



CONFERENCE OF INGOs  
OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

## Migration Committee on the rights of persons who are migrants

### INGO and NGO access to migrant populations Access to fundamental rights for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers

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## WEBINAR "MIGRATION AND HEALTH" - Concept note TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2024

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At the start of its mandate, the Migration Committee of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe drew up a roadmap outlining the various areas of activity for the next 2-3 years. Health is one of the key areas of focus. With a view to tackling all the challenges identified in 2021, the Committee is today focusing on the **health issues of migrant populations, refugees and asylum seekers**.

This webinar has three objectives:

- 1- To raise awareness of the **health issues and problems** faced by migrants, refugees and asylum seekers throughout their migratory journey and once they have arrived in Europe;
- 2- Help to shed light on **preconceived ideas and prejudices** based on false beliefs;
- 3- Propose **examples of good practice**;

These points will be addressed by various professionals from the field and from the Council of Europe.

The issue of the health of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers is so vast that it is impossible to cover it all in a single webinar. We have concentrated our discussion on three specific themes in response to the feedback we have received from field experience. Drawing on a variety of recommendations and reflections, this webinar presents three focus points that seem to guide health considerations when it comes to migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

### ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

When it comes to the health of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, one of the first things to consider is the **effectiveness and accessibility of healthcare structures**.

The various professional contacts and interactions we have received so far highlight this particular problem as the direct cause of many pathologies, or of the aggravation of pre-existing pathologies. As a result of this lack - or difficulty - of access to healthcare, the health of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers in Council of Europe countries is all the more precarious, as it is often the reason why they leave their country of origin, in search of a more comprehensive care pathway.

Recent events in France have highlighted the fragility of the right to access healthcare for migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The webinar will provide some insight into the difficulties these individuals face in accessing care, and the importance of continuing to protect and assert these rights.

## MENTAL HEALTH

The question of the physical health of these vulnerable populations will then be balanced by reflections on the **mental health** of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

This dimension is at the heart of the work of the Migration Committee, but also of many of our INGOs. Mental health problems are an integral part of the migratory process, and are both the cause and consequence of a precarious situation predefined by the lack of rights from which these populations suffer, and accentuated by the accumulation of various vulnerabilities.

This webinar will therefore give a central place to mental health alongside physical health. The aim is to give credibility and visibility to real difficulties that are correlated with other issues specific to migration, such as integration, work and housing.

## SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

The final presentations will address the dimension of **sexual and reproductive health**. The latter can encompass various aspects. This webinar will focus on the health of migrant, refugee and asylum-seeking women - from both a biological and identity-based perspective.

From this perspective, several aspects will be highlighted, such as maternity, pregnancy, pediatric health... But also some more difficult ones, such as the issues of violence and sexual abuse that arise during the migratory journey and can also be correlated with the dimension of housing and safety.

This webinar will be based on free discussion and reflection on the themes identified above.

**MODERATOR:** **Salomé Brun**, graduated in European studies, specialized in migration politics - project manager and communications manager for the Migration Committee of the Conference of INGOs of the Council of Europe.

**SPEAKERS:**

- ° **David Best** – Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration and Refugees, Council of Europe
- ° NGO [The Smile of the Child](#) – **Eleni Papakosta**, social worker, Panhellenic Center for Health and Social Care Services - Grèce
- ° Association "[Medica](#)" [Zenica](#) – Dr.sci. **Sabiha Husić** (Directress) - Bosnia
- ° Association [Suojellaan Lapsia ry](#) / Protect Children – **Katariina Leivo** (Senior Specialist) – Finland
- ° [Associação Protectora de Diabéticos de Portugal](#) (Portuguese Association for Protection of People with Diabetes) – **Isabel MARIA SOUSA OSÓRIO ARAÚJO, MD**, Internal Medicine consultant/Diabetologist.
- ° ONG Doctors of the World – Association for the development of tropical medicine at the Lisbon Institute of Tropical Medicine M. **Carlos Araujo, MD**
- ° ONG MIAMSI – **Marie-Laure Frys** ; **Francis Merckaert** (general physician) – Lille Metropolitan Area (France)