



Technical Support Instrument  
2024 flagship projects

# Mental health: fostering well-being and mental health



## Context

Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Mental health problems can negatively impact not only one's quality of life, but also one's ability to participate in society and the economy, while significantly affecting the budget of health systems.

The European Year of Youth (in 2022), in line with the EU Youth Strategy 2019-2027, called for an increased attention on the **mental health situation of youth**. In the State of the European Union speech in September 2022, President Ursula von der Leyen announced the Commission's intention to present a new comprehensive approach to mental health in 2023.

## Objectives

It will support Member States strengthen the capacity of health, social and education systems to deal with mental health issues, including through increased availability, accessibility and quality of mental health services. It also aims to help Member States integrate mental health care, well-being and physical

activity into public health programmes, educational pathways and the workplace. It will support the upcoming Commission initiative on mental health by offering Member States technical support for reforms across sectors: education, labour, social and health.



## Support measures

Member States (i.e. national, regional and local authorities) may choose for one or more of the work packages:

### Work package 1: Strengthen the capacity of health systems to deal with mental health issues

- Assess the cost of the mental health reform in terms of (human) resources, financing, streamlining of institutional set-ups and review of legislation;
- Improve the quality of prevention and treatment of mental health problems;
- Support research and innovation and the uptake of scientific evidence generated (e.g. best practices, guidelines or policies);
- Support the role of digital tools in mental health;
- Develop practical toolkits for protection and prevention, especially for the educational setting, the digital sphere and the workplace;
- Foster integrated mental health care approach and ensure coordination and cooperation across policy areas at all levels (national, regional, local, school).

### Work package 2: Mainstream mental health and physical exercise in the educational setting

- Promote a systemic, whole school approach to well-being and mental health in schools, in line with Pathways to School Success recommendation;
- Develop targeted measures in cooperation with mental health professionals;
- Promote physical activity and other well-being enhancing activities in educational settings;
- Roll out awareness raising actions on mental health literacy and the impact of social media on mental health, including the fight against stigma focused on vulnerable groups;
- Introduce social and emotional learning, mental health literacy competences in the school curricula, training of teachers, psycho-social counsellors and other staff; Address the well-being of teachers, educators and staff.

### Work package 3: Increase the availability, accessibility and inclusiveness of mental health services

- Support the development of operational frameworks for mental health and psychosocial support in various settings – such as at school, at work, in community settings for older adults, prisons and juvenile detention centres and in healthcare;
- Set mechanisms to consult and/or enable community stakeholders, including young people to participate in and co-design measures aimed at enhancing (youth) wellbeing and mental health;
- Foster more timely and equitable access to mental health services by promoting the early detection of mental health issues, especially for vulnerable groups;
- Focus on the specific needs of vulnerable groups (children, elderly, people with disabilities, victims of (gender) violence, trauma, abuse or bullying), displaced people, minority groups and socio-economic disadvantaged groups (low education, low income, the unemployed).

### Work package 4: Support mental health professionals

- Support the preparation and implementation of integrated interventions (social services, healthcare, education, workplace) in the area of mental health;
- Strengthen the capacity of mental health professionals and of the social/community services in charge of mental health (competence development); training and support, including inter-disciplinary training;
- Strengthen the collaboration among health professionals across disciplines.



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