

**EUROPEAN
MENTAL
HEALTH
WEEK**

**22-28
MAY 2023**



European Mental Health Week

**ENGAGEMENT
TOOLKIT**



ABOUT MHE

Mental Health Europe (MHE) is the largest independent network organisation representing people with mental health problems, their supporters, care professionals, service providers and human rights experts in the field of mental health across Europe.

Our goal is to lead in advancing a human rights, community-based, recovery-oriented and psychosocial approach to mental health and well-being for all.

MHE is committed to the prevention of mental distress, the improvement of care, advocacy for social inclusion and the protection of the rights of (ex)users of mental health services, persons with psychosocial disabilities, their families and carers.

We are a membership organisation representing 70+ member organisations from 30 European countries.

Together with members, MHE formulates recommendations for policymakers to develop mental health friendly policies.

Our vision is a Europe where everyone's mental health and wellbeing flourish across their life course.

A MESSAGE FROM MHE

Mental Health Europe (MHE) is hosting **the fourth edition of the European Mental Health Week** – an ideal opportunity for everyone in Europe and beyond to come together to celebrate mentally healthy communities, share stories and highlight the need for better understanding and knowledge about mental health.

Mental health is universal and essential for thriving societies and the theme this year is **Mentally Healthy Communities**.

The goal of this year's Awareness Week is to **increase understanding and learning about mental health** in our communities, schools, workplaces, and at home so that everyone can thrive and flourish at every stage of life.

TEAM MHE



ABOUT THE WEEK

The European Mental Health Week is **a pan-European initiative** that aims to raise awareness about the importance of mental health in our everyday lives.

Spearheaded by Mental Health Europe, this **week-long online action** provides an opportunity for individuals to engage in discussions on all aspects of mental health. Participants can share personal stories of how to cope with difficulties in times of crisis and highlight the need for action.

The ultimate goal of this initiative is to enhance the quality of life for people experiencing mental health problems. To achieve this, we must adopt a different kind of approach that addresses the social determinants of mental health and prioritizes the lived experiences of individuals. By doing so, we can promote better mental health for all.

It is crucial to note that mental health is an integral part of overall health and a basic human right. Good mental health is vital for personal, community, and socio-economic development. Therefore, we must prioritize initiatives like the European Mental Health Week to foster greater public awareness and support for individuals experiencing mental health problems.

Let's unite for mental health and thriving communities, and build a caring community.



WHY THE WEEK

Background

The European Mental Health Awareness Week is a continuation of the well-established global tradition of observing Mental Health Awareness Month in May. Mental Health Month was first introduced by Mental Health America in 1949 and has been celebrated every year since, garnering increasing support from both the public and policymakers for over 70 years.

Similarly, the Canadian Mental Health Association has been organizing Mental Health Week during the first week of May for 70 years, while the Mental Health Foundation has been running Mental Health Awareness Week in the UK for over 20 years during the third week of May.

The continued observance of Mental Health Awareness Month and the introduction of initiatives like the European Mental Health Awareness Week serve as a testament to the **growing public recognition of the importance of mental health.**

By promoting awareness and understanding of mental health issues, we can **reduce stigma and discrimination** and encourage individuals to seek help and support when needed.

Our goal

The ambition of our Awareness Week is to promote and establish the European Mental Health Week as an annual pan-European mental health campaign **celebrating the path to awareness and action.**

SOME FACTS

WHO

The number of individuals living with mental health problems in the WHO European Region surpassed 150 million in 2021. Shockingly, only one in three individuals with depressive symptoms receive the necessary care and support.

Mental health is a crucial aspect of both individual and collective well-being, and can be jeopardized by challenging living, working, and economic circumstances, as well as social inequalities, violence, and conflict. The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted the fragility of mental health.

Individuals of all ages and social groups can have mental health problems. There are also specific challenges such as the prevalence of burnout (i.e. among healthcare workers) and supporting the resilience of communities impacted by conflict. Tragically, individuals and their families often suffer from stigma, discrimination, and human rights violations, as well as social exclusion. Unfortunately, the way in which society views individuals with mental health problems can contribute to these problems.

OECD

OECD: “Mental ill-health can have devastating effects on individuals, families and communities, with **one in every two people experiencing a mental health [problem] in their lifetime**. Mental ill-health also weighs heavily on societies and economies; the **economic burden of mental ill-health can rise to up to 4% of GDP**, and those with mental [ill-health] have poorer educational, employment, and physical health outcomes than those in good mental health.”



WHY MENTAL HEALTH?

