

Basic information	
2023/2074(INI)	Procedure completed
INI - Own-initiative procedure	
Mental health	
<b>Subject</b>	
4.20 Public health	

Key players			
European Parliament	Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
	ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	CERDAS Sara (S&D)	20/04/2023
		Shadow rapporteur  KYMPOUROPOULOS Stelios (EPP)  SOLÍS PÉREZ Susana (Renew)  STEFĂNUȚĂ Nicolae (Greens/EFA)  NISSINEN Johan (ECR)  PIMENTA LOPES João (The Left)	

Key events			
Date	Event	Reference	Summary
15/06/2023	Committee referral announced in Parliament		
07/11/2023	Vote in committee		
20/11/2023	Committee report tabled for plenary	A9-0367/2023	Summary
11/12/2023	Debate in Parliament		
12/12/2023	Decision by Parliament	T9-0457/2023	Summary
12/12/2023	Results of vote in Parliament		

Technical information	
Procedure reference	2023/2074(INI)

Procedure type	INI - Own-initiative procedure
Procedure subtype	Initiative
Legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 55
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/9/12215

Documentation gateway				
European Parliament				
Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.879	08/09/2023	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE752.936	08/09/2023	
Committee draft report		PE751.899	27/10/2023	
Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading		A9-0367/2023	20/11/2023	Summary
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T9-0457/2023	12/12/2023	Summary
European Commission				
Document type	Reference	Date	Summary	
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2024)220	13/06/2024		

## Meetings with interest representatives published in line with the Rules of Procedure

### Rapporteurs, Shadow Rapporteurs and Committee Chairs

Transparency				
Name	Role	Committee	Date	Interest representatives
KYMPOUROPOULOS Stelios	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	15/02/2024	Nobody Left Outside (NLO)
KYMPOUROPOULOS Stelios	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	25/10/2023	H. Lundbeck A/S
CERDAS Sara	Shadow rapporteur	ENVI	06/10/2023	World Health Organization
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	04/09/2023	European Commission
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	04/09/2023	WHO Europe
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	31/08/2023	Mental Health Europe - Santé Mentale Europe
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	31/08/2023	Wellcome Trust
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	04/07/2023	WHO Europe
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	03/07/2023	European Commission
CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	29/06/2023	Wellcome Trust

CERDAS Sara	Rapporteur	ENVI	20/06/2023	Mental Health Europe - Santé Mentale Europe
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# Mental health

2023/2074(INI) - 20/11/2023 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety adopted an own-initiative report by Sara CERDAS (S&D, PT) on mental health.

According to Members, everyone can face different mental stressors and risk factors at different phases of their lives, which can increase the risk of more severe or even chronic mental health conditions. Mental health and well-being is shaped by a combination of socio-economic, environmental, biological and genetic factors.

## **Work and workplace**

The Commission is called on to propose a legislative initiative, in consultation with the social partners, on the management of psychosocial risks and well-being at work, including online, in order to effectively prevent psychosocial risks in the workplace, provide training for management and workers, periodically assess progress and improve the working environment. The report further called on the Commission to adopt guidelines to support the access and return to work of people with mental health conditions, including more flexible work practices.

Member States are recommended to introduce measures to provide flexible work practices that support employees who suffer from disease, physical or emotional pain, stress or other health crises.

## **Elderly people**

Members noted with concern that, in the context of an ageing society, the risks of mental health conditions in the elderly are increasing, including isolation and stigmatisation, which can lead to abuse, neglect and difficulties in coping with depression and other disorders. The report also noted with alarm that suicide rates among elderly people are high and believe it is therefore essential to promote the active participation of elderly people in community life, affordable and equal access to healthcare, as well as public support structures, community care, and infrastructure equipped with mental health specialists.

Members States are called on to develop national dementia plans in order to expand early diagnosis, support and care for adults with dementia.

## **Mental healthcare professionals**

The report highlighted the need to ensure further investment in public health services and that they are staffed with sufficient mental health professionals. Members acknowledge that the shortages in the mental health workforce undermines the accessibility of mental health services. In this regard, they stressed the need for better trained professionals in the EU by ensuring training, re-training, certification and capacity building schemes for staff in order to increase the number of qualified professionals.

## **Early diagnosis and intervention**

Mental health conditions are currently under- and misdiagnosed or are diagnosed late in the EU, resulting in significant individual and societal consequences, making this an issue that needs urgent attention. The report underlined the importance of early diagnosis and intervention for mental health conditions with a focus on vulnerable groups in society, as early intervention is cost-effective and may prevent poor outcomes.

Early identification and treatment of depression and substance use disorders are essential to reduce the suicide rate by one third by 2030, in line with the Member States' commitment under the WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2030 and target 3.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **Mental health support and treatment**

Members stressed that people with mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities have the right to receive evidence-based treatment and support tailored to their needs. The integration of family and **caregiver support** services into mental health service delivery models should be encouraged.

