



Federaal Kenniscentrum voor de Gezondheidszorg
Centre Fédéral d'Expertise des Soins de Santé
Belgian Health Care Knowledge Centre

Are migrants merely semi-human, then?

Challenges of the health care system
to meet the mental health needs of migrants



“En voor de suiker; tweemaal is beter dan niets [lacht], maar voor een echte diabeet is een goede behandeling vier maal op dag, met een schema, het is normaal voor iedereen, waarom : zijn migranten dan maar halve mensen?”

« Il y a des moments où vous arrivez à la pharmacie et on vous dit "ah non pas avec cette carte". Puis vous revenez 30 minutes après et c'est un autre qui dit ok. »

Interviews with health care professionals & undocumented migrants, KCE study 257,
Roberfroid, Dauvrin, Keygnaert, Desomer, Kerstens, Camberlin , Gysen, Lorant & Derluyn, 2015



Law#1 – Right to quality care

- Art. 5.**Le patient a droit, de la part du praticien professionnel, à des prestations de qualité répondant à ses besoins et ce, dans le respect de sa dignité humaine et de son autonomie et sans qu'une distinction d'aucune sorte ne soit faite.**
- Art. 5.**De patiënt heeft, met eerbiediging van zijn menselijke waardigheid en zijn zelfbeschikking en zonder enig onderscheid op welke grond ook, tegenover de beroepsbeoefenaar recht op kwaliteitsvolle dienstverstrekking die beantwoordt aan zijn behoeften.**



Challenges#1 – Ensuring quality of care

- **No guarantee of accessing care when needed**
- **No guarantee of receiving appropriate care when needed**
- **No guarantee about the existence of services to be mobilised**
- **No guarantee of being cared by trained health care professionals**
- **No information about the existence of the services**

Roberfroid et al. 2015, Dauvin et al. 2019



Key problems

Problems at the macro-level

- Lack of coordination
- Regional differences regarding health care for asylum seekers
- Lack of monitoring of health care use and health care costs
- Lack of transparency about health care expenses
- Lack of administrative support and of qualified personnel to manage administrative tasks

Problems at the meso-level

- Unclear administrative system for health care professionals
- Differences in health care system depending on place of stay
- Lack of health care professionals qualified to interact in health care for asylum seekers
- High turnover of health care professionals in reception centres
- Reluctance and/or overburdening of(some) health care professionals
- Poor and/or unclear collaboration between the different actors involved in health care for asylum seekers
- Tension regarding patient confidentiality
- Lack of appropriate health information for asylum seekers

Problems at the micro-level

Inequity in access

- Availability and accessibility of specialised health care services
- Cultural and linguistic barriers
- Administrative barriers

- Divergent practices in the freedom of choice of health care professionals

Inequity in treatment

- Lack of uniformity in the coverage of health care
- Lack of global evaluation of health status upon arrival and departure
- Underuse and poor implementation of (existing) guidelines
- Lack of access to mental health care and lack of alternative treatments

