

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Every year we celebrate World Mental Health Day on 10 October. The theme for 2023, set by the World Foundation of Mental Health, is “Mental health is a universal human right”.

The overall objective of World Mental Health Day is to raise awareness of mental health issues around the world and to mobilize efforts in support of mental health.

The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide. Countries participating in the JA ImpleMENTAL project have also commemorated this important occasion.

CROATIA

Some of the many activities connected to the World Mental Health Day:

- 6 October - JA ImpleMENTAL was presented at a round table event in the Croatian capital of Zagreb
- 9 and 10 October - a two-day, national conference “**Crisis of mental health**” dedicated to mental health of children and the youth
- 11 October - a workshop focused on strengthening parental competences in order to improve and protect the wellbeing of the younger generations was held in Zagreb, and this initiative will soon spread nation-wide
- SUMEZ (the union of mental health associations) established a **yearly award** that will be awarded to a distinguished individual who made significant efforts to prevent stigma and promote mental health



ROUND TABLE EVENT HELD IN ZAGREB, CROATIA

CZECHIA

Like every year, a diverse program in the form of concerts, happenings, exhibitions, theater and film performances, workshops, open days, round tables, discussions and forums on various aspects of mental health is being held throughout the Czech Republic, in the 34th Edition of Mental Health Weeks. This programme runs annually from 10 September to 10 October. **#tydnyprodusevnizdravi**

The Czech team from JA ImpleMENTAL participated in a discussion “When a loved one takes their own life”, as well as in the second-year edition of the “**March for the bereaved**” that took place on the 12 September.

SERBIA

A **mental health festival** (10 September - 13 October) was held in Serbia, which connects World Suicide Prevention Day alongside World Mental Health Day. Some of the activities include:

- 27 September - The Days of Mental Health initiative - The Mental Health in Serbia
- 28 September and 3 October - Eliminate stress! Mental health workshop
- 10 October - Art and mental health; art and psychological workshops
- 10 October - Tribuness “The Art of Support” and a premiere of a short-documentary film “(U)Druženje prostor”
- 13 October - The Days of Mental Health - The Mental Health at work

LITHUANIA

A Lithuanian initiative, **Open Psychiatry Month**, is held from 11 September to 31 October, with several important purposes - to reduce the stigma of mental illnesses and their treatment, to introduce the public to the field of psychiatry, to encourage people to seek appropriate help on time, to expand knowledge about the achievements of psychiatry, and to get rid of prejudices and prevailing myths. This year Open Psychiatry Month states: "**Mental disorders are no longer an obstacle to work**", linked with the "Mental health is a universal human right" slogan of World Mental Health Day.

A number of events are planned throughout the country, such as bibliotherapy, art therapy, play therapy, music therapy, physiotherapy classes, concerts, individual anonymous consultations with children and adolescents' psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, alongside relaxation techniques. Various activities, lectures, exhibitions and conferences will take place:

- September 18th in Klaipėda's Public Health Office there a lecture for employees "Basic suicide prevention training" was held
- On September 24th the exhibition "Mental health is a universal human right" was held in the Independence Square of Rokiškis;
- On October 4th Lithuanian Psychiatrists' Association, LSMU MA MF Psychiatry Clinic and Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kaunas Hospital Psychiatry Clinic are organizing a scientific-practical conference "Psychiatric disorders in general medical practice and nursing: how to recognize and what to do?";
- October 10th - a remote conference "Mental health in all policies", organized by the Lithuanian Psychiatric Association, the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania and the Lithuanian Psychologists' Union
- On October 25th the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania and the Mental Health Management Association are organizing the conference "Mental health - a universal human right"

Throughout the country, during Open Psychiatry Month events, flyers "Mental disorders are no longer a barrier to work" will be distributed.

ESTONIA

On 10 September, the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs and the Estonian Association of Young Journalists (ENAS) awarded the **Papageno Media Award**, for the first time. This award recognizes the best article, radio program or television clip supporting suicide prevention, published during 2022. Papageno recognizes outstanding journalists who have contributed to the dissemination of the **Papageno effect** in the Estonian media landscape. Studies have found that sharing stories of people who have found alternative positive solutions to crises instead of taking their own lives has a positive impact on others, particularly those going through difficult situations. These stories offer hope and prove that no matter how difficult the circumstances may be, help is always available.

The award committee selected the most impactful coverage supporting the Papageno effect based on internationally recognized criteria. The Papageno Media Award 2023 was won by Gunnar Leheste with the story „A call to mother saved tennis player Katriin Saar's life." The second place and an opera gift card was awarded to Kerttu Jänese for the story „Every child is needed alive." Merilin Pärli's „The girl who came back" and Erik Tikan's and Mari Mets' video story „On the edge. Living with a diagnosis" were also recognized for their contribution to suicide prevention.



ESTONIA'S PAPAGENO AWARD

FINLAND

A national seminar is to be held on World Mental Health Day, titled "How to improve competencies in prevention of mental health disorders, alcohol and substance abuse?". The seminar is focused on professionals in the field, those developing the services, management and also students in the field. The aim is to present variety of means how to increase competence.

ESTONIA

In addition to the Papageno media award, there were several more activities organized in Estonia. On 8 September, the biggest regional hospital (**PERH**) organized **online lectures** in Tallinn with possibilities of onsite participation, on the topic of suicide prevention („Notice people around, create the hope“). The experts from Tallinn University (Prof. Merike Sisask), Ministry of Social Affairs (Dr. Zrinka Laido), and Mare Serg (nurse with experience, PERH) have participated with lectures and follow up discussions on suicide prevention.

During October, many activities related to mental health promotion and mental illness are organized; varying events, from conferences, workshops, theater plays, seminars to counselling possibilities. These events have been organised from different stakeholders – NGO's, expert associations and local communities. The end beneficiaries include general population, and also some vulnerable groups for mental health such as children, youth, women, older people and some occupational groups. Also, there are workshops aimed for experts and increasing their capability to manage people with mental health problems. Several important topics are covered, such as burn out, resilience, how to preserve mental health, possibilities of psychological support and others.

GERMANY



LECTURES ORGANIZED AT PERH, ESTONIA

From 10 to 20 October, the nationwide **Mental Health Week** will address the topic of fears in times of crisis under the motto "Taking the weight out of fear together". How can we personally and as a society find a healthy way to deal with the general uncertainty and excessive demands in the face of global crises?

The Mental Health action week wants to draw attention to different coping strategies and to the diversity of psychosocial support offered in Germany and calls for joint exchange and mutual support. The organizers, the Aktionsbündnis Seelische Gesundheit (Coalition/Alliance for Action on Mental Health) gathers 150 member organizations whose common goal is that mental illness is no longer considered a taboo.

SWEDEN

There are several activities taking place all around Sweden to highlight World Mental Health Day. Many regions and municipalities are organizing their own events, seminars and awareness campaigns. On national level, there is among other things, an **open webinar** organized by a national umbrella organization for peer-, patient- and user-organizations which will focus on children and young people's mental health. The Public Health Agency of Sweden will participate in this. The Public Health Agency is also publishing, for the first time, a statistical overview report on mental health in Sweden, covering a wide range of data to present a more comprehensive picture of the population's mental health in different age groups and from different perspectives. The report is mainly for professionals working in the field.

In addition, an awareness campaign will be held in different media outlets targeting middle-aged men. The campaign includes short films with the message: "Everyone has mental health – take care of yours" and is followed by links to the website dinpsyiskahalsa.se (Your Mental Health), which targets the general public and contains articles on mental health promotion.



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GERMANY

The BZgA (Federal Centre for Health education) is organizing an event on "**Mental Health - New Research Perspectives and Potentials for Practice**" on 24 October 2023 in Cologne, Germany. The one-day event aims to stimulate the further development of prevention and health promotion in mental health through a continued dialogue and exchange of ideas between science and practice. The participants include external guests as well as BZgA staff.

Using various formats (introductory inputs, interactive workshops, panel discussion) the event will introduce the topic of prevention and health promotion in mental health from the perspective of life-course approach(es) and effectiveness. Exemplary fields of action of public mental health like queer mental health, loneliness, suicide and ageing and (de)stigmatisation and addictive disorders will be addressed at. The objective is to raise scientifically relevant questions, e.g. about the effects of interventions and principles of action, and to tie in with topics already worked on by the BZgA and to work out cross-links. A discussion focusing on the question of future prevention needs for the field of mental health will conclude the event.

MALTA



MALTA'S 5 WAYS TO WELLBEING

- The Occupational Therapy department within Mental Health Services will be organizing a day of activities on Mental health day - **5 Ways to Wellbeing**
- Mental Health Services and Friends of Mount Carmel Hospital will be organizing a **conference** on the 8 November having the same theme as that of World Mental Health Day - "Mental health is a universal human right: best practices for mental health"
- Mental Health Association is organizing a walk on Saturday 14 October, during which information stalls on mental health in the main square of the capital city of Valletta will be displayed
- Mental Health Run
- A number of Health and other Government Buildings to be lit green from 7 till 14 October to increase awareness on mental health
- A number of slots on Radio and TV are being dedicated to Mental Health with the participation of various health professionals to raise awareness on mental health and promote **Mental Health Helpline 1579**

SPAIN

The Papageno Association, alongside COPAO (College of Psychology of Western Andalusia), will award the **third edition** of the **#PeriodismoResponsable award**, with the aim of distinguishing the best works that contribute to the visibility of the problem of suicide, and in turn help save lives.



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NORWAY

Norway marks the World Mental Health Day as a **national population campaign** on public mental health during the weeks 39-42 of each year. Activities are organized at municipalities, schools, workplaces, organizations, and individual level. The organization "Mental helse" (Mental Health) has coordinated the campaign since 1992 on behalf of the Directorate of Health. The organization has developed a large selection of digital resources, teaching programmes, posters, films, and activity proposals that the municipalities can use in their marking. This year's theme for World Mental Health Day is: We need to belong. **#makespace**

Last year, World Mental Health Day entered a new three-year strategy period where they invite joint efforts against loneliness and alienation, which are central challenges for public mental health in Norway, especially after the COVID pandemic.

This year's campaign encourages us to work on actively creating an inclusive environment and reducing the distance between all of us. It also states **seven reasons to mark World Mental Health Day**:

- you contribute to increasing knowledge, understanding and openness about mental health.
- you can influence the social debate.
- you are helping to challenge stigma and prejudice.
- you create meaningful meetings between different people.
- you are helping to expand the conversation about mental health.
- you become more aware of taking care of your own mental health.
- you contribute to a positive development for public mental health.

SLOVENIA

World Mental Health Day 2023 in Slovenia is commemorated by various activities across all nine regional units of the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ). Under the banner of the National Mental Health Programme (MIRA Programme), these activities include meetings, lectures, workshops, discussions, and exhibitions, all geared towards educating individuals about the importance of mental health care. They also aim to spread knowledge on enhancing mental health, reducing the stigma associated with mental health disorders, and ultimately, highlight the central theme of World Mental Health Day 2023, which is that mental health is a universal human right. At this occasion, specific attention will also be given to a manual for teenagers titled "What should I do to make it easier for me", which was issued in cooperation between the National Institute of Public Health and the Ministry of health. With the support of Ministry of Education, it will be distributed to 22 thousand ninth graders in Slovenia.

Slovenia's commitment to mental health was demonstrated through the 2018 Resolution on the MIRA Programme. This comprehensive strategy takes a holistic approach to mental health, emphasizing support and care for individuals' mental well-being and society as a whole. It sets strategic goals for the next decade, focusing on community-based mental health care and equitable access to services. World Mental Health Day 2023 in Slovenia invites people from all backgrounds to join these enlightening activities, proudly wear a green ribbon in support of this crucial cause, and together, raise awareness, reduce stigma, and ensure mental health rights for all.

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HUNGARY

Hungarian Association of Mental Health First Aid Helplines (Magyar Leiki Elsősegély Telefonszolgálatok Szövetsége (LESZ) is organising a **conference** between 13-14 October 2023, in Balatonfüred Hungary, honouring Mental Health World Day 2023. The main aim of the conference is to exchange experiences between professionals from public institutions and the civil society, all involved in mental health protection in order to improve mental health prevention.

In Hungary, the **first mental aid telephone hotline** service was established in Debrecen in 1970, with the aim to serve suicide prevention, crisis management and mental health prevention. The founders' aims are still at the forefront today. Every year, volunteers answer nearly 200,000 calls 24 hours a day. The service is free of charge on two emergency lines.

Furthermore, The Office for Sustainability and Equal Opportunities of the Budapest Business University (Budapesti Gazdasági Egyetem) is organising for the first time a series of events on its campus called "**Week of Development**" from 9 to 12 October 2023, honouring World Mental Health Day and will entirely focus on mental health issues. The events will be free for both students and external visitors. All presentations and discussions will be related to the theme of mental health and well-being, with such interesting topics like:

- Involvement of therapy dogs in social, health and educational institutions
- When someone is ready for a harmonious relationship?
- How to read facial expressions?
- How to fight against bullying in higher education?
- Challenges of language teaching for students with neurodivergent dyslexia
- Roundtable discussion on menstrual poverty, discussing sustainability, material deprivation and supporting women's health at work

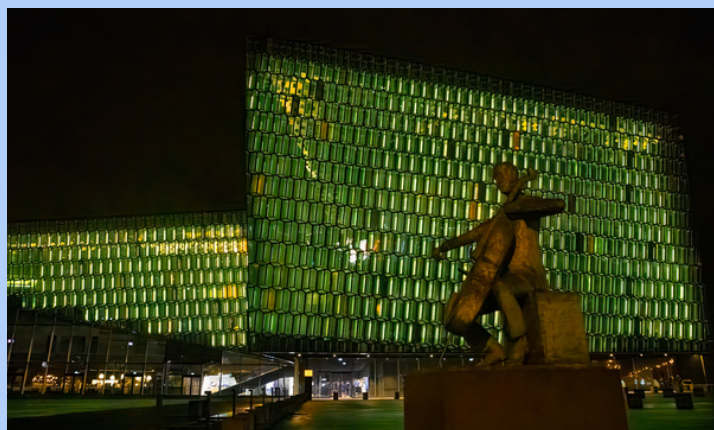
ICELAND

A campaign called "**Yellow September**" was organized in order to raise awareness about the importance of mental health and suicide prevention, throughout September and concluding with 10 October, the World Mental Health Day.

Alongside the campaign, a "**Yellow Day**" was held on 7 September, where people dressed in yellow and lit up various public building in the same color, such as the University of Iceland and Harpa concert Hall.



ICELAND'S YELLOW DAY



HARPA CONCERT HALL

SECOND ANNUAL CONSORTIUM MEETING

SEPTEMBER 24-27, 2023
MURCIA, SPAIN

DAY 1

The Region of Murcia hosted the second **Annual Consortium Meeting, Stakeholder Forum** and **General Assembly** of the Joint Action 'ImpleMental' program, between 25-27 September. The event is organized by the Coordinator, the National Public Health Organization of Greece, and is co-organized by the Murcian Health Service (SMS) and the Foundation for the Health Training and Research of the Region of Murcia (FFIS).

The event was opened by **Stella Kyriakides**, European Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. The Commissioner's online speech is available at the following [link](#). The meeting was addressed by the Minister of Health, **Juan José Pedreño Planes**, Councillor of Health of Murcia, and **Concepción Ruiz Caballero**, Councillor of Social Policy, Families and Equality.

The meeting took place in the conference hall of the **"Hospital General Universitario Reina Sofía"**, maintained by the Murcian Health Service. Physically and online there were over 200 participants: members of the JA ImpleMental country teams (17 EU Member States, 2 EEA countries and 1 EU candidate country), nominated Member State Policy Committee members from ministries, and Stakeholder Forum representatives from different key European organisations across Europe (such as EUCOMS, EUFAMI, Euro Healthnet, GAMIAN-Europe, IASP, MHE, EAAD best, EUPHA Public mental health section, ENUSP, EPA) and WHO Europe and OECD. They were joined by more than 60 Spanish experts and key stakeholders from the Region of Murcia, who attended to hear about the progress achieved by the project in the second year of its implementation. The first day was dedicated to discussing the national implementation of the **Belgian Best Practice** community mental health system reform and sharing experiences gained from its adoption.



The press release [can be found here](#)



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DAY 2

The second day was focused on learning about national activities and implementation of the **Austrian Best practice on Suicide Prevention "SUPRA"**, addressing challenges and opportunities sharing ways to link policy to practice. An interesting panel discussions was held on how to engage stakeholders in suicide prevention and positive outcomes were exchanged on sustainability of services. In the afternoon JA ImpleMENTAL delegations visited Santa Lucía Mental Hospital in Cartagena, in order to meet with local management and staff members who have been successfully implementing the Belgium Best Practice at the hospital.



DAY 3

The last day of the ACM continued by a session on sustainability and panel discussion on the work of **WP4**. **WP2** gave a short presentation on communication and dissemination work so far focusing on future tasks.

JA ImpleMENTAL **stakeholder forum members** reflected on what was discussed during the previous two days and discussed the importance of stakeholder engagement and formulated key recommendations for the last year of the implementation.

Member State Policy Committee members **also reflected on how** they can assist in the implementation of the two best practices. Representatives from DG Santé, WHO Europe and OECD assessed the policy relevance and value of JA achievements, and explored new ways of potential integration of the JA results into national/regional policies so as to build deeper synergies among JA ImpleMENTAL other EU Mental Health initiatives and national strategies.

The meeting ended with the **General Assembly meeting** where the country coordinators of the JA discussed contractual issues, potential risks and next steps of project implementation.



The press release [can be found here](#)



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MAIN CHALLENGES OF BEST PRACTICES

- resistance to change
- engagement of stakeholders
- sustainability of funding and resources
- availability of reliable data
- shortage of mental health staff

MAIN POSITIVE OUTCOMES

- improving collaboration with stakeholders
- management tools and methods can be extended to other regions, sites, etc.
- community-based service development and improvement
- quick wins

MAIN LESSONS LEARNED

Customization to local needs is crucial for the success of implementation.

Interprofessional and **intersectoral collaboration** is key to successful implementation.

A **realistic action plan** must be designed, based on *activities which are focused, feasible and practical.*

MAIN GAINS OF THE IMPLEMENTAL NETWORK

- sharing knowledge
- knowledge increase
- strong international network
- opportunity for change

EU COMMUNICATION ON A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH

- *integrate* mental health across policies
- **promoting** good mental health, **prevention** and **early intervention** for MH problems
- *boosting* MH of children and adolescents
- *helping* those most in need
- **reinforcing** MH systems and **improving access** to treatment and care
- **breaking stigma**
- *fostering* mental health globally