

# FRANCE – Comparative analysis of mental health strategies (Belgium / France)

## BACKGROUND

In France, mental health reforms are guided by the Mental Health and Psychiatry roadmap (Feuille de Route Santé Mentale et Psychiatrie) which was delivered in June 2018. Initially composed of 37 actions (now more than 50), this text is presented each year by the Minister of Health with the purpose of tracking the progress of the reform plan. The Ministerial Delegation for Mental Health and Psychiatry was created in 2019 to ensure the development and implementation of the national mental health strategy across all French territories. The main role of the delegation is to coordinate, follow up and provide an annual progress report of the roadmap.

The overarching goals of the French mental health plan are the integration of mental health into global health, the promotion of mental well-being, the prevention and early detection of psychological suffering, the reduction of social stigma attached to mental health problems, and the development of ambulatory mental health and psychiatric care. The reform strives to promote a recovery-oriented care, and an inter-sectoral and psycho-social rehabilitation approach while promoting the patient's empowerment at the center of the decision-making - a right-based and integrated approach to mental health, psychiatric care, and peer support.

The roadmap aims at ensuring coordinated care pathways, supported by accessible, diversified, and efficient psychiatric care services and seeks at improving the living conditions, social inclusion, and citizenship of people with mental health problems. The role of the ministerial delegation is to ensure the optimal articulation and integration of the three policies.

## KEY LEARNINGS

**France and Belgium undertook a comparative analysis of their mental health strategy, and identified 9 common recommendations.**

**Recommendation 1:** Anchor mental health policies to international references and conventions

**Recommendation 2:** Conceive mental health policies with an inter ministerial approach in line with international standards and guidelines

**Recommendation 3:** Target specific mental health needs in specific populations (age, gender, socio-economic status, vulnerabilities, geography, etc.) with specific strategies

**Recommendation 4:** Prioritize / Install local groups of governance to ensure bottom-up and top-down dialogues and include patients and family representatives to locally implement national policies

**Recommendation 5:** Create a dedicated team in charge of monitoring the implementation of mental health reforms and facilitating multi-sectoral approaches. This team should be positioned close to but separate from the minister & his/her cabinet.

**Recommendation 6:** Prioritize pre-service and in-service training with a focus on service change and innovation

**Recommendation 7:** Include systematic assessment of mental health policies based on a set of pre-defined indicators

**Recommendation 8:** Ensure mid and long term perspectives in the implementation of change

**Recommendation 9:** Promote International and public-private sector collaborations to accelerate change

## GAINS FROM JA ImpleMENTAL NETWORK

- Development of international perspectives and actions for the Ministerial Delegation for Mental Health and Psychiatry (MoH, France).
- Strengthened links with the Belgian Mental Health Reform team and start of the work on comparative analysis of mental health strategies.
- A Case-Study has emerged regarding an early detection and preventive intervention policy inspired by the Belgian model (especially the **inter-sectorial dimension** of the reform and the **implementation methods** ) and the pilot experience of the PsyCARE project in the Transition network in terms of communication to improve awareness, access to care, and capacity building.