Mental health is a critical human and societal issue

Learn why putting a spotlight on mental health matters.

Change

There's an urgent need to raise the general public and policymakers' understanding about mental health, reduce stigma and change behaviours and attitudes.

Progress

We know more about mental health today than ever before. Armed with all the knowledge, progress can be made. Mental health support must be available for all.

Impact

In recent years, the WHO and other UN agencies, European institutions and health ministries have **recognised the urgent need for commitment and action on mental health**. When our leaders start speaking up and take action, we can look towards a brighter future to move towards positive mental health.

Equity

More people in Europe have been negatively affected by the "polycrisis" and these numbers could increase as new crises emerge. Equitable access to mental health care can improve the quality of life for many and especially for people in vulnerable situations (children, young people, elderly, marginalised groups, etc.).



EUROPEAN YEAR OF SKILLS

The **2023 European Year of Skills** presents a unique opportunity to promote wellbeing by emphasizing the significance of life skills, not just those related to vocational and digital skills.

Life skills that foster greater wellbeing and improve overall quality of life come in many forms and can be developed at any stage of life.

This year's focus on vocational skills, education, and digital skills provides an ideal platform to **integrate and mainstream mental health**.

Soft skills, often overlooked, are crucial in combating wellbeing challenges and building and sustaining a healthy culture in institutions and communities.

We can use the European Year of Skills to **understand mental health in different settings** (i.e., educational, workplaces, at home, broader communities, etc.).



THIS YEAR'S THEME

Mentally Healthy Communities. Thriving Together.

Mental well-being is **universal and essential** for healthy communities, and vice-versa.

As with physical health, mental health can have its **ups and downs over a lifetime**.

Young or old, we all **need better understanding, knowledge, skills and support** to take care of our mental health.

That's why it is crucial to address **mental health across our communities**, in schools, homes and workplaces.

Mentally healthy communities allow us to **thrive without fear of stigma** or discrimination.

What can you do for **your community and** how can your community support you?



MESSAGES

1

Mental health is **universal and essential** for thriving communities.

2

We all need better understanding, knowledge, skills and support to take care of our mental health.

3

What can you do for your community and how can your community support you? Share your story.

1

Mental health is **universal and essential** – and just like physical health – it can have its ups and downs over a lifetime.

2

Let's **make accessible to everyone** the knowledge, skills and support needed to address mental health across our communities, in schools, homes and workplaces.

3

Everyone can **thrive with the right support**. What can you do for your community and how would you like to be supported by your community? Share your story.

Visuals with these messages will be available in several European languages.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Access a variety of **digital assets** for this year's Awareness Week to engage, share and spread awareness on various social media channels.

You can find the visuals for Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram from the event website: www.mhe-sme.org/emhw

 **Download these visuals, add the hashtag and start sharing!**

By **sharing our experiences**, we send a powerful message to others, indicating that we all share similar challenges. Mental health is an issue that affects us all, irrespective of our background.

Join us on our social media channels, tag us in your posts using the hashtag: [#EuropeanMentalHealthWeek](https://twitter.com/EuropeanMentalHealthWeek)



www.mhe-sme.org/emhw



DIGITAL ASSETS



[Download more here!](#)

POLICY ASKS

MH's Policy Recommendations

Mental Health Europe (MHE) recognizes that to achieve good mental health for all, structural changes must be implemented to address the broader socio-economic and environmental determinants of mental health.

While individual skills are important, they alone are not enough to enhance protective factors and mitigate risk factors that shape mental health.

To this end, **MHE will be releasing a set of Policy Recommendations** that focus on empowering communities to be inclusive and supporting individuals with the skills they need to flourish. These recommendations will serve as a basis to demand policies and actions that bring about the necessary changes.

We invite you to **visit our website on Wednesday 24 May** to download the Policy Recommendations and gain insights on how we can take action to promote mental health for all.



www.mhe-sme.org



THE GREEN RIBBON

 **The green ribbon is the international symbol for mental health awareness.**

The green ribbon is a globally recognized symbol of mental health awareness, and we encourage you to **wear a green ribbon pin** throughout the week to show your support and raise awareness.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who will be attending our Policy Event on Wednesday May 24th for wearing the green ribbon pin and bringing mental health to the forefront.

We invite you to also wear the green ribbon pin during the week, take a selfie, and share your photo on social media to help spread the word about mental health.

Don't forget to **use the hashtag** to join the conversation!

