

RESEARCH STUDENT SEMINAR

Thursday 3 October 2019
11:30 – 12:30

**SEERC Conference Room,
Proxenou Koromila Building**

“Migrant Mental Health: The Role of Social Identity”

By
Ms Kristine Brance,
PhD student
Department of Psychology, TUoS

ABSTRACT

In light of the rising numbers of forcibly displaced individuals globally, research on migration and mental health issues has significant psychosocial implications. A substantial body of literature links the many hardships migrants face prior the migration, such as exposure to war, violence, and torture, with elevated rates of mental health issues including posttraumatic stress, depression, and anxiety. Moreover, post-migration period brings many new challenges that are linked to even further decreases in their emotional well-being. However, while much research has attempted to identify pre-migration and post-migration factors to understand migrant mental health, only a few studies have explored the crucial role of migrants' social environment and its potential benefits for their mental health. Thus, those few studies indicate that groups and the social identities that underpin them function to protect individual well-being. Consequently, the current research builds on social identity theory with an aim to help explain how group belonging can be linked with positive and negative mental health outcomes. Using a mixed-methods approach, this research, firstly, aims to systematically review and synthesize the current evidence on the effects social identity has on common mental disorders in migrant populations and to assess the potential influence of methodological and contextual factors when measuring social identity in accounting for variations in prevalence rates. Secondly, using semi-structured interviews this research aims to qualitatively explore how social identity is constructed by migrants, and the possible effects of immigration to their social identities. In addition, it aims to explore the nature of their mental health issues and its potential impact on migrants' everyday lives and their ability to adapt to the host culture. Overall, this research project aims to shed light on the role social environment plays in migrant mental health and contribute to the development of support systems for migrants that can promote psychological well-being and integration strategies.

The seminar series is open to all members of *staff* and *students* of CITY and to any *externals* that wish to attend.