**Abstract special issue**: Military conflicts have a profound impact upon the mental health of involved communities. This special issue would like to invite articles that provide support and build a knowledge base for primary care providers, psychologists, social workers, teachers, caregivers, and any community members working with affected groups in mental health support and treatment in connection to war, trauma and migration.

**Short communications.** Short communications (formally called Brief reports) should not exceed 1500 words, including a 100-word abstract, 3 keywords, text, and references plus 1 table or 1 figure.

1. **Migrants from War to War: Israel 2023-2024**
2. **IDP's**
3. **Methods**
4. **Understanding the Impact of Dual Wars**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/psychiatry-research/publish/guide-for-authors>

**Short communications - Migrants from War to War: Israel 2023-2024**

**Abstract:**

Dual war experiences may affect mental health. As a result, the treatment of refugees experiencing a double war, which is going on at the same time, may have unique characteristics. The therapists have to take into account the context of a double war that includes cultural experiences, languages, trauma and resilience in dealing with war every day. This document also seeks to shed light on the transnational connections that exist simultaneously in a global reality that enables the creation of tools to Create continuity of traumatic experiences, reshaping trauma in a new language and culture alongside a combination of tools for resilience and coping with trauma.

**Key words**: Dual war, migration, mental health

**Introduction:**

Research has consistently shown that both pre and post-migration factors play a significant role in the mental health of war-affected refugees Bogić et al. (2015). Post-migration factors have been highlighted as potentially mediating or even surpassing the impact of war trauma on mental health outcomes (Bogić et al., 2012).

Furthermore, studies have indicated that post-migration stress can pose a risk similar to or greater than that of war-related trauma (Hollifield et al., 2018).

There is research on the impact of war on immigrants exists, but there is a noticeable gap concerning the phenomenon where immigrants may experience two wars simultaneously and the resources and strategies they employ to cope with this dual conflict.

**Migrants from War to War: Israel 2023-2024**

Since 2022, several new military conflicts have erupted: the Russo-Ukrainian war, warfare in the Tigray and Amhara regions of Ethiopia, North India, and war in Israel. At first glance, these wars may seem distant from one another, occurring as they do on different continents. However, for migrants who have arrived in Israel over the past two years and since October 7, 2023, they have *also* experienced the war in Israel. Two of these conflicts are part of their daily lived experiences. This short communication shines a spotlight on the phenomenon of immigrants who experience two wars, in the country of origin and the country of destination and the future implications for mental health aspects.

Israel is an immigrant country in which 75% of its population is composed of immigrants (referred to in Hebrew as *olim*) or the children and grandchildren of immigrants. Coming from all over the world, they have Jewish roots and have been granted automatic citizenship in accordance with the country’s Law of Return,[[1]](#footnote-1) regardless of their age, health, wealth, professional skills, country of origin, or other criteria. *Olim* who came from conflict zones are defined in Israel as *refugee-olim*, a status that gives them economic benefits beyond those given to other *olim*.

From the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, about 3.3 million olim have immigrated to Israel, 44.6% of them from 1990 onwards (CBS, 2023). Their various motivations include ideological, religious, economic, social, health, political and even security motives. According to the Ministry of Aliyah and Integration (MAI), between 2022 and August 2023, 113,806 immigrants arrived in Israel (see Table 1). In all, about **84% of all immigrants who came to Israel in 2022 and 2023 arrived from directly or indirectly experienced war in their country of origin over the same period**.

TABLE 1 IS ABOUT HERE

It is important to note that following the war in Israel, over 200,000 (XXX) Israelis became internally displaced persons (IDPs), including new immigrants who immigrated in the last two years and experienced international migration and internal displacement.

**Methods**

The current study, part of a larger project, is based on observations and interviews with new immigrants in Israel starting October 7, 2023. Interviews were conducted with 18 new migrants who arrived in 2022-2023. They were asked in detail about (a) their pre-immigration experiences of war in their country of origin and their current war-related experiences in Israel; (b) their feelings and the coping mechanisms they have adopted to navigate their daily lives in Israel. Each interview was conducted in the mother tongue of the interviewee, translated, and meticulously transcribed to enable a comprehensive and detailed qualitative analysis. All interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Watzlawik & Born, 2007). Additionally, the researchers stayed in hotels with IDPs, some of whom were immigrants. Each researcher spent a total of about a week in areas where IDPs had been evacuated following the war, to learn about their experiences and explore the connection with immigration.

**Preliminary insights**

1. ***"We looked for security and got war."*(Natalia, 2024)**

Upon their arrival in Israel, immigrants from four specific origin countries seeking safety and stability were unexpectedly met with the outbreak of war on October 7th and its ongoing aftermath. In the early stages of an absorption process often described with optimism in the literature (XXX), these immigrants encountered the complexities of settling into a new country, compounded by the stress and uncertainty induced by the conflict. Beyond the typical absorption challenges, such as cultural and linguistic differences, this sudden war introduced additional hurdles, adversely affecting their psychological well-being and adaptation processes.

1. ***Double crisis and/or double resilience***

The experience of a ‘dual war’ precipitated a variety of feelings and struggles among the new immigrants. Some described fears that grew stronger, continuing feelings they had from the war in their country of origin. Others felt that their prior experience helped them deal with their current experience in Israel. The tension between fear and resilience always occurred within the different social and cultural contexts of the country of origin and their adopted country. As described by X, "[When] I arrived in Israel, I got used to the new reality. Then suddenly, the heat started [the war] and returned my body to fear.” Or, as Y describes, "A war started here [but] I ran away from a war! My family keeps telling me to leave Israel, to run away to a quiet place. I am thinking of what else to do".

