

MIGRATION AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC AND SEXUAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Although Sweden had an International Policy on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights since 2004, a national one (the National Strategy for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights) was not published until 2020. The strategy identifies “people with migration experiences” and “youths and young adults” as groups that their sexual and reproductive health and rights need to be improved. Despite this announced priority, little research has been done on the specific experiences and perceptions of this population.

Young migrants have almost doubled during the last two decades with currently more than one in five young people 16 to 29 years old are born outside Sweden.

Young migrants' sexual rights are less fulfilled compared to other young people in Sweden, especially for those who are *men, non-binary, LGBTQ+, born in South Asia, without a residence permit, or from low economic backgrounds*. These groups have also more challenges in and lower access to SRH services than their counterparts.

sexual and reproductive health services are generally available in Sweden, however, almost half of young migrants who need them do not utilize them due to various barriers such as lack of access to information about the services and to comprehensive sexual education, cultural insensitivity, fear of exposure, and lack of parental support. Long waiting times and not taking their problems seriously are also commonly reported.

While the "open environment" of Sweden and the good quality services facilitates access, there is still a need for better equity, respect, privacy, and non-prejudice for young migrants. Those who visit sexual and reproductive health services report that they are not treated with respect (7,4%), lack of privacy (12,1%), prejudice attitude of the staff (28,4%), received inadequate help (24,6%) and they are treated with discrimination (10,5%).

Keywords: sexual and reproductive health services, access to healthcare, quality of healthcare, youth, young adults, migrants, Sweden

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[Mazen Baroudi](#) is a Senior research assistant at the Department of Epidemiology and Global Health in Umeå University. He defended his thesis in 2022 with a title "[Leaving the door ajar: young migrants' sexual and reproductive health in Sweden](#)". His main research interests are sexual and reproductive health and rights especially for migrants and men, migrants' health, and health system research.