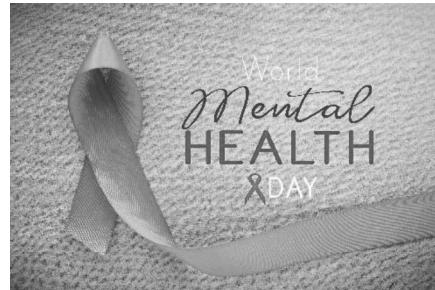




## World Mental Health Day October 10, 2022

<https://www.efpa.eu/world-mental-health-day-october-10-2022>



### EFPA calls for comprehensive, sustained and meaningful EU-level action on mental health

EFPA welcomes the signs of a return to specific comprehensive EU-level attention for mental health.

Between 2004 and 2017, a variety of dedicated initiatives was proposed and implemented by the European Commission: examples are the EU Pact on Mental Health and the Joint Action on Mental Health, leading to a policy Framework on Mental Health.

Since 2018 however, mental health has been part of the overall EU chronic disease agenda. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current war against Ukraine serve to underline the precious and vulnerable nature of mental health, and the urgent need for continued specific rather than generic action. The need to actively step-up attention and resources to safeguard and protect mental health has never been more apparent.

**Awareness of the importance of mental health is strong and on the rise in society at large and in the European institutions. And so is the need for psychological support.**

First, Commission President von der Leyen, in her recent State of the Union address, referred to the need for an 'initiative in Mental Health', and specified this in her *Letter of Intent accompanying the address*<sup>1</sup>.

EFPA was also very pleased to hear *DG Santé Director John F. Ryan listing several mental health funding options*<sup>2</sup>, when speaking at the opening of EFPA's European Congress of Psychology in July in Ljubljana.

The State of the Union address offers hope that the Commission will act on the 2019 Finnish Presidency Conclusions, calling for a comprehensive EU Strategy on Mental Health.

Second, the Czech Republic EU Presidency is organising a high-level conference on mental health on 14 November. This will strive to develop a 'roadmap' for EU action on mental health and will provide a useful opportunity for stakeholders, including EFPA, to make their voices heard, and underline their mental health priorities and needs.

Third, the European Parliament has recently adopted its first-ever report dedicated to mental health. In addition, several MEPs are actively campaigning for a EU Year for Mental Health and an EU Health Strategy. *EFPA has supported this campaign since its inception*<sup>3</sup>.

These three initiatives, which involve the three main EU institutions provide concrete opportunities for advocacy and action.

<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/strategic-planning/state-union-addresses\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/strategic-planning/state-union-addresses_en)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.efpa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-10/Speech%20John%20F.%20Ryan%20-ECP%20opening%20July%202022\\_EU%20DG%20Health.pdf](https://www.efpa.eu/sites/default/files/2022-10/Speech%20John%20F.%20Ryan%20-ECP%20opening%20July%202022_EU%20DG%20Health.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [REPORT on mental health in the digital world of work | A9-0184/2022 | European Parliament \(europa.eu\)](#)

EFPA would like to see future EU-action on Mental Health support and recognise the crucial role of equality of access for citizens to the services of psychologists, both in relation to the prevention of mental ill-health as well as in the promotion of mental health and well-being.

Psychologists should be included in the health and social care system as a matter of course. EU action could also aim to facilitate access to psychological interventions, with particular attention to addressing the needs of underserved populations. It should also ensure a lifespan approach to mental health, taking account of age-specific requirements and needs.

The active input from relevant stakeholders in the development, implementation, monitoring and assessment of the future EU action on mental health will be indispensable.

Only then can the relevance and practical impact of this action be guaranteed.

EFPA, harnessing its Member Associations from every country in the EU and more widely throughout Europe, as well as making use of the findings of the many *EU research projects we were involved with*<sup>4</sup> will play its part, in cooperation with other relevant and leading stakeholders, to make concrete proposals towards the content of future EU action on mental health.

## Contact

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*EFPA is the umbrella organization in Europe for national psychologists' associations and currently comprises associations from 38 European countries, including all 27 member countries of the European Union.*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.efpa.eu/activities/involvement-eu-projects>