Specific problems for health care with unaccompanied minors

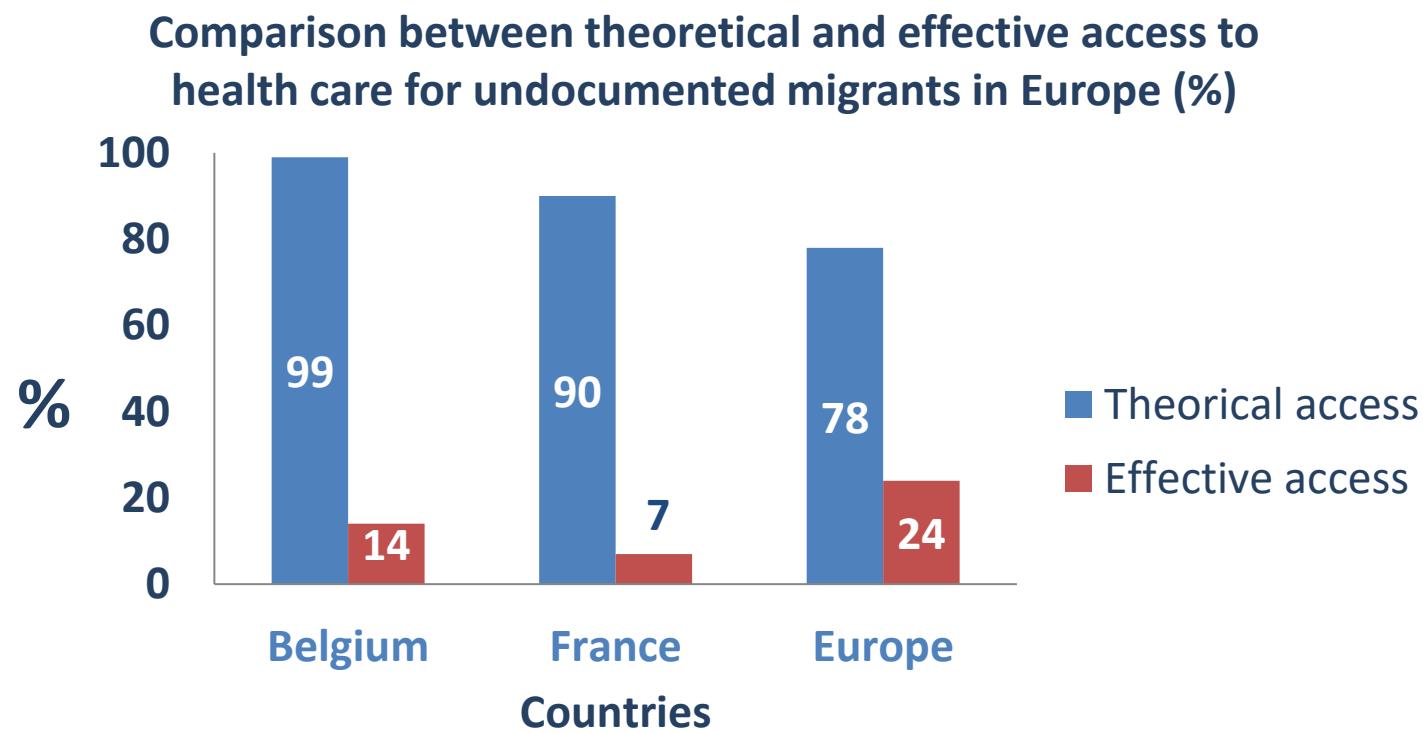
- Lack of coverage through insurance funds for unaccompanied minors
- Difficulties to comply with the conditions to access the compulsory health insurance
- Shortage of guardians

Challenges#1 Overview of problems encountered by asylum seekers when seeking health care in Belgium

Problems collected in 2018-2019, Dauvrin et al. KCE project 319.



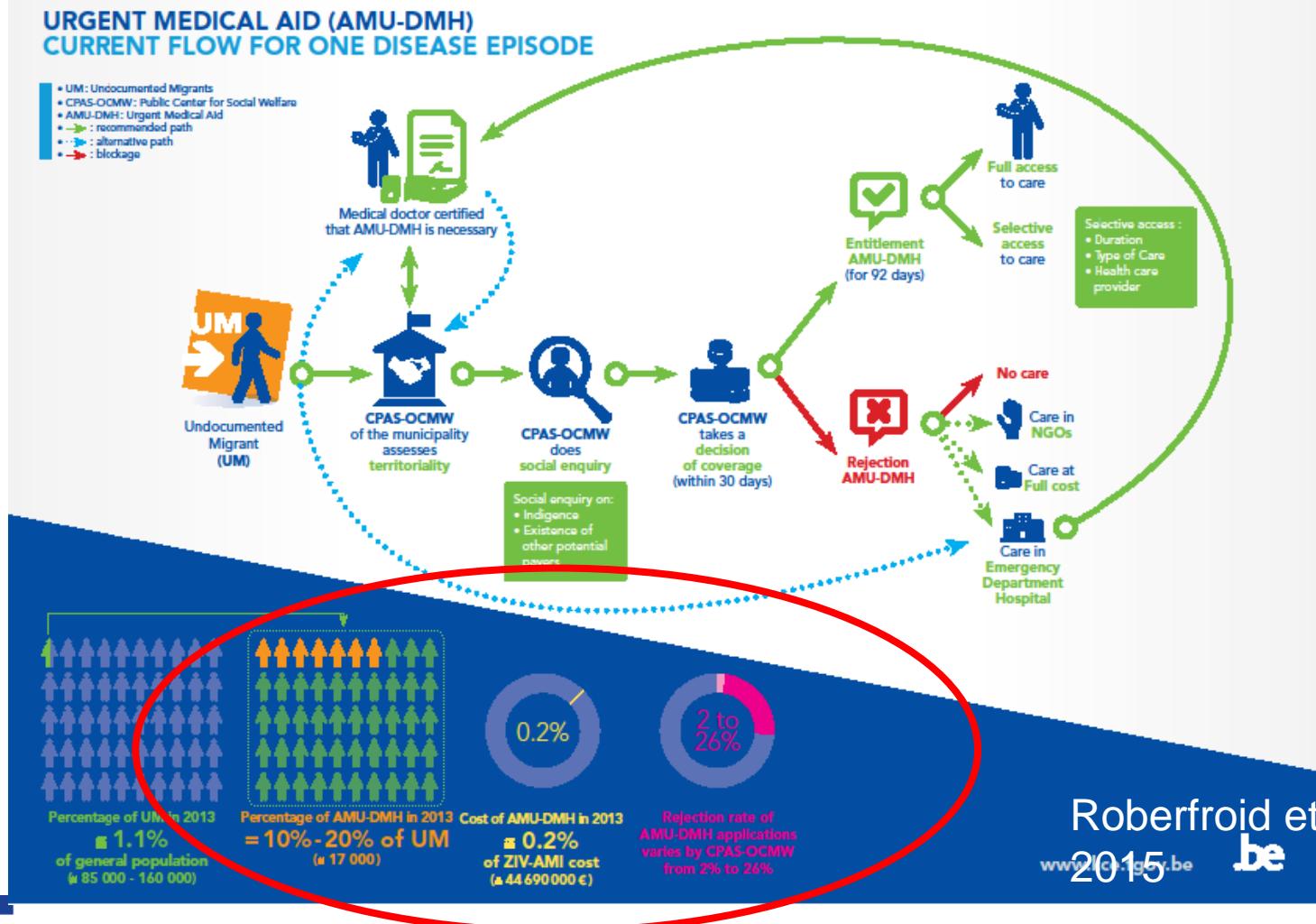
Challenges#1 Disparities in accessing health care for undocumented migrants



