

Disclaimer: We kindly ask to acknowledge that due to the diverse and heterogeneous nature of the questions and the dynamic pandemic situation some of the information might be incomplete or only correct for the time being. Thus, please consider the date and date of the last update with the below information. All available information was provided by a country representative from the PHIRI network during or in connection to the respective meeting.

Date: 15.03.2021 Last update: 24.03.2021

Table 1: Overview of country responses Q1 – Mental health

Country	Q1: Measures on mental health COVID-19 related cases in 2021	Additional information
Austria	<p>Recently constituted psychosocial advisory board for the federal minister of health: 7 experts discussing relevant issues concerning mental health in all areas of the psychosocial intervention pyramid (https://www.sozialministerium.at/Informationen-zum-Coronavirus/Neuartiges-Coronavirus-(2019-nCov)/Coronavirus---Taskforce.html).</p> <p>MoH/government information websites on available psychological support and recommendations for dealing with pandemic (https://www.sozialministerium.at/Informationen-zum-Coronavirus/Coronavirus-%E2%80%93-Psychologische-Hilfe.html https://www.oesterreich.gv.at/public/Seelische_Gesundheit.html):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information sheets provided by austrian association of psychologists on specific topics (https://www.boep.or.at/psychologische-behandlung/informationen-zum-coronavirus-covid-19): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dealing with isolation/quarantine (available in 19 languages; https://www.boep.or.at/download/5e75f1443c15c84a60000091/20200321_COVID-19_Infosheet_English.pdf) - For people who need to be physically present at work (German) - Dealing with working from home (German) - Dealing with unemployment (German) - For parents on dealing with home-schooling (German) - Recommendations for maintaining mental health addressing various groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - General population - Parents - Health-care workers - Team leaders and managers in health care sector - People caring for elderly people - Recommendations for daily living in different household settings during lockdown (singles, couples, families) 	



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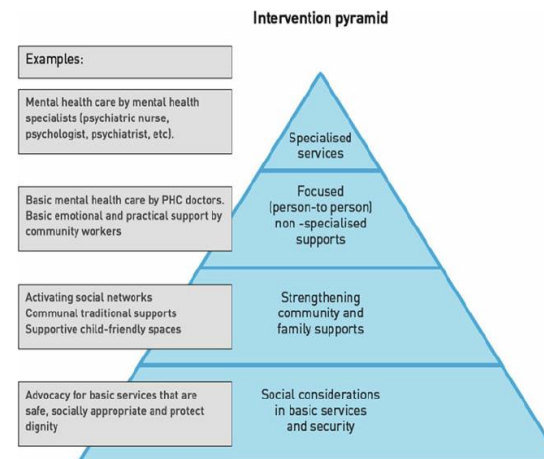
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- Opportunities for social engagement during pandemic

There are several hotlines offering psychological counselling (some also via chat or e-mail); they have existed before, were not created specifically for the pandemic.

The Austrian Public Health Institute (GÖG) has been commissioned with a COVID-19 package by the MoH:

- development of a monitoring concept for mental health (based on – more or less – real time data on utilization of psychosocial telephone helplines, entry bans due to domestic violence, mission data of mobile crisis intervention teams, unvalidated hospital data, unemployment figures, studies,)
- concept for psychosocial telephone/chat helplines (equipment and funding)
- concept for regular funding of crisis intervention/suicide prevention centres
- support for creation of legal basis for video-psychotherapy



Belgium

1. There is a Motivation barometer following the adherence to measures (UGent): <https://www.ugent.be/epg/nl/onderzoek/coronastudie>
2. There are no figures available today on mental health. However, in recent years, some attention has been paid to the topic, and several studies in BE have integrated questionnaires relating to mental health;
3. COVID-19 health interview survey to follow the impact of the crisis and measure on mental health: <https://www.healthybelgium.be/en/health-status/covid-19-crisis/covid-19-impact#mental-health>



