Belonging to and longing for home in two places - experiences of aging in migration.

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Introduction: Ageing in the context of migration has been described as a negative stressor for perceiving health in everyday life. Compared with native-born persons, older persons who are the same age and with an immigrant background have been described as being more vulnerable and with risk for being having weaker health. However, the research has often a pathogen perspective of health; few studies describe an occupational perspective of health when aging in migration. There is also a lack of research which describes how the older person’s capability is used to support health and by that create a meaningful everyday life when aging in migration.

Objectives: To describe how persons from Finland, aging in Sweden, experience health from an occupational perspective in everyday life.

Method: Qualitative interviews (n=16) was conducted with persons (age 66-85) from Finland living in Sweden. A hermeneutic approach was used in analyze to capture their experience of health in everyday life.

Results: Participants’ experienced health when they managed activities in daily life. Additionally, health was reinforced by affiliating with others who shared a similar life situation. Maintaining a sense of double belonging to one’s country of birth and to one’s host country was a health source.

Conclusion: Experience of health can be seen as a continuum in time and place, which creates a sense of belonging and continuity in life. The connections between health and doing, being and becoming are fundamental aspects to consider when enabling health in everyday life among older persons aging in migration.