



## Media statement

# EURORDIS welcomes European Parliament vote on mental health

**12 December, Brussels** – EURORDIS-Rare Diseases Europe has welcomed the European Parliament's adoption of recommendations on mental health and their call for a long-term, comprehensive and integrated EU Mental Health Strategy that builds on the European Commission's recent [communication](#) on the policy area.

By 482 votes to 94, Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have overwhelmingly voted in favour, of the [report](#) led by **Sara Cerdas MEP** under the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, who last month, co-hosted with EURORDIS, Mental Health Europe and **Tilly Metz MEP** an event in the European Parliament on addressing the mental health of vulnerable populations.

Responding to the vote, **Matt Bolz-Johnson**, Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead and Healthcare Advisor at EURORDIS, said:

"The European Commission may have introduced their 'Comprehensive Approach' to mental health in June, but it's the European Parliament that has today reinforced its dedication to a truly comprehensive, integrated, and enduring mental health strategy.

"MEPs have insightfully noted that a person's mental health is shaped by a multifaceted mix of socioeconomic, environmental, biological, and genetic elements. We are particularly encouraged by their acknowledgment of the unique mental health challenges faced by individuals living with rare diseases and other chronic conditions. This includes backing the UN's call for effective mental health and psychosocial support programmes for those with rare diseases. Such programmes are undeniably needed, given that our previous Rare Barometer survey indicated that 37% of people with rare conditions suffer from unhappiness and depression – a rate over three times higher than the general population.

"Importantly, MEPs have proposed actionable steps for the European Commission to assist Member States in positively impacting the lives of those with rare diseases. The recommendation to create a capacity-building and empowerment toolkit, which our community is eager to support, would empower vulnerable groups.

"As Europe approaches new parliamentary elections and a fresh Commission, maintaining the mental health needs of those with rare diseases on the European policy forefront, especially post-COVID-19, is imperative."

## About EURORDIS-Rare Diseases Europe

[EURORDIS-Rare Diseases Europe](#) is a unique, non-profit alliance of over 1,000 rare disease organisations from 74 countries that work together to improve the lives of the 30 million people living with a rare disease in Europe. By connecting people, families and rare disease groups, as well as by bringing together all stakeholders and mobilising the rare disease community, EURORDIS strengthens the patient voice and shapes research, policies and services.

## Contact

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