Observatoire Européen de l'Accès aux Soins de Médecins du Monde, 2007



Challenges#1 Unequal coverage for undocumented migrants



Recommendations#1

- **What?**
 - Integrate asylum seekers and undocumented migrants into the compulsory invalidity health insurance system
 - Integrate all persons residing on Belgian territory into the compulsory insurance system under the responsibility of RIZIV in order To have a single procedure for access to health care for the entire population present on Belgian territory, facilitated by the granting of an ID card or another form of identification card compatible with the e-health database.
- **Who?**
 - State Secretary for Asylum & Migration
 - Minister of Social Affairs and Health
- **When?**
 - As soon as possible
- **Expected outcomes**
 - Avoiding (costly) parallel insurability systems
 - Reducing administrative burden
 - Facilitating the social & epidemiological monitoring (emerging need during the COVID pandemic)
 - Facilitating social integration

Roberfroid et al. 2015, Dauvrin et al. 2019, Verrept et al. 2020, Myria annual report...



Law#2 –Right to choose health care professionals

- **Art. 6.Le patient a droit au libre choix du praticien professionnel et il a le droit de modifier son choix, sauf limites imposées dans ces deux cas en vertu de la loi.**
- **Art. 6.De patiënt heeft recht op vrije keuze van de beroepsbeoefenaar en recht op wijziging van deze keuze behoudens, in beide gevallen, beperkingen opgelegd krachtens de wet.**



Challenges#2 – Respecting preferences

- **Limited possibilities for choosing health care professionals / services**
- **Limited availability of qualified / trained professionals**
- **Limited willingness of professionals / refusal of care**
- **Limited support to choose in an informed way**



Recommendations#2

- **What?**
 - **Training health professionals in cultural competence**
 - Integrating cultural competence into the curricula of health professionals.
 - Diversify the places of practical training (internships in reception centres, services, ...), the evaluation of acquired knowledge and by encouraging intercultural experiences (Erasmus/traineeships abroad).
 - **Improving health literacy of migrants**
- **Who?**
 - **Federated entities (initial training)**
 - **Professional associations (permanent education)**
 - **Specialised associations in health literacy and health promotion**
- **Expected outcomes**
 - **Improved awareness of health care professionals to non-medical aspects of health**
 - **Improved availability of trained professionals**
 - **Prevention of “care ghettos”**
 - **Improved navigation into the Belgian health care system**

Verrept et al. 2020, UNIA...



