



Mental Health⁺

EUROPEAN LEVEL REPORT

Approaches to mental health inclusion in Europe

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1. Current developments and policies towards mental health inclusion

i. Summary of the emerging themes, main trends and challenges in mental health issues in European countries

The latest report on the overview of European health (Health at a Glance: Europe 2018), which was published by the European Commission and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development), stated that more than one in six people in European countries had a mental health problem in 2016, which is equivalent to more than 84 million people.

This report also stated that many European countries have developed policies and programmes to deal with the mental health of people at different ages. The data shows that countries Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom follow specific plan or policy documents on mental health promotion and prevention.

On average 17.3% of people in Europe, more than one in six, have mental health problems. On a country-by-country basis, these rates are highest in Finland, the Netherlands, France and Ireland, with rates of more than 18.5% of people with at least one kind of mental health issue. In contrast, it is at its lowest in Romania, Bulgaria and Poland, with rates of less than 15% of the population.

Data from the 2014 European Health Interview Survey confirm a substantial gender gap in self-reported chronic depression, with more than one in twelve women (8.8%) indicating they experience chronic depression, compared with one in nineteen men (5.3%). The prevalence of chronic depression increases steadily with age among both women and men, and is particularly high in middle age. At age 55-64, more than 11.4% of women and 7.1% of men reported being chronically depressed across the EU as a whole in 2014. These rates decrease between the age 65 and 74, and then increase again in older ages. This increase in older ages may be partly explained by the fact that depression is often associated with poor physical health, frailty, perceived financial strain and lower social support. In addition, the most common mental health issues in women are anxiety. Some of these gender gaps may be due to a greater propensity of women to report these problems. However, one exception is drug and alcohol use disorders, which are more than two times more likely to occur in men than women on average across EU countries.

To get a wider idea of mental health inclusion in Europe, in addition to the six countries in the Mental Health+ project, four countries outside the project have been selected for further evaluation into the mental health policies. The selected countries are Portugal, France, Germany and Norway. Thus, the report will collect more information regarding the mental health inclusion in Europe.



PORTUGAL

Portugal is the European country with the fifth-highest prevalence of mental health issues. According to the Health at a Glance 2018 report, 18.4% of the Portuguese population presents mental health problems, such as anxiety, depression or addiction (most commonly to drugs and alcohol).

Depression and anxiety affects 6% of the population, followed by drug and alcohol addiction (2%), and finally, bipolar disorder (2%) and schizophrenia (2%).

The report shows that unemployed people and overworked or shift workers have a higher probability of suffering from poor mental health in Portugal.

FRANCE

In France, 1 in 5 people (20% of the population) suffer from mental health problems or disorders. In other words, 12 million people have some kind of mental health issue. Similar to other European countries, the most common mental health issues are anxiety, depression, bipolar disorders and schizophrenia. In children and young people, mental health issues are quite prevalent with 12.5% of all French children and teenagers diagnosed with a mental health issue. The most common mental health issues are anxiety, anorexia, bulimia and schizophrenia. Eating disorders are becoming increasingly more common amongst French young people, and 30% of teenagers have reported to have had bulimia.

Despite the high prevalence of mental health issues, the budget devoted in France to the investigation of such mental health issues only amounts to 3% of the national budget, far less than in other European countries. For instance, Finland devotes about 10% of its budget.

NORWAY

Around half of the Norwegian population has suffered mental and/or emotional issues in some way at some point in their lives.

It is possible that one of the reasons for this high number of people suffering from a mental health problems in Scandinavian countries is due to weather conditions. The darker days and colder weather can be responsible of a large number of depression cases among the Scandinavian population.

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that comes and goes in a seasonal pattern. SAD is sometimes known as "winter depression" because the symptoms are usually more apparent and more severe during the winter.



Data from Norway's Ministry of Labour show that there is a mental health issue behind one in every three disability claims and, in the case of young people, this figure rises to one in two.

According to NOVA (Norway Social Research), recent surveys conducted among young Norwegians indicate that the number of young people with symptoms of mental health problems has increased. Mental health issues have been becoming more frequent among Norway's youth in the last 20 years.

Anxiety, depression and disorders relating to drug abuse are the three most common issues among the Norwegian population.

An important challenge related to these issues is access to education and involvement in the labour market. Young people with mental health problems are less likely to complete their education and therefore have more difficulty finding a job, and this can further cause mental health issues as unemployment is associated with poor mental health. Approximately half of those who have not completed secondary education claim that it was due to their mental health issues.

GERMANY

According to a study conducted in Germany by DAK, 1 in 4 children and teenagers have some kind of mental health issue. The data show that 24% of children and teenagers display 'psychological abnormalities' indicative of mental health problems.

Almost 2% of children between the ages of 10 and 17 have been diagnosed with depression and 2.2% with some anxiety disorder. According to DAK, if this data are extrapolated to the entire German population between the ages of 10 and 17, the total number of children suffering with their mental health is 238,000. The data also show that childhood depression rates increased by 5% from 2016 to 2017.

Mental health issues are the fifth most common of all childhood illnesses. Depression only represents a small part of mental illnesses, whereas development and behaviour conditions represent the majority of this category.

