

World Mental Health Day 2022: Migrants, Refugees and Mental Health

Bios: Speakers, Panellists

Stella Kyriakides – European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety



As European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, Stella Kyriakides has been leading the Commission's work on the public health response to COVID-19. Commissioner Kyriakides is responsible for a number of initiatives in the area of health aiming to establish a strong European Health Union. She is a strong advocate for mental health.

Since February 2022, Commissioner Kyriakides has been at the forefront of EU efforts to support Ukraine and its people in the area of health, including by supporting the protection of the physical and mental health of Ukrainian refugees arriving in Member States.

Kyriakides has been an active advocate on patients' rights, and on the rights of cancer patients, founding the first Cypriot breast cancer organisation Europa Cyprus, for which she served as President for over 15 years. She was elected President to the European Breast Cancer Coalition Europa Donna, and served on numerous European patient advocacy and scientific boards.

MEP Tilly Metz (Greens/EFA, Luxembourg) EP Coalition for Mental Health and Wellbeing



Tilly Metz is a Luxembourgish Member of the European Parliament since July 2018. She represents the Greens/EFA Group in the Committees on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, Transport and Tourism, and Agriculture and Rural Development as well as the Special Committee on the COVID-19 pandemic. She also chairs the Delegation for Relations with Central American Countries.

Health and healthcare are amongst her core issues. She is the Health coordinator of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament and represented them in the negotiations on the extension of the mandate of the European Medicines Agency and around the Pharmaceutical Strategy. She is also Vice-President of the Intergroup on People with Disabilities and advocates for the treatment of rare diseases.

Protecting the most vulnerable in our society has always been an important goal of Tilly's work. In 2019, she received the "EU for animals" award for her commitment to animal rights and welfare. In 2021, she was elected President of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Animal Welfare.

MEP Estrella Durá Ferrandis (S&D, Spain) EP Coalition for Mental Health and Wellbeing



Estrella Durá Ferrandis has been a researcher at the Polibienestar Research Institute at the University of Valencia since 2006 and she became a Full Professor in 2017 at the University of Valencia in the Department of Personality, Evaluation and Psychological Treatments.

Estrella Durá-Ferrandis is an expert in social policy programs with the main objective to increase the quality of life, social protection, and welfare of vulnerable groups. Some of the topics she has worked on include unemployment, women and health, persons with functional diversity and persons with chronic illnesses, dependent elderly persons and migrants.

She is member of Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats political group (S&D), member of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) substitute of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and the Special Committee on Beating Cancer (BECA). She has been a shadow rapporteur to the European Parliament's report on "Access to affordable, decent housing to all" and the report on "Mental Health in the digital world of work".

Claudia Marinetti – Mental Health Europe, Director



Claudia Marinetti is Director at Mental Health Europe (MHE) and has extensive expertise in the areas of health and its social determinants, well-being, and equity. With over 15 years of experience in management, policy, advocacy and research, Claudia has worked across sectors to improve the well-being of people, including a focus on approaches based on human rights, access to quality services, Health in All Policies, and social inclusion. Prior to joining MHE, Claudia worked at European level on public health, disease prevention, health promotion, and inequality reduction. She has conducted research for K.U. Leuven and other research institutions. Claudia is a graduate of the University of Padua (Italy) and holds a PhD in Social and Applied Psychology from the University of Oxford (UK).

Ronan Mangan – Red Cross EU Office, Head of Unit for Social Inclusion



Ronan Mangan is Head of the Social Inclusion Unit at the Red Cross EU Office and leads the office's strategic work and engagement in relation to social inclusion policies and programmes towards the EU institutions. Prior to joining the Red Cross EU Office, he worked with UNHCR as a Regional Protection Officer, SOS Kinderdorf International, as an EU Policy Advisor, the Council of Europe as an expert consultant on youth rights as well as being a practicing social worker in several different countries. Ronan has contributed to a number of publications on the topic of child rights and protection as well as on the topic of youth and holds a Master's in Social Policy Research and Evaluation as well as a Degree in Social Work.

Verena Knaus – UNICEF, Global Advisor on Migration



As Global Lead on Migration and Displacement, Verena heads the Global Migration Issue Hub located in NY and Geneva, driving UNICEF's policy, programmes and partnerships focused on migrant, refugee and IDP children since 2017. Prior to this role, Verena worked at UNICEF's EU office as Senior Policy Advisor, as strategy advisor to the Kosovo Ministry of European Integration and developed local economic development and youth programs in Mitrovica, an ethnically divided town. From 2004-2007, Verena headed the Turkey office of ESI (European Stability Initiative), an independent policy think tank she co-founded in 1999. With ESI she led policy research on post-war reconstruction and recovery rural and urban development. Verena is author of the 2013 Best of UNICEF research, a Yale World Fellow, and Young Global Leader of the World Economic Forum.

Laetitia Van der Vennet – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM)



Laetitia Van der Vennet leads [PICUM](#)'s work on undocumented children, families, and youth. She joined the organisation in 2019 and has worked in the field of human rights and migration for the past decade. Currently, her work focusses on the impact of growing up undocumented, the phenomenon of 'ageing out' and the transition into (undocumented) adulthood many face, child-rights compliant migration procedures and regularisation. Laetitia is one of three focal points of the [Initiative for Children in Migration](#), an informal collaboration between migration, asylum and child protection actors from European and national levels, and is a member of the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG).

Frohar Poya – European Network of Migrant Women



Frohar Poya works as project officer for the European Network of Migrant Women. She is part of the European Commission’s Expert Group on Asylum and Integration. Her expert areas are research, and capacity building in the field of Refugee and Migration. She has Masters degree in Cross-Cultural Psychology and Community Oral History.

Jonas Bull – Human Rights Watch



Jonas Bull is Assistant Researcher on disability rights at Human Rights Watch. Jonas focuses particularly on climate change impacts on people with disabilities, good practices and access to rights based mental health support. Before joining Human Rights Watch, Jonas worked with Mental Health Europe and Humanity & Inclusion focusing on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Previously, Jonas conducted research projects on livelihoods of refugees with disabilities in Uganda and on migrant’s mental health in Greece.

Fatima Awil – Mental Health Europe



Fatima is Mental Health Europe’s Policy and Knowledge Officer. She has a background in human rights research, policy, and advocacy with NGOs. Before joining Mental Health Europe, Fatima worked as the Advocacy and Policy Officer for End Female Genital Mutilation European Network. As well as being an intersectional feminist, Fatima is an activist, with over nine years of experience in advocacy and campaigning. Fatima holds a BA (Hons) in Law and Human Rights, and an LLM in International Law and International Relations.