

# Parallel Session: Loneliness and Health



**Ms Véronique Wasbauer**

**Principal Advisor for non-communicable  
diseases, European Commission's  
Directorate-General for Health and Food  
Safety**





# Towards a comprehensive approach to mental health

*Veronique Wasbauer, DG SANTE B.4.  
Principal Adviser for Non-Communicable Diseases  
European Commission*

# Background

- COVID-19 pandemic, Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and rising living costs have increased the risk of development of various mental health conditions
- [Health at a Glance \(2022\)](#) – one in two young Europeans report unmet needs for mental health care
- [State of Union speech](#) – President von der Leyen announced “a comprehensive approach to mental health”



# Commission Communication

- **New approach** at EU level to support and complement Member State action.
- Will take the form of a **Commission Communication** to be adopted on 7 June 2023.
- The Communication will promote a **comprehensive, prevention-oriented and multi-stakeholder** approach to mental health and address **socioeconomic and environmental determinants**.



# Consultation process

- Extensive consultation of Member States, stakeholders and citizens
- Strong support for a comprehensive, prevention-oriented and multi-stakeholder approach to mental health at EU level,
- Other initiatives:
  - Thematic Network on Mental Health in all Policies
  - Young cancer survivors conference: 07.02
  - European Youth Policy Dialogue on mental health: 22.02

# EU4Health Programme



- Provides **financial support** to Member States and stakeholders to implement actions to improve the mental health of European citizens
- EU4Health 2021, 2020 and 2023 work programmes implement the Healthier Together initiative including actions on mental health
- **Open calls for proposals** to support civil society organisations and other stakeholders
- **Direct grants to Member States** to support cooperation and collaboration
- **Contribution agreements** with international organisations e.g. WHO, OECD, Red Cross



# 'Healthier Together' Initiative

## 'Healthier Together' EU non-communicable diseases Initiative

### Key objectives:

- **Increase EU support** in a coordinated way
- **Focus** on major public health burden areas
- Target **national needs** in key disease areas
- Reduce **health inequalities**

Strand: Mental health

## Public Health Expert Group - meetings of sub-group on mental health

[Flash report - Public Health Expert Group \(3 February 2023\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

[Flash report - PHEG sub-group on mental health \(28 March 2023\) \(europa.eu\)](#)

Next PHEG meeting: June 29<sup>th</sup>



Best Practices Portal (Europa)  
[BP Portal \(europa.eu\)](#)

# Mental health – Ongoing projects

## Ongoing projects

- **JA ImpleMENTAL** – transfer of best practices on suicide prevention (AT) and mental health system reform (BE)
- Best practice **to prevent depression** (EEAD)
- **Icehearts Europe** – improve mental health and wellbeing for disadvantaged youth
- **Let's Talk about Children** – child-centred psychosocial intervention to promote mental health of children in vulnerable situations



- **Ukraine:** mental health support through International Federation of Red Cross
- Implementing promising best practices to improve mental health in migrant/refugee populations

[EU4Health projects to provide mental health support to Ukrainian refugees \(europa.eu\)](https://europa.eu/eu4health/projects/ukraine)



# Thank you



© European Union 2020

Unless otherwise noted the reuse of this presentation is authorised under the [CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/) license. For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

Slide xx: [element concerned](#), source: [e.g. Fotolia.com](#); Slide xx: [element concerned](#), source: [e.g. iStock.com](#)