Law#3 – Right to clear communication & informed consent

- Art. 7.§ 1er. Le patient a droit, de la part du praticien professionnel, à toutes les informations qui le concernent et peuvent lui être nécessaires pour comprendre son état de santé et son évolution probable. § 2. La communication avec le patient se déroule dans une langue claire. Le patient peut demander que les informations soient confirmées par écrit.
- Art. 8.§ 1er. Le patient a le droit de consentir librement à toute intervention du praticien professionnel moyennant information préalable. Ce consentement est donné expressément, sauf lorsque le praticien professionnel, après avoir informé suffisamment le patient, peut raisonnablement inférer du comportement de celui-ci qu'il consent à l'intervention.
- *Art. 7.§ 1. De patiënt heeft tegenover de beroepsbeoefenaar recht op alle hem betreffende informatie die nodig is om inzicht te krijgen in zijn gezondheidstoestand en de vermoedelijke evolutie ervan. § 2. De communicatie met de patiënt geschiedt in een duidelijke taal. De patiënt kan erom verzoeken dat de informatie hem schriftelijk wordt bevestigd.*
- *Art. 8.§ 1. De patiënt heeft het recht om geïnformeerd, voorafgaandelijk en vrij toe te stemmen in iedere tussenkomst van de beroepsbeoefenaar. Deze toestemming wordt uitdrukkelijk gegeven behalve wanneer de beroepsbeoefenaar, na de patiënt voldoende te hebben geïnformeerd, uit de gedragingen van de patiënt redelijkerwijze diens toestemming kan afleiden.*



Challenges#3 Tackling the language barriers

- **Lack of knowledge regarding resources**
- **Unequal availability of professional interpreting services**
- **Limited linguistic offer**
- **Sparse implementation of intercultural mediation**
- **Complexity of the inclusion of a third player in mental health**
 - Impact on the relationship between patient and professional
 - Impact on the patient confidentiality
 - Impact on the organisation
 - Impact on the interpreters / mediators themselves
- **No informed consent without appropriate communication**



Recommendations#3

- **What?**
 - **Promote access to quality mental health care**
 - Encourage and fund work with interpreters/mediators at every stage of the mental health care process, also for non-residential care (e.g. in the framework of project 107).
 - Include mental health services in front-line packages.
 - Develop & fund alternatives to speech-based therapies
 - **Encourage work with intercultural interpreters/mediators in health services when there is a language and/or cultural barrier**
 - Support free intercultural interpreters/mediators throughout the health care system, including prevention and health promotion, by making the budgetary envelope more permanent and larger.
 - Include work with intercultural interpreters/mediators in the further training of health and social care professionals and in the management of health services.
- **Who?**
 - **Minister of Social Affairs and Health**
 - **Ministers of the federated entities in charge of social action and health**

Verrept et al. 2020, Dauvrin et al. 2019...

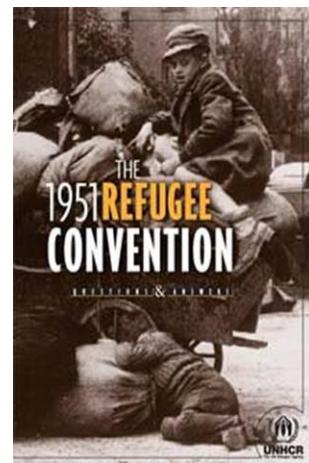


L'Etat belge condamné pour la première fois

MSF avec 9 autres organisations fait condamner l'Etat belge et l'entité à juger ensemble à l'endroit d'un migrant, alors qu'il n'a pas demandé d'asile, dès la présentation de sa demande, sans condition ni délai, et ce sous peine d'astreintes. L'entité, en effet, a reçue un compte près de 7.400 condamnations individuelles par le tribunal du travail de Bruxelles.

Naar een interculturele gezondheidszorg

Aanbevelingen van de ETHEALTH-groep voor een gelijkwaardige gezondheid en gezondheidszorg voor migranten en etnische minderheden



UNIA

Recommandation 144/avril 2016

IMPLÉMENTATION DES COMPÉTENCES TRANSCULTURELLES DANS LE NOUVEAU CURRICULUM DE LA FORMATION EN SOINS INFIRMIERS



FEANTSA
European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless

KCE RAPPORT 2020

ÉVALUATION DE LA PERFORMANCE DU SYSTÈME DE SANTÉ: SOINS DES PERSONNES VIVANT AVEC DES MALADIES CHRONIQUES



KCE RAPPORT 2020a

SYNTHÈSE
SOINS DE SANTÉ DANS LES PRISONS BELGES : SITUATION ACTUELLE ET SCENARIOS POUR LE FUTUR



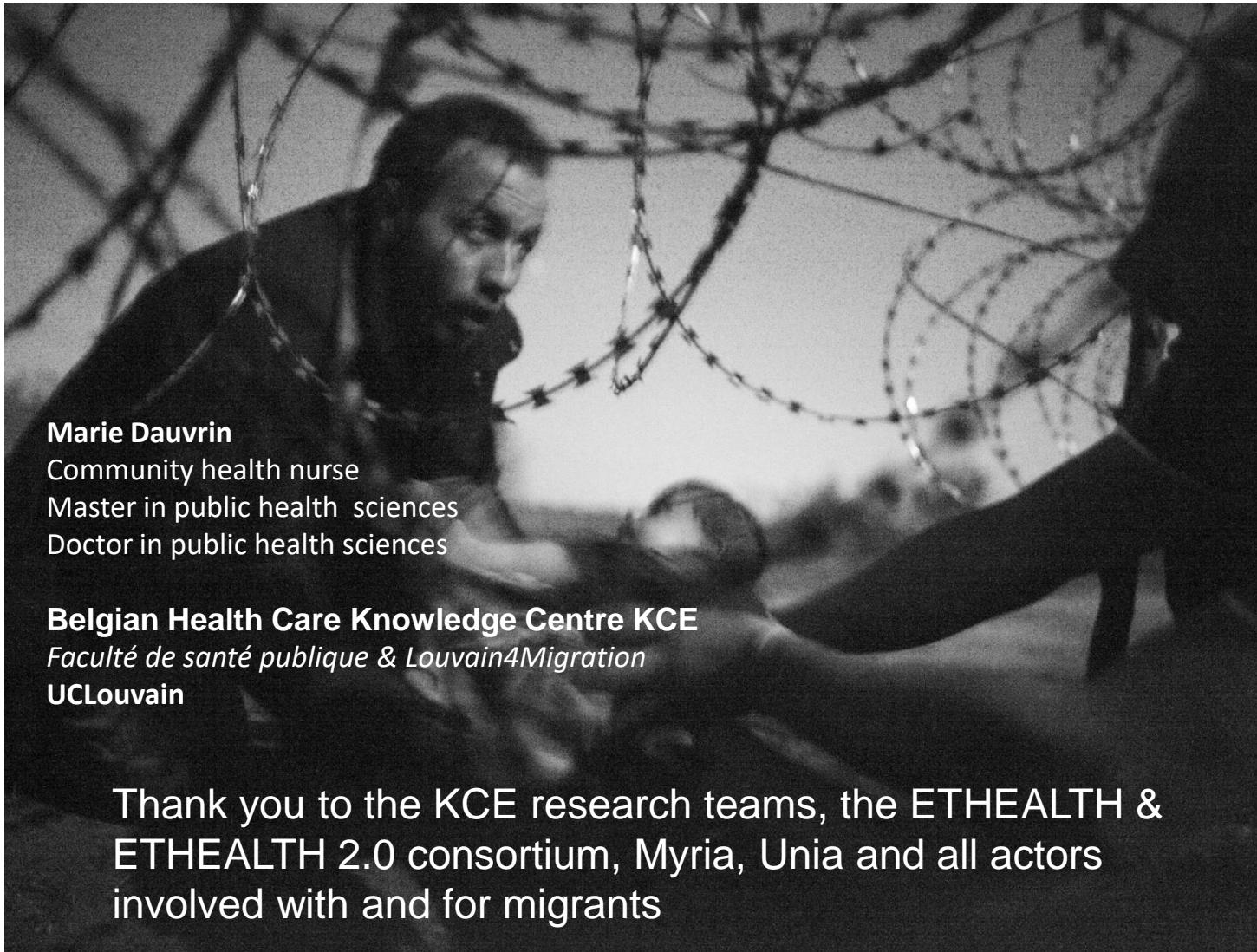
KCE
Centre belge d'évaluation des Soins de Santé
Belgian Health Care Evaluation Centre

Challenges#4 – Barriers to change

- **Political acceptability of the inclusion of migrants**
- **Lack of (political) leadership**
- **Fragmentation of competences & silo view**
- **Resistance to change**
- **High degree of inertia of the health care system**
- **Unequal exposition to migration**
- **Unpredictability & dynamic aspect of migration**







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involved with and for migrants