In the initial interviews conducted two months into the war, participants shared how they've been channeling their resilience. Some engaged with the media in their native languages to shape global perceptions of the conflict, while others focused on supporting fellow immigrants and the military, collecting donations for essentials to contribute to soldiers' welfare, a gesture that was deeply meaningful. Additionally, immigrants like Tatyana have compared the relative calm they feel during air raid sirens in Israel to their distressing experiences in Kyiv, responding to the question about their feelings towards air raid sirens in Israel: 'Here, it's okay. In Kyiv, it was difficult. Here, it feels like a "child's game." I go to work every day, and my daughter goes to school. If there's an alarm (which happens a few times a day), I'm okay. We both have access to a shelter'" (Tatyana 2024).

1. ***Various shades of ongoing displacement***

The war created ongoing and varied patterns of migration for most of the immigrants. Some chose to stay in Israel, others became internally displaced in Israel, and still others chose to move to a third country. Some are still in Israel but are thinking about whether to stay. Some have had to move from place to place, from home to home, and now find themselves in a state of homelessness and feeling of personal and human insecurity. Categorially, they became immigrants, refugees, and some displaced persons. Each category has a different meaning also in mental aspects and especially in everyday experiences.

While their arrival in Israel can be seen ideologically as reaching the Jewish national home, at a practical, day-to-day level, both of their homes of origin and their new national homes are in crisis.

"We arrived in Israel [WHEN?] and were living in the reception center., When the war started we quickly left the area [and have now] been living in a hotel, not at home, for more than two months. We have arrived in Israel, [but] because of the war, we [had to leave] our first home in Israel. We will surely return but in the meantime we have to get used to everything [like going] to new schools for example" (Joseph 2024).

1. ***Transnationalism - Ties with family and friend***

As with most immigrants, those interviewed have family and social ties in their origin countries. Those ties have been affected by both the direct and indirect experience of a ‘double war’. The concerns expressed by migrants in preliminary interviews relate both to the daily life of their family and friends in the origin country and to concerns related to war there. As expressed by Marina from Ukraine (2023) and Sarah from Ethiopia (2023): "*When a missile falls in Kharkiv, the impact waves are clearly heard in Ashdod [[2]](#footnote-2)"* or "*When I try to call my daughter in Gondar and there is no internet for several days, I don't know what to worry about anymore?*"

In addition to worries about people, there are also double concerns regarding financial concerns about belongings and property accumulated throughout life in their country of origin left behind. Alex from Odessa (2024) described his fear about this loss: "*I left my big house, my summer house and everything there and I hope I will do with this something later …."*

At the same time, their family and friends living in the origin countries have new existential concerns for those now experiencing war in Israel. As Yulia (2024) describes, *"When war broke out in Israel, I received endless calls telling me to get*

*out of Israel, especially because I have a little girl. The pressure from the family was very great…*."

The continuity of family and social ties, amidst two wars and across two or more countries, is reshaped. Some relationships grow stronger, while others weaken or even break apart. Immigrants are faced with a reality where these ties, once personal anchors and sources of solace, are profoundly shaken.

**Conclusions: (we didn’t have enough time if you can help us it will be great)**

This short communication aims to highlight the significance of the dual and ongoing war phenomenon experienced by immigrants, offering initial insights with potential implications for mental health care.

Interviews with a subset of these immigrants uncovered a variety of impacts on their personal lives, community engagement, and relationships with those in their home countries, bringing to light several significant themes that emerged from their experiences.

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| **Country Name** | **Number of Immigrants 2023\*** | **Number of Immigrants 2022** | **Total Immigrants** | **Percentage of Total Immigrants** | **War/Involvement in War in the Last Two Years** |
| Russia | 28,007 | 43,584 | 71,591 | 63% | Yes |
| Ukraine | 1,822 | 15,037 | 16,859 | 15% | Yes |
| Ethiopia | 1,668 | 1,512 | 3,180 | 3% | Yes |
| Belarus | 1,498 | 2,192 | 3,690 | 3% | Yes |
| India | 16 | 301 | 317 | 0% | Yes |
| **Total Immigrants from Eight Countries** | **33,011** | **62,626** | **9563700%** | **84%** |  |
| USA | 1,765 | 3,215 | 4,980 | 4% | No |
| France | 751 | 2,113 | 2,864 | 4% | No |
| Argentina | 437 | 1,032 | 1,469 | 1% | No |
| **Total Immigrants** | **39,332** | **74,474** | **113,806** | **100%** |  |

**Table 1:** Number of immigrants from eight countries in 2022 and 2023

\* Updated to August 30, 2023.

Source: Ministry of Aliyah and Integration (MAI)

1. **The Law of Return, in its updated version (1970), states that persons of Jewish descent (someone with at least one Jewish grandparent) and their spouses are entitled to immigrate to Israel, with the exception of Jews who voluntarily converted to another religion or are excluded as a result of public security concerns. According to the Israeli Nationality Law (1952), an immigrant’s certificate immediately entitles them to Israeli citizenship.** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ashdod is the sixth largest city in Israel, where approximately 30% of the population are immigrants from the Post-Soviet Union (Index Ruppin, 2019). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)