#EuropeanMentalHealthWeek

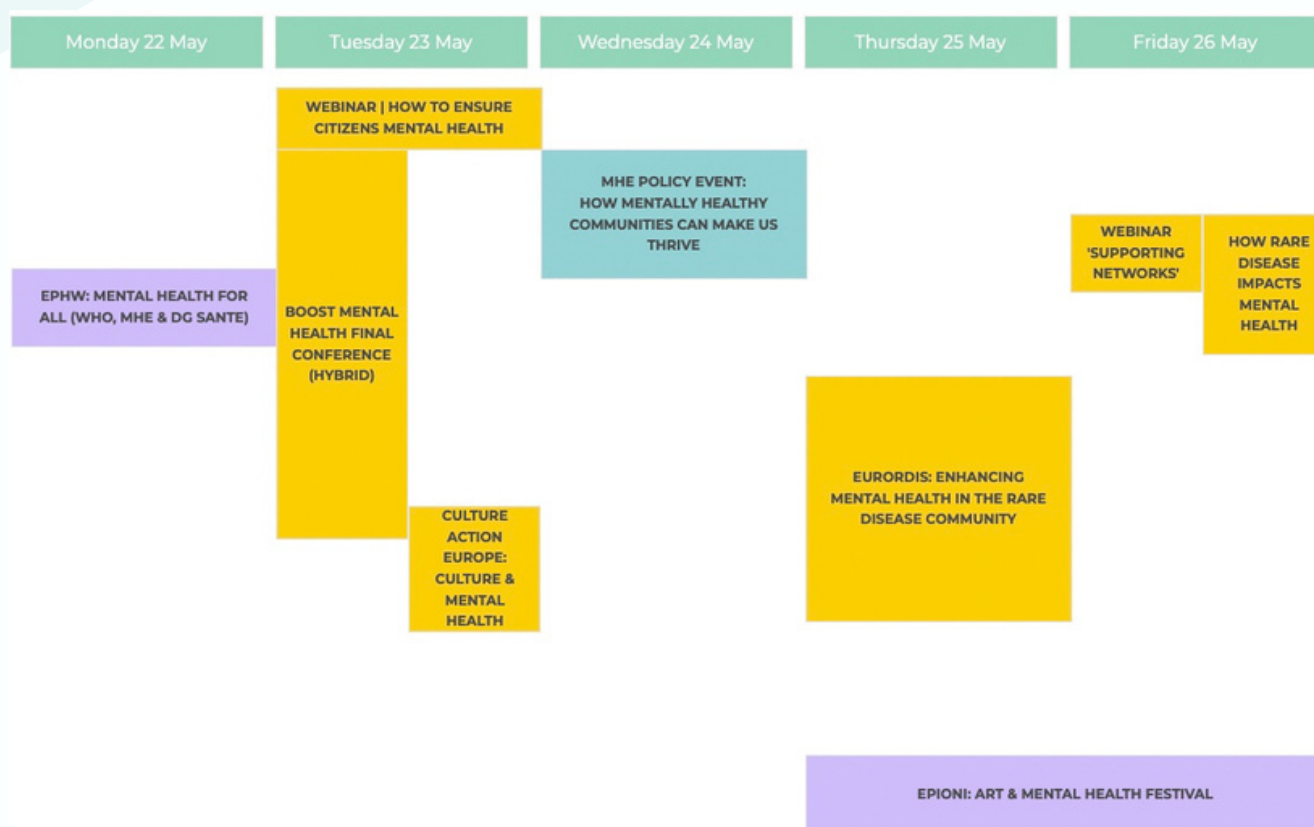




EVENTS

MHE has planned an **exciting lineup of events for the week**. Our members and partners will also be hosting their own events to raise awareness about mental health.

Be sure to visit our campaign website frequently to stay up-to-date on the latest event details.



www.mhe-sme.org/emhw



FUNDRAISING

You, your colleagues, family, and friends can take part in a variety of fundraising challenges during the European Mental Health Week!

Visit the [campaign website](http://www.mhe-sme.org/emhw) for ideas and inspiration to get started.

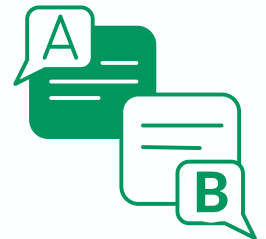
Donate directly



Organise a fundraiser



Spread the word



www.mhe-sme.org/emhw



THANK YOU

**Thank you for being a part of and supporting
the 2023 European Mental Health Week!**

**Let us work together to create mentally healthy
communities.**



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CONTACT US

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