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EMN Luxembourg Annual National Conference “Mental health and well-being of front-line (reception) workers”

2 October 2024

The University of Luxembourg, Belval Campus, Maison des Sciences Humaines, “Black Box”

In recent years, the number of refugees and asylum seekers has been increasing globally. Many of these individuals have endured traumatic experiences due to events that occurred in their country of origin or on their way to Europe.

Therefore frontline workers (interpreters, educators, social workers, medical workers, cleaning personnel, cultural mediators, security staff, police officers etc.), who provide support for various groups of clients i.e. applicants for international protection (AIPs), beneficiaries of international protection (BIPs), beneficiaries of temporary protection (BoTPs) as well as other persons with migratory background are likely to be confronted with extensive job demands that can have impact on their own mental health and well-being.

In their jobs, front-line workers are confronted with day-to-day challenges of other persons, which affect reception workers' well-being. This is even more true during any emergency, be it public health crisis, such as COVID-19, or increased influx of migrants (i.e. Ukraine war), as the past two years have clearly shown. Front-line workers interact with asylum seekers on a daily basis on a multitude of topics and are responsible for their security, physical and mental well-being. They often have to deal with the trauma and frustrations of the AIPs, BIPs and BoTPs as well as being confronted with conflicts, tensions and sometimes personal safety risks. Hence, they are exposed to high risk of personal stress-levels and burnout, moral injury, depression, trauma, and other mental health challenges.

As part of the conference agenda participants will have a possibility to participate in a practical activity, “searching journey” moderated by one of the conference speakers Dr. Viktoriia Gorbunova, University of Luxembourg.

AGENDA

2 October 2024

09.30 – 10.00	Arrival and registration
10.00 – 10.10	Opening and welcome words Prof Birte Nienaber, coordinator of the EMN Luxembourg (online)
10.10 – 10.30	Presentation on the three-fold European Union Agency for Asylum (EUAA) Practical guide on the welfare of asylum and reception staff Sharon Kassahun, European Union Agency for Asylum (online)
10.30 – 10.45	Q&A
10.45 – 11.45	Panel 1: Prof. Philip S. Santangelo , Behavioural Health Technology Interventions, Department of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jimmy Corneille, Inclusion specialist, University of Luxembourg and Managing Director & Founder SINGA Luxembourg• Nicholas Schembri, Welfare and Mental Health Manager, Detention Services Agency, Malta• Nikita Cassar, Unit leader, Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers, Malta (online)
11.45-12.00	Q&A
12.00 – 13.00	Viktoriia Gorbunova , postdoctoral researcher, University of Luxembourg, presentation of Universal mental health training for frontline professionals <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Background, development and research statistics• 5-step algorithm to support others and yourself• How it works at a glance “Searching Journey”, practical activity in smaller groups, managed by Viktoriia Gorbunova, University of Luxembourg
13.00 – 13.15	Q&A
13.15 – 13.30	Closing remarks Adolfo Sommarribas, Senior Legal Migration expert of EMN Luxembourg and Senior Legal advisor of the University of Luxembourg
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch