

# Promoting Positive Adaptation and Development among Refugee Children and Youth

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## **Abstract:**

Millions of children and youth reside in countries different than those where they or their parents were born. Their families may have migrated voluntarily to seek a better future, or they may have been forcibly displaced by war and atrocities and have sought refuge in another country. Refugee and immigrant-origin children and youth need to address similar developmental and acculturative issues, as well as similar challenges related to their social status in host societies (e.g., discrimination). However, refugee children and youth also face significant trauma and insecurity linked to the adverse events that necessitated their flight from their country of origin (war, pain, death), the hardship endured during their perilous journey to destination, and the complex, lengthy and uncertain legal process after seeking asylum. These challenges often have a negative impact on their mental health, development, and acculturation.

This roundtable brings together scholars conducting cutting-edge research on immigrant and refugee youth development, acculturation, and mental health. Based on a strengths-based multilevel resilience perspective, the panelists will share their experience and discuss a) the importance of refugee children and youth doing well in the host society, b) the challenges they often face, which may place at risk their adaptation, c) which personal, proximal- and distal- context resources matter for their positive adaptation, and d) how to promote their development, acculturation, and mental health when they often live in host societies that may be negative towards their presence in the country.

The panelists are (in alphabetical order):

Elisabetta Crochetti, University of Bologna, Italy

Frosso Motti, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece (chair)

Vassilis Pavlopoulos, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Michael Pluess, University of Surrey, UK

Peter Titzmann, Leibniz University Hannover, Germany