



# Immunization of migrants in Finland

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Terveyden ja  
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**Main expertise (1-2 lines): Vaccine uptake and hesitancy, Equity & diversity**



# Terms and definitions



- I. Migrant: anyone who moves from one place to another, often across international borders. Often used to describe those who move for other reasons than fleeing a conflict or prosecution
- II. Asylum seeker: someone who is seeking international protection but has not yet been granted a refuge
- III. Refugee: a person who has been granted a legal protection under international law
- IV. Undocumented (i.e. "paperless"): person living in the country without legal right to reside (no official definition)
  - I. Groups equivalent to undocumented migrants

# Statistics



- I. 5,372 asylum applications submitted (2023)
  - I. Somalia, Syria, Iraq, and Russia
- II. 1,324 quota refugees (2023)
- III. 1,275 first residence permit for studies (2023)
  - I. Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, China, and India
- IV. 21,866 residence permits based on family ties (2023)
  - I. Sri Lanka, Russia, India, the Philippines and Bangladesh
- V. 9,570 EU citizen registration applications (2023)
- VI. 3,675 basis of work
- VII. 19,426 temporary protection applications (2023)
  - I. Ukraine

Source: Finnish Immigration Service 2024

# Determining and completing migrants' vaccination coverage



## Determining migrants' vaccination coverage

- I. Employment inspections
- II. Clinics, schools and student healthcare
- III. When receiving quota refugees
- IV. When encountering those who have been granted residence

## Completing migrants' vaccination coverage

- I. If vaccination certificate available, complete missing vaccinations according to the Finnish Vaccination Programme
- II. If vaccination certificate not available, but recounts receiving all offered vaccines, administer one dose of diphtheria-tetanus (DT) vaccine, polio vaccine and measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine
- III. If recounts never receiving any vaccinations, not remembering any vaccinations or receiving some, recommend to build vaccination coverage from "scratch"
- IV. All asylum-seeking children are entitled to vaccinations offered in the National Vaccination Programme

# “If the nurse tells me this is a good thing, I trust her completely” – Exploring health system enablers of MMR vaccine uptake in the Finnish Somali community: A mixed method study



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Table 1. Vaccination coverage for at least one dose MMR, PCV and Pentavac vaccines in children born in 2015 and 2020.

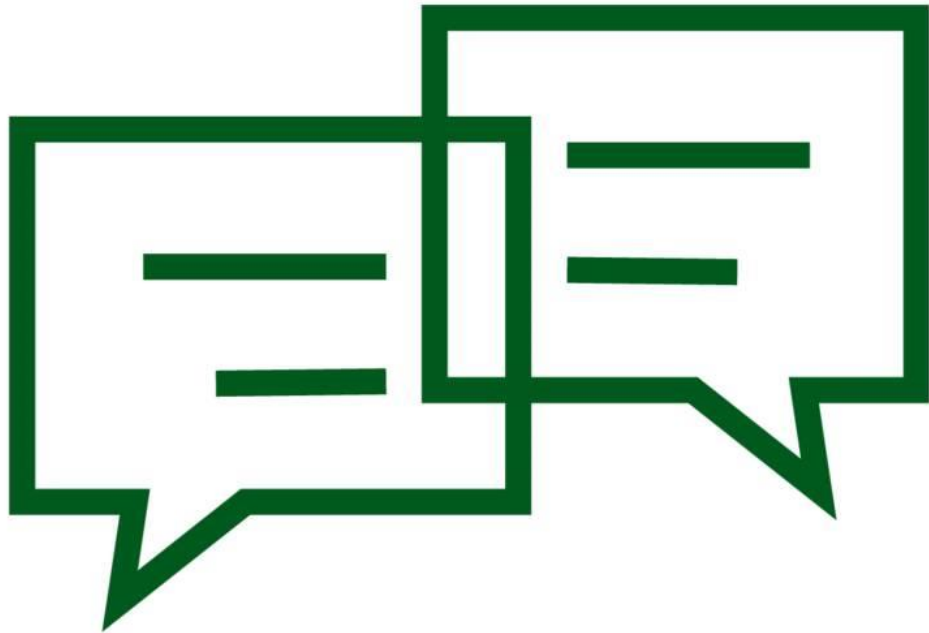
Vaccine	Coverage (%) for Somali children born in 2015 (n=587)	National coverage (%) for children born in 2015 (n=58637)	Coverage (%) for Somali children born in 2020 (n=582)	National coverage (%) for children born in 2020 (n=48143)
MMR (incl. MMRV)	95.7	94.5	81.6	94.4
Pentavac (DTaP-IPV-Hib)	89.3	98.7	93.5	97.0
PCV	89.6	95.7	94.3	95.6

