



21st nMEP 2nd digital nMEP Wels 22
28th – 30th January 2022

FACTFILE

Committee on Environment and Public Health

The issue of rising rates of mental illness, especially among digital natives:

How should the EU address the mental health crisis partially caused by the COVID pandemic? How does the social media usage of digital natives' factor into the rising mental health issues? What steps should the EU take?

DEFINITIONS

Mental health is a state of well-being, in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Mental disorders represent disturbances to a person's mental health that are often characterized by some combination of troubled thoughts, emotions, behaviour and relationships with others. Examples of mental disorders include depression, anxiety disorder, conduct disorder, bipolar disorder and psychosis.

What is Mental Health

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Over the course of your life, if you experience mental health problems, your thinking, mood, and behavior could be affected. Many factors contribute to mental health problems, including:

- Biological factors, such as genes or brain chemistry
- Life experiences, such as trauma or abuse
- Family history of mental health problems

Early Warning Signs

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Pulling away from people and usual activities
- Having low or no energy



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- Feeling numb or like nothing matters
- Having unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling helpless or hopeless
- Smoking, drinking, or using drugs more than usual
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings that cause problems in relationships
- Having persistent thoughts and memories you can't get out of your head
- Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- Thinking of harming yourself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like taking care of your kids or getting to work or school

Mental Health and Wellness

Positive mental health allows people to:

- Realize their full potential
- Cope with the stresses of life
- Work productively
- Make meaningful contributions to their communities

Ways to maintain positive mental health include:

- Getting professional help if you need it
- Connecting with others
- Staying positive
- Getting physically active
- Helping others
- Getting enough sleep



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- Developing coping skills



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50 MILLION YEARS
12 MILLION DAYS
US\$ 1 TRILLION

is lost annually due to common mental disorders.

Mental health spending

In the European Region, governments spent on average US\$ 22 per capita on mental health programmes and services in 2016. Again, however, there is wide variation in expenditure, the median by country grouping stretching from <US\$ 1 per capita in the Newly Independent States to nearly US\$ 200 in the countries in the European Union (pre 2004).

Despite the massive global economic burden of mental health conditions, spending amounts only to 1% of total health expenditure by governments in the WHO European Region. Of this spending, 69% was dedicated to government mental hospitals.

