

# Use of epidemiologic methods to estimate needs among migrants in France

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## Background

During 2015, >1 million refugees arrived in the European Union to seek asylum. At the end of 2015, in Calais, northern France, 30 km from the United Kingdom, around 6000 refugees were living in unsatisfactory conditions in an open camp called the “jungle” and trying to reach England. MSF began providing medical and psychological care in the “jungle” in September 2015. On their journey, refugees are exposed to diseases related to their living conditions and to violence in countries hostile to their reception. We aimed to determine the health status of refugees and the violence they have endured.

## Methods

We conducted a cross-sectional population-based survey in Nov/Dec 2015; the study population included everyone residing in the “jungle”. We used spatial simple random sampling. We collected data on demographics, countries crossed, health status, violence, and life plans.

## Results

425 (94.9%) of 462 residents approached participated. Overall, 95.0% were male, 33.3% were Sudanese, and median (IQR) age was 25 (21-30) years. Half of the participants were educated to secondary or tertiary level. Most had fled conflict in their country, with most having left in Sept 2015. The median (IQR) time taken to reach Calais was 100 (41-498) days. 61.0% reported having encountered a total of 331 health problems. Overall, 65.6% (95%CI 60.3-70.6) had experienced at least one violent event: 30.8% (95%CI 25.11-37.2) in Libya and 25.3% (95%CI 19.9-31.6) in Calais. 81.5% of refugees wanted to go to England, of whom 51.5% (95%CI 45.4-57.6) had a family member there.

## Conclusion

Data from these analyses suggest that MSF should continue to be involved in medical care of refugees in Europe countries and could help to strengthen advocacy in countries where MSF is already involved.

This first quantitative survey of refugees in Europe shows that refugees, who mostly came from conflict areas, still had to cope with violence and problem of access to health in the countries they crossed and in France.