# What affects vaccination uptake in migrants?

- I. Insufficient access to healthcare
- II. Low utilisation rate of healthcare services
- III. Financial , linguistic, cultural or logistic barriers
  - I. Health beliefs, health literacy
- IV. Vaccine hesitancy
  - I. Information sources

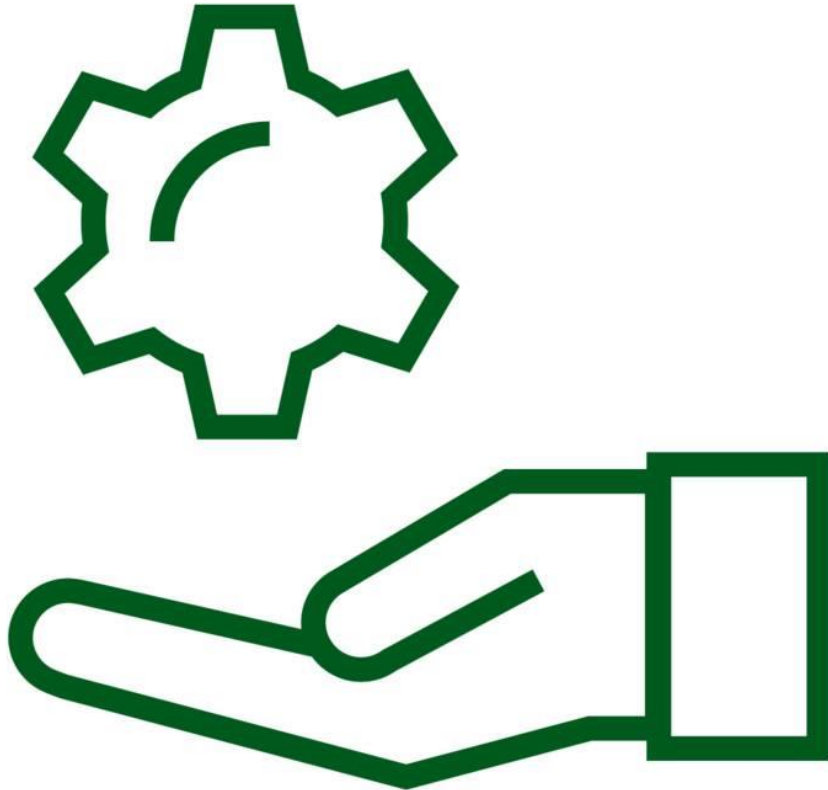
Klein, Jens, and Olaf von dem Knesebeck. "Inequalities in health care utilization among migrants and non-migrants in Germany: a systematic review." *International journal for equity in health* 17 (2018): 1-10.

Wilson, Lindsay, et al. "Barriers to immunization among newcomers: a systematic review." *Vaccine* 36.8 (2018): 1055-1062.





# Conclusions



- I. Migrants' right to social and health services depends on the nature of their permit
- II. In terms of asylum seeking and refugee adults, dT, MMR and polio vaccines are offered
- III. Country of origin and previous vaccination history must be considered in the assessment
- IV. Existing differences in vaccination uptake in migrant-origin populations – need for more research



# Thank you!

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