



VII International Congress on Migration & Mental Health
Youth & Families Wellbeing matters in the context of Migration

20th October 2018 – Brussels

Familles du Monde, asbl & The Athena Network

A CROSS-CULTURAL APPROACH TO MIGRANTS' HEALTHCARE IN VALENCIA (SPAIN)



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Spain counts among the nations receiving considerable migration flows. This phenomenon brings to the country issues and opportunities of cultural interaction between the foreign populations which reach its territory over the years and the local society.

After a great tradition of emigration, the mid of the-1980s Spain ceased to be a predominantly sending country to become an immigration country. The large flows from different parts of the world, mainly from Latin America and North Africa, brought with them changes in the Spanish socio-demographic structure. As a result, a set of new needs and priorities emerged in different social spheres, including health care services.

The WHO defines health as "the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity" (WHO, 1948) but the conception of that state is largely influenced by culture. "Health" and "Culture" are two closely related concepts. Therefore, health care must always be governed by a cross-cultural approach that takes into account the cultural characteristics of the population that has access to it.

Given its story of migration, Spain is an interesting case study for this topic. This is why this qualitative research analyses the image that the migrant population we have selected has about the Valencian Public Health System, as well as the perception that its health personnel have of this migrant group. By analysing whether differences in accessing health care services depending on to the origins of migrants This study will confirm the role of culture in addressing the issue of immigrant populations' access to public health.

Keywords:

culture, health, health care services, cross-cultural approach, Valencia (Spain)

About the author

Lucía Ferri, graduate in Psychology at the 'Universidad de Valencia' (Spain). She currently curses the second year of the International Master in Migration at the same university with destination Switzerland and France. She has collaborated in programmes of 'Cruz Roja Valencia' (Spain), Psicólogos Sin Fronteras Trinidad (Bolivia), Caritas Berlin (Germany). It is the second year in a row she presents a conference at the International Congress on Migration and Mental Health.