As per this very same study, the number of people that had to request a leave of absence due to mental health problems had tripled in the last 20 years.

Recent surveys prove that 15% of women and 8% of men have had undergone at least a depressive episode during the last year. The most feared consequence of depression is suicide and in Germany, one in seven of those with severe depression has committed suicide.



Furthermore, depression is the most common cause of inability to work.

It is estimated that 5.3 million Germans suffer from depression every year and around 17% of German adults will experience a persistent depressive disorder in their lifetime.

iii. Mental health inclusion policies and approaches on a European level.

Policies and services addressing mental health are the responsibility of individual EU countries. However, the need to include mental health among the priorities of the public health agenda has resulted in renewed focus at an EU level.

Europe is facing diverse challenges affecting the mental wellbeing of the population and the provision of care for people with mental health problems. The wellbeing of the population has become a central focus for European governments. Policies across governments can increase mental wellbeing and reduce exposure to risk factors. Mental health problems are one of the greatest public health challenges in Europe as measured by prevalence, burden of disease and disability. Mental health problems, including depression, anxiety and schizophrenia, are the main cause of disability and early retirement in many countries and a major burden to economies, demanding policy action.

Most countries now have mental health policies and legislation, and many are making progress with the implementation of community-based mental health services. However, the capacity and quality of services are very diverse across Europe. For example, the number of beds, coverage of community services, number of psychiatrists and nurses, and the level of government investment differs greatly across the EU.

In Europe, Member States of the European Region of World Health Organisation adopted the **European Declaration and Action Plan at the Ministerial Conference** held in Helsinki in 2005, co-signed by the European Commission and the Council of Europe and endorsed by the Regional Committee. This set an agenda for action to tackle stigma and discrimination and develop community-based services.

The European Mental Health Action Plan 2013-2020 focuses on seven interlinked objectives and proposes effective actions to strengthen mental health and well-being. Investing in mental health is essential for the sustainability of health and socio-economic policies in the European Region. The European Mental Health Action Plan corresponds to the four priority areas of the European policy framework for health and wellbeing, Health 2020, and will contribute directly to its implementation. The Action Plan has been developed in close consultation with Member States, experts and NGOs, guided by the Standing Committee of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe.



Below are some of the existing policies in the four countries selected for this report:

PORTUGAL

The main law associated with mental health in Portugal is Law no. 36/98 of 24 July (3rd version, updated in 2018, introduced in 1998). Its main objective is to protect mental health through approaches that help ensure and establish a mental balance among the citizens and to encourage the development of capabilities that are necessary to promote their integration into the society to which they belong.

In addition to this law, there is the **National Mental Health Plan 2007-2016** (PNSM). In 2012, the plan was updated.

As a result of its implementation, Portugal has experienced a 40% reduction in the number of patients in mental health institutions, has closed its oldest mental hospital and is in the process of disabling others. Another of this health plan's achievements has been the creation of Mental Health Services in general hospitals, as well as the training of professionals working with people with severe mental health issues.

Lastly, there is the **Avaliação do Plano Nacional de Saúde Mental 2007-2016 e propostas prioritarias para à extensão a 2020**. (Evaluation of the National Mental Health Plan 2007-2016 and priority proposals for extension to 2020). The main limitations to the implementation of the Mental Health Plan are identified within this document, and the plan is updated for the period 2017-2020.

Portugal's National Mental Health Plan aims to ensure that the entire population can access the services that have been set up, foster their mental health, provide quality care, and heal and reintegrate people who have suffered issues of such kind.

This National Plan also attempts to ensure the rights of people with mental problems or disorders, which must be respected like those of other citizens, including the right to adequate care, protection against any kind of discrimination, etc.

Mental Health services must create the necessary conditions to assist in the recovery of people with mental health issues or disorders and provide them with their own path or itinerary. Furthermore, these services must be made accessible to all people regardless of their age, gender, place of residence and economic or social situation.

FRANCE

The main law/policy addressing mental health issues in France is the Multiannual Programme. Psychiatry and Mental Health 2018-2023.

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This programme published by Haute Autorité de Santé (HAS) in 2018 is divided into four units—safety and rights in psychiatry, severe and persistent mental problems, child psychiatry and other topics.

In safety and rights in psychiatry, work will be carried out, for example, with a view to improving the care of patients in care programmes and to better assess and manage psychotrauma in children and adults.

For severe and persistent mental health disorders and problems, includes in particular work dedicated to the social and medico-social sectors as well as work at the interface of the health, social and medico-social sectors: reduction of risks and damage related to addictions in social and medico-social establishments, cognitive assessment and psychosocial rehabilitation care...

The needs in child psychiatry are important, which explains the choice of this third theme. The work will focus on the prevention, diagnosis and management of perinatal mental disorders, coordination between child protection services and child psychiatry services, continuity of care between child psychiatry services and services adult psychiatry and the prevention and management of suicide attempts in children and adolescents.

In addition, psychiatry and mental health will be specifically addressed during the transversal work of the HAS, with the development of new indicators of quality and safety of care in this field and on the occasion of a specific focus in the framework for the future certification of health establishments.

