

## **Short Bio Vassilis Karatzias**

Vassilis Karatzias is a passionate patient advocate and legal expert, currently serving as the President of the Hellenic Friedreich Ataxia Association and Vice President of the Rare Diseases Greece Association. He has played a pivotal role in raising awareness and supporting research for rare diseases. Vassilis has successfully organized international conferences on Friedreich's Ataxia, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among experts. He is also an active member of the Board of Euro-ataxia, contributing to European initiatives that aim to improve the lives of individuals affected by ataxia disorders.

Vassilis holds a Law degree from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, a Master's degree in Specialized Public Law from Université de Bordeaux Montesquieu IV, and an MBA from the Hellenic Open University. With over two decades of experience in the Hellenic Armed Forces Legal Corps, where he currently holds the rank of Colonel, Vassilis has extensive expertise in military law, international humanitarian law, and NATO operations. His dedication to patient advocacy, combined with his deep understanding of healthcare laws and policies, makes him a valuable member of the European Patients Forum's Ethics Committee.

As a committed advocate for patients with rare diseases and a seasoned legal professional, he strives to bridge the gap between legal frameworks and patient needs, ensuring that every patient receives the support and recognition they deserve.