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	<p>4. A group of psychologists is meeting to make recommendations to politicians (for more information the contact person is: olivier.luminet@uclouvain.be)</p> <p>5. The CSS/HGR (or Superior Health Council) is creating a database of all surveys that considered mental health;</p> <p>6. Mental health was recently taken into account when policy makers have adopted a partial relaxation allowing more attendance at schools and universities;</p> <p>7. We presume that there are other initiatives in this field;</p> <p>8. We are not aware of initiatives at the regional level.</p> <p>In September, Sciensano discussed mental health issues with their policy makers. Unfortunately, few days later the second wave of COVID-19 started and the process halted. Now the authorities asked the Commissariat to include mental health indicators in the epidemiological reports. There is a first tentative to identify appropriate mental health indicators.</p>	
Bulgaria	There is not much data available regarding mental health. There are a few specific activities for children and young people. BG will send information in written;	
Croatia	Psychological call helplines can be reached 24 hours a day and recommendations are uploaded on various websites.	
Czech Republic	<p>In 2020 the government of the Czech Republic approved the National Action Plan for Mental Health for 2020–2030 and National action plan for suicide prevention 2020 – 2030, that cover the area of mental health in complexity (including prevention, early intervention). The implementation of those two strategic documents is the strongest measure regarding the tackling the mental health COVID 19 related cases. The coordinating body of the implementation is the Governmental Council on Mental health.</p> <p>Other ad hoc measures implemented by Ministry of Health and other ministries and stakeholders based on the decision of the Governmental Council on Mental health specifically during the pandemic:</p> <p>STUDIES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A population study of the prevalence of mental illness compared to 2017 was conducted showing the increase in the prevalence of the symptoms of mental health disorders in general population. (https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/1FDE06C80D8CE44526CC016B565D79F5/S204579602000888a.pdf/increase_in_prevalence_of_current_mental_disorders_in_the_context_of_covid19_analysis_of_repeated_nationwide_crosssectional_surveys.pdf). - Other data were gathered regarding the impact of COVID-19 on mental health in specific target groups (children, institutionalized population ect.) <p>MEASURES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of health provided a psychosocial support for general population and health care workers through two new help lines (plus published information about mental health and COVID on the website) - Help lines provided by Ministry of Social Affairs were supported to expand - Ministry of Health gave methodological support to mental health institutions regarding the organization of care and compliance with human rights during the pandemic - Insurance companies have covered the distant care in mental health sector - Czech government supports an information campaign regarding mental health that is being implemented by Ministry of health - The project to create a network of crisis centers was started to be realized - The primary prevention is being implemented also in online schooling and mental health is becoming an essential part of primary prevention at schools - The project to support the access to psychotherapy and finance a free sessions by insurance companies was implemented 	<p>Link to open data sets in CZ: https://onemocneni-aktualne.mzcr.cz/api/v2/covid-19</p> <p>Link to data sets on vaccines: https://data.nzis.cz/news-detail/cs/5-covid-19-prehled-distribuce-a-spotreby-podle-ockovacich-mist-cr/</p>
Estonia	<p>At the moment there is no systematic approach (or state plan) how to solve the crises related mental health problems. But there are already institutions who are providing psychological consultations for their workers in need. Also, even though the schools are closed, students who had behavioral problems or learning difficulties already before the crises or need counseling can continue with their sessions at school. As the number of young people (mainly teenagers) arriving to ER due to intentional self-harm attacks have recently increased, there are also quite many mental health service providers who are now trying to reach to them through social media by advertising their services there.</p> <p>1. An emergency mental health headquarters has been set up to respond during in times of crises.</p> <p>2. A committee will be set up to deal with mental health problems in getting out of the crises.</p>	



Finland	<p>THL has collected instruction and links to support with mental health issues during the COVID-19 at https://thl.fi/en/web/mental-health/what-s-new/mental-health-and-the-coronavirus-epidemic.</p> <p>Latest follow-up survey results are currently being analyzed about effects of COVID-19 on general population. Results should be available approx. within a month.</p>	
Malta	<p>MT provides tele-consultation service, also for mental health practitioners regarding the care of psychiatric patients. There is a helpline available that runs on a voluntary basis. The Health Promotion Department provides help to cope with mental health problems;</p> <p>https://www.esprimi.eu/covid-19-mental-health-in-malta/ https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/covid-19/Documents/mitigation-conditions-and-guidances/Taking_Care_Of_Your_Mental_Health.pdf https://psycnet.apa.org/fulltext/2020-37322-001.html</p>	
Netherlands	<p>PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP (websites in Dutch):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information for citizens, by RIMV: https://www.loketgezondleven.nl/advies-ondersteuning/coronavirus/mentale-gezondheid - Information for citizens, by the National Psychotraumacenter and RIVM: Steunpunt Coronazorgen: https://www.steunpuntcoronazorgen.nl/ - Information for professionals, by Trimbos Institute for mental health: https://www.trimbos.nl/kennis/corona/mentale-gezondheid; <p>clients can be referred to the following mental health interventions: https://www.trimbos.nl/kennis/corona/mentale-gezondheid/doorverwijzen-bij-mentale-problemen-door-corona</p> <p>RESEARCH</p> <p>For example: CORONA BEHAVIOURAL UNIT (RIVM) SURVEY AMONG GENERAL POPULATION https://www.rivm.nl/gedragsonderzoek/maatregelen-welbevinden</p> <p>In round 10 of the questionnaire survey, conducted between 10 and 14 February among more than 54,000 participants, we see that most corona measures can still count on broad support.</p> <p>Mental and social well-being is under pressure. More participants in the study experience feelings of loneliness (increase from 61 to 67% compared to the previous measurement) and fewer people experience their social contacts as 'good' (decrease from 58 to 51%). Participants under the age of 40 report poorer mental health than older participants. It is noticeable that participants aged 70 years and older appear to have remained stable during this pandemic (around 2% psychologically moderate to severely unhealthy), while mental well-being declines in particular in younger groups (up to 14% moderately to severely -39 year olds and 30% among 16-24 year old participants; trend not shown in figure).</p> <p>More detailed information: https://www.rivm.nl/gedragsonderzoek/maatregelen-welbevinden/welbevinden-en-leefstijl</p> <p>Well-being and lifestyle during the corona crisis</p> <p>In the 10th measurement round of the questionnaire survey, participants gave their lives at the time of completing the questionnaire a score of 6.8 on a scale of 1-10. For changes over time, we looked at the participants who participated in at least two measuring rounds. Over time, the score that participants give their lives shows a small peak in the summer months. When interpreting changes in well-being over time, possible seasonal effects should also be taken into account.</p> <p>Measurement rounds</p> <p>Round 1: April 17-24, 2020 Round 2: May 7-12 Round 3: May 27 - June 1 Round 4: June 17-21 Round 5: July 8-12 Round 6: August 19-23 Round 7: September 30 - October 4 Round 8: November 11-15 Round 9: December 30, 2020 - January 3, 2021 Round 10: February 10-14.</p> <p>Mental well-being</p> <p>When asked how they felt in the past 7 days, 6% of the participants indicated that they had (very) often felt anxious. In addition, 16% said they felt stressed (very) often and 19% said they had (very) often suffered from sleeping problems.</p> <p>Mental well-being seems to increase with age. Of the participants in the youngest age group of 16-24 years, 54% indicate that they have (very) often felt stressed in the past 7 days. This percentage decreases in the older age groups, to only 4% in the over-70s. The percentage of participants who feel anxious</p>	



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	varies by age group, from 3% in the oldest age group to 23% in the youngest group. The percentage of participants with sleeping problems is also highest in the younger age groups. 40% of the 16-24 year olds indicate that they have suffered from this in the past 7 days, compared to 13% of the over 70s.	
Poland	There are various institutions that can be contacted by phone. There is not much data and research going on at national level and no other information available at the moment.	
Portugal	A website is provided from MoH about mental health issues including scientific research, newsletter, etc. The findings of a study on mental health showed that 25% of participants showed moderate or severe symptoms of e.g. stress, anxiety. Also health care workers are highlighted in this study. 40 multidisciplinary teams are planned for working in people's homes (20 teams for adults, 20 for children), also non-pharmaceutical interventions and more mental health care units in hospitals are planned; https://saudental.covid19.min-saude.pt/	
Slovakia	There are no measures or plans about tackling mental health COVID-19 related cases. SK will be able to compare 2019/2020 suitable indicators after the routine statistical collection is closed. Of course the impact of pandemics on mental health is anticipated (home violence, substance abuse, suicide attempts, depressions, etc.) and a number of non-governmental emergency phone lines are in action to help.	
Slovenia	A needs assessment research about tackling mental health issues in subgroups (e.g. health care staff, long term care facility staff, students, ...) is ongoing as well as a survey regarding students. Also a regular survey on the influence of COVID-19 on everyday life is implemented on a webpage (all in Slovenian language); Helplines are installed. Will send more information in written;	
Spain	Autonomous communities are setting up mental health plans to adapted to the actual situation and tackle all the issues that can stem from the pandemic. Examples: Asturias: https://www.astursalud.es/documents/31867/973133/Programa+de+Atenci%C3%B3n+Psicol%C3%B3gica+en+pandemia+de+COVID+19.pdf/26cab5c4-cba8-c208-2cd7-1701d0372d60 Galicia: https://www.sergas.es/Asistencia-sanitaria/Documents/1204/PSMG%20poscovid-19.pdf Castilla La Mancha: https://sedisa.net/experiencia/plan-de-reorganizacion-en-salud-mental-en-relacion-con-la-emergencia-covid19-en-castilla-la-mancha/ In addition, regions and medical colleges have set up specific helplines to support and attend citizens, patients, health professionals and social care workers directly or indirectly affected by COVID-19. During the first wave (March - May 2020), the Ministry of Health and the Spanish General Council of Psychology set up the service of first psychological help (Servicio de Primera Ayuda Psicológica (SPAP)), a phone line to provide early psychological advice to COVID-19 patients. https://www.msbs.gob.es/biblioPublic/publicaciones/recursos_propios/resp/revista_cdrom/VOL94/C_ESPECIALES/RS94C_202010138.pdf	
United Kingdom	There are many different ongoing studies on the impact of COVID-19, e.g. cohort studies and a large number on surveys from different organizations targeting different populations; Ongoing work in WP6 about mental health conditions of infected people and the general population with interventions to reduce mental health problems.	Some recommendations for interventions: https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/coronavirus/pandemic-recommendations-prevention



Figure 1: Map Q2 Self-tests, 17/03/2021

Are self-tests for carrying out at home implemented in your country?

- Yes
- No
- Yes - Not or only partially official recognized



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Table 2: Overview of country responses Q2 – Self-tests

Country	Q2: Self-tests carried out at home implemented: Yes/No	Q2 short
Austria	<p>In Austria, a recent negative test result (“entry test”) is required for accessing close-contact services such as a visit to the hairdresser. (Alternatively, a medical certificate of a past infection within the last 6 months or a certificate of a positive laboratory test for neutralizing antibodies may be presented. Vaccinated individuals are not exempted from the test requirement.)</p> <p>https://www.sozialministerium.at/Informationen-zum-Coronavirus/Coronavirus--Haeufig-gestellte-Fragen/FAQ--Testungen-und-Quarantaene.html</p> <p>Any PCR or antigen test that is performed by trained personnel (mainly HCWs, laboratory staff and medical students) in testing centers, pharmacies, doctors’ offices, nursing homes, etc. is valid if a certificate is issued. These test results are by default fed into the national surveillance system. Negative test results are valid for 48 hours after sampling in the case of antigen tests and for 72 hours after sampling in the case of PCR-tests.</p> <p>Self-tests such as antigen tests that are performed at home are not valid since it cannot be controlled that the test was performed correctly. (Considerations are ongoing, these tests might be valid in the future for the access to specific services/events.)</p> <p>There is, however, the possibility to take a saliva/tissue sample at home by throat rinsing with a special kit while being filmed by a webcam and send this sample for PCR-testing. These test results are valid since the test itself is performed by trained personnel in the laboratories. These test results are also fed into the national surveillance system: https://www.lead-horizon.com/</p> <p>Self-applied antigen tests are also used in schools (pupils and teachers, twice a week) and some workplaces and are available for free in pharmacies – these self-tests are not valid as “entry-tests” as described above.</p>	Yes/partially official recognized
Belgium	<p>Belgium has not yet authorized self-collection of swabs or self-testing for COVID-19. In a scientific advice of March 3, it has been recommended to authorize self-swabbing and self-testing and further investigate potentially useful applications. While awaiting the authorization process, a Task Force is developing a plan for self-testing, but no indications or operational modalities have yet been agreed on.</p> <p>https://covid-19.sciensano.be/sites/default/files/Covid19/20210303_Advice%20RAG_Self-testing%20and%20breath%20tests_FR.pdf</p>	No
Bulgaria	Self-tests are available in the pharmacies, but they are not officially recognized.	Yes/Not officially recognized
Croatia	Self-tests are not implemented in Croatia as a prerequisite for access to certain services/locations	No
Czech Republic	Self-tests in CZ are used for testing in companies and institutions, preferably under supervision of health care workers.	No
Estonia	Estonia has not implemented self-tests to be carried out at home.	No
Finland	Self-tests are not currently used.	No
Malta	Self-tests are not authorized for use in Malta.	No
Netherlands	<p>No, self-tests are not yet available in the Netherlands. The first self-test kits are expected to come onto the market in April.</p> <p>Rapid antigen tests soon to be available for use as self-test: https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2021/03/05/rapid-antigen-tests-soon-to-be-available-for-use-as-self-test</p>	No
Slovakia	<p>Self-tests are suggested for school children and their parents to speed up the morning checks. Services of daily living and authorities demand certified PCR, or AG testing, therefore self-testing results are not registered.</p> <p>Testing centers identify the users and store their administrative data together with the results in the System.</p> <p>There are differences in the recognition of test results along with the test procedures. Various recognitions are applied. SK does not prioritize brands, all tests are equal in this sense. Recognition of test results is based on the alert level of a district, and it goes from 48 hours up to 7 days.</p> <p>AG tests are valid for 48 hours, PCR tests are accepted for 7 days. AG tests are paid out-of-pocket, PCR tests are reimbursed once a week.</p>	Yes/Not officially recognized
Slovenia	At the moment self-testing is not in use in SLO. The National Institute of Public Health has recently submitted a proposal to Ministry of Health to pilot the use of SELF-ADMINISTERED and SELF-REPORTED tests in the school environment (including families). SLO is pending response.	No
Spain	Spain has not implemented self-tests as a prerequisite for access to services.	No
United Kingdom	<p>Self-test have been implemented for school children in England but no other UK countries.</p> <p>Also many companies have taken up opportunity for self-testing their workforce.</p> <p>UK self-testing advice: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/958773/care-home-ldf-self-test-guidance-v04-Q2_2.pdf</p>	England: Yes/partially official recognized



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Figure 2: Map AstraZeneca, 17/03/2021

Did your country stop the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine?

- Yes
- Yes, halted for a limited time
- No



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