This new programme is a continuation of the "Psychiatry and Mental Health" 2013-2017 programme and was developed to meet the needs and concerns of the many stakeholders, users, professionals and institution, as well as to ensure the complementarity of the work done within HAS.

France's **Roadmap for Mental Health and Psychiatry** was presented in June 2018. This document is aligned with the National Health Strategy and rests on three axes:

- Promote mental well-being, prevent and detect early mental distress and prevent suicide
- Ensure coordinated care routes supported by affordable, diverse and high-quality mental health services
- Improve the living conditions and social inclusion of people with mental health issues

France also has an action plan in favour of youth health and well-being: the Ministry for Solidarity and Health and the Ministry of Education released this plan in 2016. It was intended to promote good health and welfare among young people between the ages of 11 and 21. This plan addresses the prevention of mental health problems and suicide in adolescence, a period where



depression and suicidal thoughts are common.

The action plan "in favour of youth health and wellbeing" was drawn up jointly by the different government departments concerned, including the Ministry for Solidarity and Health, Ministry of National Education and Ministry of Sport.

It pursued four main thrusts:

- Enable professionals to better identify the signs of mental health problems or suffering in adolescents or young adults, and help these professionals to address such situations
- Find ways to ensure young people feel more supported and heard
- Guide young people more effectively towards the competent professionals, facilitate early advice and action and diversify and improve available treatments whilst reducing the inequalities in this area
- Develop shared monitoring of these problems and the emerging symptoms of contemporary adolescence

As part of the National Health Strategy, the main objective of the **Roadmap for Mental Health** is to change the perspective on mental health, mental illnesses, mental disorders and the people affected by mental health issues.

It provides three strong points that focus on young people:

- Promoting mental well-being by developing of psychosocial capabilities by participating in awareness-raising activities, benchmarks and training guides etc.
- fighting against stigma from an early age through launching awareness-raising campaigns
- Early identification of mental health problems with a range of different training actions (a programme dedicated to primary care in the mental health field, research into suicide prevention, improving the training of professionals, etc.)

In order to guarantee a good quality of life and participation for those suffering severe and persistent mental health issues, the plan aims to implement coordinated actions in the fields of peer support, employment, housing, effective remedies, care and help, etc

NORWAY

In 1998, the Norwegian Parliament introduced a **National Mental Health Programme**, calling for a major increase in the funding of mental health related services, as well as a major reorganisation of these services. Implementation of the programme will take place between 1999 and 2008.



Recently, new laws regulating mental health services in Norway have been introduced.

In order to implement this policy:

- The Ministry has established a consulting group, represented by all major user organisations, whose aim is to discuss all important issues concerning the mental health programme
- Government funds have been made available to strengthen the users' organisations
- New laws adopted by Parliament, aim to improve the rights of patients, including the right to take part in the planning and coordination of their own services, and the right to decide where to receive treatment
- Specialised services are now required by law to establish systems for obtaining patients' and users' experiences with, and views on services
- A new system for quality assurance is being implemented in the specialised services. This system strongly emphasises indicators measuring users' experience and satisfaction with services. A similar system will be developed for community based services.

The programme aimed at:

- Strengthening the users' position
- Increasing public awareness on mental health issues through information programmes
- strengthening community based services provided by the local municipalities (including prevention and early intervention)
- Expanding and restructuring specialised services for adults
- Expanding specialised services for children and adolescents
- Improving labour market services
- Assisting with accommodation and housing
- Stimulating education and research.

The Norwegian government has also published the **Youth Health Strategy 2016-2021** aiming for child and adolescent mental health in Norway. According to this strategy, youth mental health should be placed on the same level as physical health.

There is also the **National Plan for Children and Young People's Mental Health 2019-2024**. This plan includes measures to ensure that more and more children and young people experience good mental health and living standards and that those in need receive appropriate and effective treatment. The plan addresses health promotion and prevention measures focusing on treatment.

To conclude, there is the **National Strategic Plan for Work and Mental Health**, which lies within the various Norwegian laws, programmes and strategies. This plan applies to all mental



disorders and problems and to people who also have substance abuse problems or other challenges.

As mentioned in the previous section, there is currently a **National Programme for Mental Health** in Norway. Its objectives are to:

- Raise public awareness of mental health through information programmes
- Strengthen community services, including early prevention and intervention
- Expand services for children and adolescents
- Improve labour market services related to mental health
- Encourage research and education

Norway's Mental Health policies establish preventive measures since mental health issues are often preventable and early intervention is shown to be effective. In addition, mental health services are integrated within existing health services to make them more accessible. Norwegian mental health policies take into account the perspectives of people suffering from these problems. Participation and cooperation with the users and their families are required, both at a system level and an individual level, as having this social support is shown to be effective in recovery.

Finally, the National Programme seeks to enable people suffering from mental health issues to lead a completely normal life. Services are aimed at promoting independence, improving living conditions and quality of life and allowing to engage in daily life like other citizens.

GERMANY

In Germany, there is no specific legislation on mental health operating at a national level. Each Federal State is responsible for the legislation, planning and coordination of mental health policies.

There is the Strategy for Childhood Health Promotion—**Strategie der Bundesregierung zur Förderung der Kindergesundheit**—which operates on a federal state level and also addresses the health of adolescents and young people, especially their mental health.



2. Main actors in mental health inclusion in European countries

i. Main actors and work in the field – institutions, mental health advocacy groups, etc. and main initiatives.

In Europe there are numerous organisations, entities and advocacy groups working in the field of mental health.

In 2013 the European Union launched the **Joint Action on Mental Health and Wellbeing** to defend mental health as a priority for European public health and develop tools to help Member States improve conditions for the prevention, diagnosis and care of mental disorders in its territory.

The objective of Joint Action on Mental Health and Well-Being is to contribute to the promotion of mental health and well-being, the prevention of mental disorders and the improvement of care and social inclusion of people with mental disorders in Europe.

The Joint Action addresses issues related to five areas:

- Promotion of mental health at the workplaces
- Promotion of mental health in schools
- Promoting action against depression and suicide and implementation of e-health approaches
- Developing community-based and socially inclusive mental health care for people with severe mental disorders
- Promoting the integration of mental health in all policies.

Mental Health Europe (MHE) is an European non-governmental network organisation committed to the promotion of positive mental health, the prevention of distress, the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of the rights of users of mental health services, persons with psychosocial disabilities, their families and carers.

MHE works closely with the European Institutions and international bodies to mainstream mental health in all policies and end mental health stigma. Mental Health Europe represents associations and individuals in the field of mental health including users of mental health services, professionals, service providers and volunteers. Together with its members, MHE formulates recommendations for policy makers to develop mental health friendly policies. MHE places users of mental services at the centre of its work to ensure the voice of people who have experienced mental ill health is heard across Europe.



Its main strategies are:

- Ensure a human rights-based and recovery-centred approach to mental health
- Parity of esteem: valuing mental health equally with physical health
- Promote better mental health at work
- Advocate for better community based care
- Strengthen and consolidate MHE's networks

The European Network for Mental Health Promotion (ENMHP) is a network for people interested in mental health promotion issues.

It has more than 1600 members from Europe and beyond. Their members come from policy and practitioner backgrounds and they all have an interest in the implementation of mental health promotion programmes. In addition, the ENMHP aims to influence policy by communicating the experiences of practice directly to those who formulate and manage policy.

Information and tools relevant to promoting mental health and wellbeing can be found on the website of European Network for Mental Health Promotion.

There are tools and methods for promoting mental health, support for implementing mental health promotion programmes and training (face-to-face and e-learning) on mental health promotion (MHP). These features are available for three settings – schools, workplaces and older people's residences and in multiple languages.

The ENMHP has developed from an EU funded project called ProMenPol which finished in December 2009. The partners in the ENMHP are developing the work of ProMenPol to include training for mental health promotion and providing support for implementing MHP.

ENMHP aims to be the largest network for mental health promotion in Europe, providing, information, tools and methods, training and a communications platform for all who are interested in this area.

Another advocacy group working in the field of mental health in Europe is **GAMIAN-Europe**. **GAMIAN-Europe** is a patient-driven pan-European organisation, representing and advocating the interests and rights of persons affected by mental ill health. Its main activities relate to advocacy, information, awareness-raising and education and partnership and capacity building. Overarching themes in its work relate to anti-stigma and discrimination and patients' rights.

GAMIAN-Europe was established in 1998 as a representative coalition of patient organisations as it was felt that patients can and should play an effective and complementary role in developing positive and proactive policies and other initiatives with an impact on mental health issues and



services.

The main objectives of GAMIAN-Europe are:

- To improve the provision, reliability and quality of information on mental ill health for patients, relatives and carers
- To reduce stigma, prejudice, ignorance and misinformation surrounding mental ill health
- To promote collaboration within the mental health field amongst those working in research, education/training and service provision at national and pan European levels
- To assist in improving the training, education and understanding of health professionals and other personnel responsible for the delivery of mental health services in Europe
- To improve awareness, knowledge and understanding of the public, policymaker and the media with regard to mental disorders
- To promote a positive message that mental ill health can be treated effectively (by a variety of means)
- To assist in the creation, growth and development, where appropriate, of representative patient organisations throughout Europe

In closing, the European Community based Mental Health Service Providers (**EUCOMS**) network was born in 2015 from the realisation that one of the most important stakeholders for the implementation of quality mental health care, community mental health service providers, were not represented on European policy level.

Recognizing the need for good quality community based mental health services in Europe, backed up by evidence of the value for people using these services, the EUCOMS network acts as the linking pin between policy and practice and brings together mental health service providers from across Europe and beyond.

The activities that EUCOMS develops are:

- Knowledge sharing activities including the organisation of conferences, workshops and cross country visits to share best practices
- Advocacy on national and European level for the implementation of quality community mental health care
- Capacity building of leaders, providers, and peer experts in community mental health care
- Supporting and pursuing the full implementation of community based mental health care in nations and regions

At the moment the network comprises organisations from 20 countries. A full list of our member organisations can be found on their website.



PORTUGAL

The main actor in mental health inclusion in Portugal is the **National Health Service**. Many promotion and prevention initiatives have been carried out within the National Mental Health Plan, among which, the following stand out:

- National Plan for Suicide Prevention 2013-2017.
- The “+**Contigo: promoção de saúde mental e prevenção de comportamentos suicidários na comunidade educativa**” programme aiming to fight stigma and prevent the suicide of school-aged people.
- Since 2010 the “**Mental Health and Art**” programme has promoted yearly initiatives dedicated to the identification, selection and public dissemination of artwork created by people with mental health problems or illnesses.
- Two national training programmes aimed at primary care professionals and educational and school health teams. The main objective of these is to train professionals in the detection and management of anxiety signs and emotional distress in children and adolescents.

In Portugal, there are many public and private entities and organisations working in the field of mental health.

One of the leading organisations in Portugal is **FamiliarMente**, National Federation of Associations of Families of People with Mental Health Experience. It is a non-profit association based in Lisbon, and its main goal is to carry out measures contributing to the quality of life and welfare of those with mental health problems and their families. **FamiliarMente** supports and defends the rights and legitimate interests of these people and their families, fosters and upholds policies destined to help people with mental health problems, promotes society’s understanding and non-discrimination of those suffering from a mental health issue or illness, fights stigma, and encourages and disseminates good practices in mental health.

Mental Health Portal is a non-profit project arising from an initiative of a group of mental health professionals. This portal gathers associations, clinics, schools, companies and other entities, as well as professionals working in prevention and intervention in mental health. Its main objectives are to facilitate access to mental health professionals for those who may need it, to promote mental health in society as a whole, to disseminate the work of mental health institution, and to fight stigma related to mental health.

Another Portuguese entity standing up for people with mental health issues is **FNERDM**, National Federation of Entities for the Rehabilitation of Mentally Ill People. It is a private institution, established in 1997 by several psychosocial rehabilitation entities who work with people with mental health problems. In recent years, FNERDM has been invited to take part in



different working groups within the scope of national mental health policies, as well as with regard to the social inclusion of those with severe mentally health issues and illnesses.

In Portugal, as with other European countries, the most common mental health problems are depression, anxiety, and alcohol and drug addiction. To deal with these issues, as well as provide support to those with bipolar disorder, the **Association for the Support of Depressive and Bipolar Patients** (ADEB) was founded in 1991. ADEB aims to promote and provide specialised training to unemployed young people and adults with depression and bipolar disorder.

As well as Portugal having organisations that address and support those with mental health issues, there are also national initiatives that address mental health:

Feliz Mente (Happy Mind): Education and Awareness-Raising for Mental Health. It is an online platform that was developed by a team of researchers and mental health professionals. This platform is part of a larger project, "Education and Awareness-Raising for Mental Health: a programme of school-based intervention for Teenagers and Young People".

This project intends to promote health and prevention of mental health issues and behaviour disorders in young people and adolescents. It offers a set of tools and information addressing young people, professionals in the field of education, and parents. This programme provides information on depression, schizophrenia, alcohol addiction, stress and anxiety, and eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia.

Video on youth mental health:

The video describes the transition from childhood into adolescence, highlighting the importance of mental health. It addresses identity building, the role of family and friends, the desire for attention and recognition, the need to break the rules and other aspects relating to risky behaviour, including pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, suicidal behaviour, violence, psychoactive substances, eating disorders and internet addiction. The video also calls on teenagers to seek help from relatives or professionals.

The Portuguese Institute for Sport and Youth, the National Youth Council, the PNSM of the Directorate-General of Health and the National Association of Nutrition Students are responsible for the video, which was produced within the context of the International Youth Day of 2014 and highlighted the "Young People and Mental Health" theme.

FRANCE

The primary responsibility to ensure the mental health of French people is that of the **Ministry**



for Solidarity and Health (Ministère des Solidarités et de la Santé).

The Ministry of Solidarity and Health is responsible for implementing government policy in the fields of social affairs, solidarity and social cohesion, public health and social protection.

The Ministry of Solidarity and Health works in the organization of prevention and care, research and innovation in the field of health.

In October 2016 the **National Council for Mental Health** was established. Its main objective is to implement a national and cross-cutting strategy for mental health issues, reduce the prevalence and severity of mental health and psychiatric disorders and manage and support those who suffer from them.

There are many entities and organisations that operate in the field of mental health in France, and leading the reduction of stigma is **Santé Mentale France**. It is the French Federation for Mental Health, which fights the stigma suffered by those who have or have had any kind of mental health problem. They also advocate for the recognition of rights of those with mental health problems and foster recovery and psychosocial rehabilitation, etc.

Another French entity operating in the field of mental health is **Fondation Fondamental**. It is a research foundation devoted to combating mental illnesses.

Created in 2007 by initiative of the Ministry of Higher Education and Research, Fondation Fondamental is a scientific cooperation foundation dedicated to the fight against mental illness.

Fondation Fondamental focuses on psychiatric illnesses considered to be the most severe: bipolar disorders, schizophrenia, autism, suicidal behaviour, severe depression, and post-traumatic stress.

Its objectives are:

- Better understand the causes of psychiatric illness
- Discover new treatments and new therapeutic strategies
- Measure the medical, social and economic impact of mental illness

Psychodon is an association which purpose is to link up associations, beneficiaries and sponsors in the area of mental health. The goal is to help them get in touch in order to innovate together and work in local projects and initiatives. Psychodon is also raising awareness on the topic of mental health so as to combat discrimination and stigma.

In order to contribute to these objectives, every year Psychodon organises the “great mental



health night” on the 12th of June. This event consists of different artistic performances and educational exchanges in a festive and playful atmosphere. The event has great thematic coverage and has been broadcasted on TV and radio to great success so far. It is also live-streamed on YouTube.

Another very interesting initiative that is being currently carried out in France is the **Youth Health Pass**. The government has created this initiative within the Youth Health and Welfare Plan to help young people who have any mental health problems. The Youth Health Pass consists of a series of appointments with psychologists and it is being tested over a three-year period. The purpose of this initiative is to provide professional care for young people who may need it. It addresses young people between the ages of 11 and 21 and offers a package of 10 yearly consultations with a psychologist. In order to receive this free treatment, a school doctor or psychologist must refer the patient to a psychiatrist. Such offices are available in some French regions, but not in the whole territory.

NORWAY

In Norway there are three public institutions that deal with mental health:

- The **Ministry of Health and Care Services** takes responsibility for the implementation of health policies in Norway. The Ministry of Health and Care Services (HOD) is responsible for providing good and equal health and care services for the population of Norway. The ministry directs these services by means of a comprehensive legislation, annual budgetary allocations and through various governmental institutions.
- **Norwegian Council for Mental Health**: The Norwegian Council for Mental Health (NCMH) is an independent humanitarian organization that includes all the major actors in the field of mental health. The Council works to achieve the best quality of life possible for children and young people with mental health problems and their families. The organisation promotes access to local, integrated help, works to achieve an inclusive working life and addresses challenges related to the use of compulsory measures. This council is formed by research institutions, universities, professional associations and NGOs.
- **Norwegian Institute of Public Health (NIPH)**: is a government agency under the Ministry of Health and Care Services. The NIPH is responsible for knowledge production and systematic reviews for the health sector and provides knowledge about the health status in the population, influencing factors and how it can be improved. The institute is a national competence institution in the following areas:
 - infectious disease control
 - physical and mental health
 - environmental factors, substance abuse, tobacco, nutrition, physical activity and



- other factors that affects health status and inequality
- health-promoting and preventive measures in the population
- global health

Besides these public institutions, Norway also houses entities and organisations involved in the field of mental health.

Mental Helse Ungdom (Mental Health for Youth)

Many young boys in Norway struggle with poor mental health. One in three fail to complete their education by the normal school leaving age, and twice as many start claiming benefits immediately after leaving school compared with 10 years ago. Suicide is the most common cause of death and the organisation Mental Helse Ungdom (Mental health for youth) believe that this is because they do not talk about their problems.

Ninety six percent of Norwegian boys aged between 9 and 18 play or watch videos of computer games. Mental Helse Ungdom therefore decided to set up Ingame in partnership with the Norwegian advertising agency Hausmann. Ingame is a panel programme on the inside of a computer game, where boys can talk anonymously through their game character. Together with two of Norway's most popular gamers, Noobwork and Niklas Baarli, the boys played Fortnite, whilst being able to talk about things that were important to them, such as body image, friends, divorced parents, self-image and loss. This resulted in five episodes on Noobwork's YouTube channel focused on Ingame and mental health.

Without any promotion budget, Ingame has attracted a huge amount of attention in the Norwegian media and on social media, helping to place the mental health of young boys on the agenda.

Voksne for Barn (Adults for Children) is a non-profit member organization that for 60 years has worked for good mental health and safe growing conditions for all children.

This organisation works for children's mental health and about reducing taboos, exclusion and bullying.

Their main objectives are:

- Influence politicians and policy makers
- Ensure that children and adolescents have the best conditions for growing up safely and well
- Gather and disseminate knowledge of children's experiences and needs
- Give children learning that strengthens their mental health



- Help adults who have concerns for children

Youth in the Nordic Region - Mental Health, Work and Education is a project developed by Nordic Centre for Welfare and Social Issues focuses on young persons who suffer from or are at risk of suffering from mental illness, as well as their situation at school and their later transition to work and providing for themselves. A further important topic of the project is early retirement and retirement on mental health grounds amongst young adults.

GERMANY

The **Federal State Ministries** are responsible for the development, planning and implementation of disease prevention and mental health promotion activities. At the municipal level, these activities are coordinated by the public health departments. Quasi-governmental organisations and NGOs are involved in disease prevention and health promotion and assist in developing, funding and disseminating these programmes.

Due to Germany's federal system, there are major differences in the structure and organisation of mental health services. Some organisations and institutions are engaged in health promotion and prevention.

At a national level, the most important governmental institution is the Federal Ministry of Health, which cooperates directly with a council of experts and discussion forums on disease prevention and issues in mental health promotion.

Aktion Psychisch Kranke (APK)

APK, Association for the Assistance of Mentally Ill People, is a non-profit organisation funded by the Federal Ministry of Health. APK works as an advocacy group for these disadvantaged people. APK brings together different organisations and interest groups, such as mental health associations, associations of relatives, professional associations, etc.

An example of a project carried out by APK is the "Care of mentally ill children and young people in Germany" project, whose aim was to examine the quantitative and qualitative situation of medical care for mentally ill children and adolescents. The project was carried out from November 2014 to February 2017.

Psychische Gesundheit

Mental Health in Germany is an association which assists people suffering from mental health problems and illnesses, their relatives and the interested parties in gathering more information on topics relating to mental health and the most common mental illnesses, and also provides the first



contact points for finding help.

European Alliance Against Depression

In Germany, like in other European countries, depression is the most prevalent mental health problem. The European Alliance Against Depression is a non-profit organisation based in Leipzig who network with members from other European countries, as well as from Canada, Chile and Australia. Its main aim is to improve care and treatment for patients with depressive disorders and to prevent suicidal behaviour.

A very interesting project that has been fostered by EAAD was the **iFightDepression** website. This website contains self-management tools to deal with depression, such as an online questionnaire for the detection of depression.

Mariaberg:

Mariaberg is a German non-profit association providing help to people with mental health problems or disorders. Aside from medical and hospital care services, Mariaberg offers workshops and professional training for those with severe mental health problems and disorders who want to receive education and thus access professional life.

Other noteworthy initiatives are:

Life carries weight: an initiative aiming to educate children and young people on how eating disorders are severe illnesses. Teenagers are encouraged to question beauty standards to develop a positive sense of self-worth. This initiative was launched by various federal ministries (Education, Health and Social Affairs).

Therapy services for children and young people in Germany suffering from psychological trauma and affected by violence: This initiative produced a report displaying an overview of the therapies and services available to German children and adolescents suffering from psychological trauma and affected by violence.

Kidskompass: the main objective of this initiative is to make it easier for families and experts to find information on the mental health of children and young people in the state of Brandenburg.

ii. Existing charters or other documents for promoting mental health inclusion across Europe

In some European countries there are charters and documents for promoting mental health inclusion across Europe.



In addition to existing mental health policies in different European countries, many NGO's, organisations and advocacy groups have developed complementary documentation that can be useful.

For instance, in Italy there are two documents related to mental health inclusion. One of them is The Special Education Needs (BES). The document foresees the possibility of adopting a Personalised Educational Plan whenever the class council of teachers and parents considers it necessary on the basis of pedagogical and educational observations. Another document is "Standards for Health and Safety Management" and are major milestone towards the creation of more inclusive working environment.

In the UK it is worth noting "The Mind Workplace Wellbeing". It is a benchmarking tool of policy and practice and the only tool dedicated to workplace mental health in the UK.

PORTUGAL

Manual for the Promotion of Socio-emotional skills in School

The Directorate-General for Health created this manual for education professionals and school health teams involved in projects for the promotion of socio-emotional skills in preschool children and primary and secondary school children.

This manual provides guidance for the promotion of health and welfare in general, as well as for the development of interpersonal relationships, aiming to train education professionals in the implementation of projects fostering mental health in schools.

FRANCE

Une École Bienveillante Face Aux Situations de mal-être de élèves

This is a guide produced by the Ministry for Solidarity and Health and the Ministry of Education, and it addresses educational teams aiming to help them to detect and know more about both mental and physical signs of distress in students.

Souffrances psychiques et troubles du développement chez l'enfant et l'adolescent

This guide is aimed at staff working directly with school-aged children and young people: teachers, school counsellors, psychologist and educational psychologists, health workers in school centres, social workers, etc.



This guide was produced by the National College of Child Psychiatry of the French Federation of Psychiatry (FFP-CNPP) at the request of the General Directorate of Health (DGS). Its main objective is to provide information and analysis elements that, for preventive and therapeutic purposes, allow the early identification of signs of mental suffering in children and adolescents and facilitate their care. This objective is divided into four main axes: stimulating dialogue and encouraging the implementation of a multidisciplinary reflection on the behaviour to be followed within educational establishments; allow a better appreciation of situations and their degree of seriousness; reduce the time limits for a specialized appeal as much as possible;

NORWAY

National Strategic Plan for Work and Mental Health 2007-2012

Norway published this strategy for Work and Mental Health as a supplement to the National Mental Health Strategy. This guide provides support to workers with mental health problems or disorders in their workplace. The plan applies to all mental disorders and difficulties and to people who also have substance abuse problems or other challenges.

The government's goal is to:

- Prevent exclusion from working life
- Facilitate inclusion in working life for people with mental disorders or problems.

To achieve this, the government will strive:

- To achieve good collaboration between NAV and the health service, other elements of the public service system and employers
- Ensure user involvement and active participation from individuals
- Ensure good, relevant job and health related measures and services
- Ensure the relevant competence for work and mental health in the workplace and in the public services.
- Ensure good awareness, research and development



3. Emerging trends of mental health inclusion within VET in European countries

i. What emerging trends currently exist related to mental health in VET?

Overall, it is hard to find information on mental health inclusion within VET (vocational education and training) in other European countries. In most of the documentation consulted, training addresses youth at large but no specific measure for students with mental health problems has been found.

PORTUGAL

Since 2005, Portugal has undertaken an in-depth reform of its vocational education and training system.

Vocational training starts at the age of 15, after obtaining the basic education diploma (*Diploma de Ensino Básico*). Pupils begin their second secondary education and can choose between several pathways: mainstream, artistic, technological or vocational. From the age of 18, courses specialising in technology (*cursos de especialização tecnológica* or CET) are taught. These programmes combine academic and vocational training. After finishing a CET, a diploma specialising in technology is obtained.

In addition to these measures, there are others that take into account the involvement of young people and seek to promote the spirit of innovation and entrepreneurship.

To strengthen VET in Portugal, there is the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training.

Among other primary objectives, this institution aims for the employability of many people, particularly of those at a higher risk of social exclusion, such as people with mental health problems.

In conversation with José Carlos Correia, Technical Coordinator and Head of ADM Estrela's Training Centre, the overall situation of mental health inclusion in vocational training in Portugal is improving due to the growing effort in creating and adapting professional curricula for people affected by some kind of mental health issue. Despite these significant efforts which have been developed at a local and national level, there still is room for flexibility within these programmes, so as to improve the effectiveness of socio-professional integration for people suffering with their mental health. ADM Estrela has been promoting the integration of several trainees into formal training courses for people with disabilities, which includes mental health issues.



Portugal has the **Social Inclusion and Employment Operational Programme (POISE)**, which was created in 2014. Its main goals are to foster employment quality and sustainability, to encourage youth employment and to promote social inclusion. This Operational Programme advances the professional training of people with disabilities, mental illnesses or any other kind of incapacity.

NORWAY

Norway's VET system is built on the principle of tripartite cooperation. This tripartite system is composed of Education Authorities, Education Institutions and various social entities, both public and private. This VET system as a whole is missing support for students who have some kind of mental health problem.

The requirements for accessing this vocational training are to have completed compulsory primary and secondary education.

Norway's VET system is well-established and highly regarded, but like in other European countries, students with mental health problems or disorders are not directly represented.

GERMANY

In conversation with Michael Backhaus, Manager of Apprenticeship in Mariaberg, so far and generally there are no special mental health inclusion policies within German VET institutions.

Each organisation can establish its own mental health inclusion policies. For instance, Mariaberg has a policy on how professionals working there must deal and interact with people suffering from mental illnesses. But there are no mental health inclusion policies at a national or federal level, much less within VET organisations and institutions.

[ii. Summary of mental health inclusion practices and approaches found within VET on a European level](#)

For more information related to mental health inclusion practices and approaches you can check all the best practices in MH + eBook.

Three best practices from non-partnership countries:

Czech Republic



Zipy's Friends

The objective of Zipy's Friend is to provide resources for teachers to use that will teach primary school children how to deal with everyday difficulties and develop social and emotional skills. The idea behind this is that strengthening emotional management and coping strategies at an early age will allow people to cope better in adulthood and help prevent mental health issues.

Ireland

Well-being in post.primary education. Guidelines form mental health promotion and suicide prevention.

The guidelines aim to provide practical guidance to schools on how to develop a whole school approach to promote mental health and wellbeing to students. This is because increasing the overall wellbeing of students will help increase student success, both in their academic and personal lives.

The guidelines have been written for all members of the school community: school leaders, subject teachers, governors, guidance counsellors, student support teams etc.

Slovenia

Manual for preventive work with adolescents

The Manual covers a series of workshops to be used by teachers who work with 13-17 year olds, to help them support their students in developing and strengthening social and emotional skills as well as self-image.



MH+ partners

Mental Health + project is formed by:

Aspire-igen (UK)

The Aspire-igen group is the largest careers and training organisation in the Yorkshire region (an area with a population of over 5 million). The group is a not-for-profit social enterprise with 22 years' experience of supporting young people and adults into employment.

Website: <https://aspire-igen.com/>



CESIE (Italy)

CESIE is a non-profit, apolitical, and non-governmental organisation based in Palermo (Italy) and established in 2001. CESIE promotes cultural, social, educational and economic development at local, national, European and international levels.

Website: <https://cesie.org/>



Learnmera Oy (Finland)

Learnmera Oy is a private adult education provider and translation company, focused mainly on corporate clients in the greater Helsinki area providing private executive business language lessons.

Website: <https://learnmera.com/>



Business Foundation for Education (Bulgaria)

Business Foundation for Education (BFE) is a Bulgarian non-government organisation, established in 2005 to act in public interest. The Foundation has been implementing a variety of innovative national and EU initiatives impacting on citizens' employability and competitiveness directed to various target groups.



Website: <https://www.fbo.bg/en/>

Hugarafll (Iceland)

Hugarafll (Mindpower) is an independent association of people dealing with mental illness. The organisation is built on ideas on empowerment, recovery, equality and cooperation between users and professionals.



Website: www.hugarafll.is

INTRAS Foundation (Spain)

INTRAS is a non-profit organisation founded in 1994 dedicated to high quality research and intervention in the field of mental health. The organisation consists of 12 centres in 9 different provinces in Spain, with 189 interdisciplinary professionals (psychiatrists, psychologists, educators, art-therapists and professionals from social and economic fields) carrying out research, training, clinical practice as well as cultural and sport activities



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