious diseases for migrants from Syria and Eritrea and serves as an evidence base for public health screening and care of presenting migrants.

Keywords : Infectious Disease, Syria, Eritrea, refugee, migrant, asylum seeker, drug resistance, screening

1 Introduction

Since 2008, the number of refugees migrating to Europe has steadily increased. While the total number of first time asylum applicants in the European Union was around 225'000 in 2008, it rose to 1.3 million in 2015 and stayed at this level in 2016[1]. At the end of 2016, 5.2 million refugees were hosted in European countries, with 2.9 million refugees in Turkey alone[2].

The civil war in Syria, which started in 2011 and still ongoing, with a death toll of 250'000 by 2015 [3], has resulted in a large, forcibly displaced, Syrian population, with a count of 12 million displaced persons at the end of 2016; this includes 5.5 million refugees, 6.3 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and nearly 185,000 asylum-seekers[2].

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