## **Mental health in the EU**

The report invited the Commission to draw up a long-term, comprehensive and integrated **European Mental Health Strategy** focusing particularly on the most vulnerable groups in society. The European Mental Health Strategy should focus on many areas in which young people's mental health can be improved in coordination with the European Education Area with specific focus on bullying and cyber-bullying in schools.

## **Financial support**

Members consider that:

- sufficient funding should be allocated to match the scale of the challenge and that mental health must be further addressed in future financial programmes such as the EU4Health programme 2028-2034 and Horizon Europe;

- the EU lacks a direct fund for mental health research and innovation and called on the Commission to convert the flagship initiatives into concrete actions with adequate financial support for vulnerable groups and to create a mission on Mental Health from the Horizon Europe programme and the future programme in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2035.

## Mental health

2023/2074(INI) - 12/12/2023 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 482 votes to 94, with 32 abstentions, a resolution on mental health.

### ***Preventing mental health conditions and promoting mental health for all***

Members recalled that everyone can face different mental stressors and risk factors at different phases of their lives, which can increase the risk of more severe or even chronic mental health conditions. Mental health and well-being is shaped by a combination of socio-economic, environmental, biological and genetic factors.

The resolution stressed that addressing mental health conditions requires a thorough understanding of the different determinants of mental health and that a cross-sectoral approach is needed to prevent and mitigate the impact on individuals, communities and societies through an approach aimed at **integrating mental health into all policies**.

Members stressed the importance of a **biopsychosocial approach** to mental health and of social policies that tackle the risk factors for social exclusion. They also called on Member States to improve access to mental health services for vulnerable populations and groups suffering from certain pathologies.

Parliament encouraged Member States to develop policies that prioritise the **mental health of children, adolescents and young adults** by strengthening child protection services to prevent mental disorders and suicides, and by providing access to low-cost or free mental health services. It called for the strengthening of **support, listening and alert platforms** for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, and stressed the importance of combating gender inequality and violence against women. It also called for action to be taken against online hate speech, particularly targeting ethnic minorities and racially discriminated persons, the LGBTQIA+ community and other vulnerable groups.

### ***Work and workplace***

The Commission is called on to propose a **legislative initiative**, in consultation with the social partners, on the management of psychosocial risks and well-being at work, including online, in order to effectively prevent psychosocial risks in the workplace, provide training for management and workers, periodically assess progress and improve the working environment. The resolution further called on the Commission to adopt guidelines to support the access and return to work of people with mental health conditions, including more flexible work practices.

Member States are recommended to introduce measures to provide flexible work practices that support employees who suffer from disease, physical or emotional pain, stress or other health crises.

### ***Elderly people***

Members noted with concern that, in the context of an ageing society, the risks of mental health conditions in the elderly are increasing, including isolation and stigmatisation, which can lead to abuse, neglect and difficulties in coping with depression and other disorders. The resolution also noted with alarm that suicide rates among elderly people are high and believe it is therefore essential to promote the **active participation** of elderly people in community life, affordable and equal access to healthcare, as well as public support structures, community care, and infrastructure equipped with mental health specialists.

Member States are called on to develop **national dementia plans** in order to expand early diagnosis, support and care for adults with dementia.

### ***Strengthening mental health systems***

The resolution stressed that the principles of equitable, affordable and easily accessible care, empowerment of people with mental health problems, choice of desired treatment and **patient-centred approach** should form the basis of mental health systems throughout the EU.

Members stressed the need to invest more in **public health services** and to provide them with a sufficient number of mental health professionals. The European Commission should work with Member States to improve the coordinated response to the shortage of mental health professionals, including pan-European mapping and best practice.

### ***Early diagnosis and intervention***

The resolution underlined the importance of early diagnosis and intervention for mental health conditions with a focus on vulnerable groups in society, as early intervention is cost-effective and may prevent poor outcomes.

Early identification and treatment of depression and substance use disorders are essential to **reduce the suicide rate by one third by 2030**, in line with the Member States' commitment under the WHO Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2030. Members recalled the need for prevention at an early age via the education system.

### ***Mental health support and treatment***

Members stressed that people with mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities have the right to receive evidence-based treatment and support tailored to their needs. The integration of family and caregiver support services into mental health service delivery models should be encouraged.

#### ***Mental health in the EU***

The resolution invited the Commission to draw up a **long-term, comprehensive and integrated European Mental Health Strategy** focusing particularly on the most vulnerable groups in society. The European Mental Health Strategy should focus on many areas in which young people's mental health can be improved in coordination with the European Education Area with specific focus on bullying and cyber-bullying in schools.

#### ***Financial support***

Members consider that:

- **sufficient funding** should be allocated to match the scale of the challenge and that mental health must be further addressed in future financial programmes such as the EU4Health programme 2028-2034 and Horizon Europe;

- the EU lacks a direct fund for mental health research and innovation and called on the Commission to convert the flagship initiatives into concrete actions with adequate financial support for vulnerable groups and to create a mission on Mental Health from the Horizon Europe programme and the future programme in the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2035.

Lastly, Parliament called on the Commission to follow the recommendations of the Conference on the Future of Europe and designate next year as the **European Year of Mental Health**.