Regional Conference

Mental Health Europe

VATEK

Mental Health Perspectives

mieli Mental Health Finland



Investing in Mental Health for Resilient Societies

4 November 2026, 10:00-16:00

Riigikogu (Estonian Parliament), Lossi plats 1a, Tallinn

Co-funded by the European Union

Background & Rationale

Mental health is increasingly recognised as a key societal priority across Europe. Yet this recognition has not translated into the sustained, cross-sector investment needed to help people and communities thrive. Investing in mental health is not only a health issue but also a social, economic and human rights imperative. Beyond mental health services, it requires investment in education, employment, housing, social protection, community support and inclusive environments. Such investments strengthen resilience, improve wellbeing, reduce long-term public costs and contribute to more prosperous societies.

At the EU level, discussions on the long-term budget, the Multiannual Financial Framework (2028–2034) begin, there is a unique opportunity to embed mental health across EU funding and policy priorities. This regional conference will bring together policymakers, researchers, civil society and people with lived experience to explore how mental health investment can be translated into concrete policy and funding decisions at both national and European level.

Mental Health Europe (MHE), together with its members Estonian Coalition for Mental Health and Well-being (VATEK) and Estonian Mental Health Society, Mental Health Perspectives Lithuania, and MIELI Mental Health Finland, is convening a regional conference to contribute to this moment. The conference will bring together policymakers, civil society, practitioners, and people with lived experience to explore how investing in mental health can be translated into concrete policy and funding decisions at both EU and national levels.

We look forward to your attendance.

Yours sincerely,

Kadri Soova
Director
Mental Health Europe



Programme

09:15 - 10:00 — **Registration & Coffee**

10:00 - 10:15 — **Welcome and opening remarks**

Opening reflections on why investing in mental health is essential for resilient, inclusive and prosperous societies.

Opening Speakers

- **Hanah Lahe**, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Estonian Parliament's Support Group for Youth Mental Health, Estonia
- **Dr. Kadri Haljas**, CEO, Estonian Coalition for Mental Health and Well-being VATEK, Estonia
- **Karilė Levickaitė**, President, Mental Health Europe and Director, Mental Health Perspectives, Lithuania

10:15 - 10:45 — **The economic and societal case for investing in mental health**

Presentation of the latest evidence on the costs of poor mental health and the benefits of sustained, cross-sector investment.

Speaker: **Aliénor Lerouge**, Lead Modeler, OECD Public Health, France

10:45 - 11:00 — **Coffee Break**

11:00 - 12:30 **Panel 1**

Measuring the impact of mental health investment

How can we measure the impact of mental health investment beyond healthcare? Which indicators best capture prevention, wellbeing and long-term societal value?

Moderator

- **Sanna Vesikansa**, Director of Crisis Services, MIELI Mental Health Finland

Panelists (alphabetical order)

- **Vera Gergov**, Chief Specialist, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Finland
- **Hannes Jarke**, Project Coordinator Mental Health Policy, EuroHealthNet, Brussels, Belgium
- **Mihkel Lees**, Member of Parliament, Chair of the Tartu City Council Social Affairs Committee, Estonia
- **Lenne Lillepuu**, CEO, Estonian Mental Health Advocacy Association for Patients & Families (EPill), Estonia
- **Pavel Říčan**, Director, Centre for Mental Health Care Development, Czech Republic

12:30 - 13:45 **Networking Lunch**



13:45 - 15:15 **Panel 2**

From commitment to investment: translating EU priorities into national action

How can European and national policymakers move from short-term initiatives towards supporting strategic, sustainable investments that benefit mental health?

Moderator

- **Karilė Levickaitė**, President, Mental Health Europe and Director, Mental Health Perspectives, Lithuania

Panelists (alphabetical order)

- **Ülla-Karin Nurm**, Director, Northern Dimension Partnership in Public Health and Social Well-being, Sweden
- **Ann-Katrin Orr**, Policy Officer, Mental Health Europe, Brussels, Belgium
- **Ignas Rubikas**, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Health and Lithuanian Presidency of the Council of the EU, Lithuania
- **Stefan Schreck**, Adviser for Stakeholder Relations, DG SANTE, European Commission, Luxembourg
- **Riina Sikkut**, Member of Parliament, Former Minister of Health of Estonia, Estonia

15:15 - 16:00 **Closing Discussion**

Regional priorities and next steps

Summary of key messages and priorities for future EU and national action.

Moderator

- **Dr. Kadri Haljas,** CEO, Estonian Coalition for Mental Health and Well-being VATEK, Estonia

Panelists

- **Signe Riisalo**, Chair of the Social Affairs Committee, Estonian Parliament, former Minister of Social Protection
- **Paulė Kuzmickienė**, Member of Parliament, Lithuania

Final remarks and closing

Camille Roux, Policy Manager, Mental Health Europe

We look forward to seeing you in Tallinn

On behalf of

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