



GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF  
MENTAL ILLNESS  
ADVOCACY NETWORKS-  
EUROPE (GAMIAN-  
EUROPE)

# EU action on Mental Health

Hilkka Kärkkäinen  
President, GAMIAN-Europe

28<sup>th</sup> September 2022, Brussels

The voice of patients in mental health

**GAMIAN-Europe is a patient-driven pan-European organisation that represents the interests of more than 60 organisations from Europe and beyond**

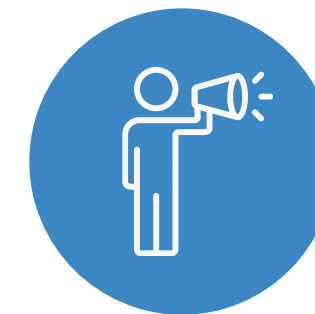
## **Our activities are related to:**



Advocacy and EU policy



Information and education



Awareness-raising



Partnership and capacity building

# Our areas of work



## Patient voice

Mental health patients are the core of our work. We make sure their campaigns and activities reach large audiences and that their voice is heard clear and loud.



## Advocacy and EU-policy

We work closely with policy-makers, European Institutions and European-level organisations to make sure the needs of mental health patients are added to the EU agenda.



## GAMIAN-Europe projects

Through partnership and collaboration with stakeholders from the private sector we lead projects in different mental health areas. We strive for the inclusion of patients views in the development of treatments.



## EU-Research

We are a key partner in EU-Research projects related to mental health. Together with stakeholders from different countries we look at improving the living conditions of people with mental ill-health.



# GAMIAN- Europe's objectives for EU-level action on mental health

## 1. A comprehensive EU mental health strategy

(As requested by the Finnish Presidency in 2019)  
(GAMIAN-Europe developed blueprint in 2015)

## 2. A European Year for Mental Health: 'Making Mental Health Everybody's Business'

(As a stepping stone toward a Strategy)

**The voice of patients in mental health**



# Why dedicated EU action for Mental Health?

- **Prevalence:** one in six people across the European Union
- **Cost:** EUR 600 billion across EU countries
- **Consequences:** impact on individuals, families and carers, health and social systems, employers, communities and the economy
- **Inequalities:** link with unemployment, low income or standard of living, poor physical health, challenging life events, poor quality of life, stigma and taboo
- **Increase:** fastest growing current health burden



# Why a EU action on Mental Health now?

- The COVID-19 pandemic has put the spotlight on mental health like never before
  - The ongoing war in Ukraine is also highlighting how vulnerable and precious mental health is
- The momentum is there
- We have to strike while the iron is hot!



# Why a European Year for Mental Health?

→ Need for:

- Better/wider understanding of the importance and impact of mental health
- Effective policy and practice in this area
- Improving people's well-being while ultimately saving resources
- The Year could mark the start of a Strategy

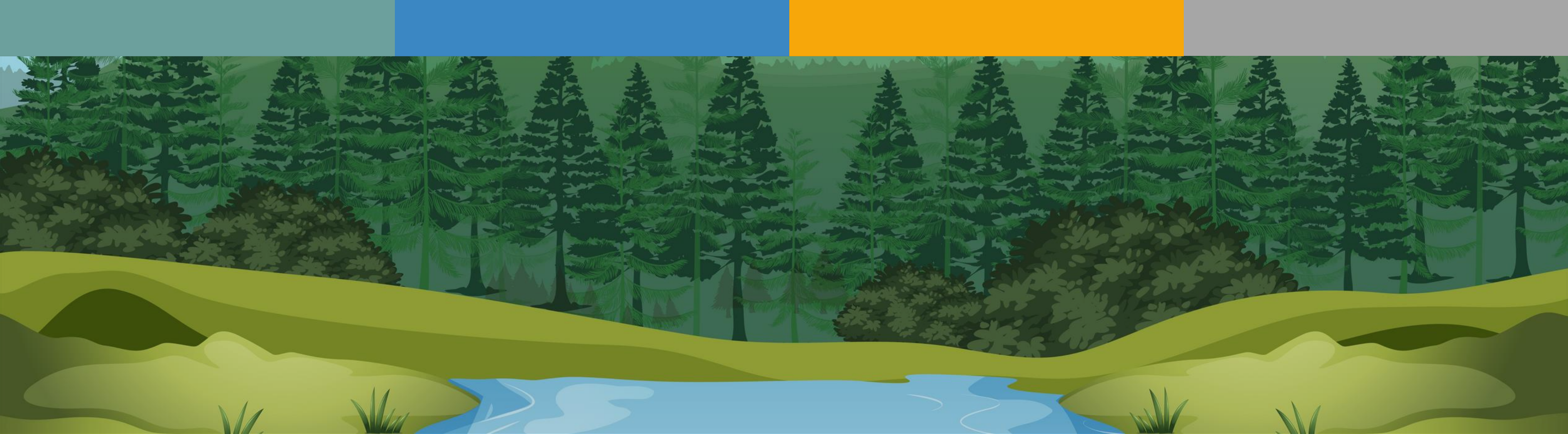


# Why an EU Strategy on Mental Health?

- Focus all Member States on shared challenges and potential solutions
- Will drive sustainable actions in the Member States
- Will act as a multiplier of knowledge and good practice
- Will involve all relevant stakeholders
- Will be a cross-policy topic

Let us not forget that the Council already called for a comprehensive EU Mental Health Strategy in 2019!





*The momentum is there*

The voice of patients in mental health



# Point of entry:

- Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced an ‘initiative on mental health in this year’s ‘State of the Union’ address
- This provides a focus point for advocacy and making our voices heard about what such an initiative should contain and aim for



The slide features a decorative background. On the left side, there is a vertical strip with a stylized landscape illustration. The top of this strip is orange, followed by a large yellow circle representing a sun or moon, with a small black bird silhouette flying to its left. Below the yellow circle are red, jagged shapes representing mountains. The rest of the slide background is a solid light gray. At the very top, there is a horizontal bar divided into four colored segments: teal, blue, orange, and gray.

# Point of entry: the Czech EU Presidency

- Conference on 14 November will be a useful opportunity to put mental health firmly on the agenda and discuss a future initiative on mental health
- Will amplify the voice of all relevant stakeholders in calling for action

# Next steps



GAMIAN-Europe will continue to use its blueprint for EU action on mental health as an advocacy tool



With MH now on the Czech Presidency as well as on the Commission agenda, GAMIAN-Europe is launching a campaign to involve national parliaments and governments



We work with our members to raise awareness of our blueprint for EU level action on mental health



Work with EP Alliance for Mental Health to prepare the CZ Presidency conference (meeting on 25th October)





Support the campaign

Visit [www.gamian.eu](http://www.gamian.eu)



The voice of patients in mental health



**Hilkka Kärkkäinen**

President of GAMIAN-Europe

**Email Addresses**

President@gamian.eu

Secretariat@gamian.eu

# Thank you

The voice of patients in mental health