



# **The place of research in the Joint Action Mental Health and Well-being**

**Brussels, 20 January 2015**

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# **Mental health and capital – a key resource under strain**

Mental health and well-being: a key resource for people, countries and the EU as a whole

A resource under strain:

- Mental health problems and disorders are leading contributors to Europe's burden of disease. Major depression is among the top three causes in the burden of disease in each EU-Member State. Mental disorders as most costly disorder group and / because they often hit people during their productive age.

A need to act on mental health and to improve our understanding.



# The approach of the European Pact for Mental health and Well-being

- Mental health – providing challenges and opportunities;
- A priority and responsibility for all society: citizens themselves, health systems, other actors including workplaces, schools, NGOs including patient and family organisations;
- The necessity of investing in health promotion, disease prevention and improving treatment and care.
- The EU can support Member States by raising awareness, promoting the cooperation between Member States, supporting the exchange of good practices, and disseminating recommendations and knowledge.

# The Joint Action Mental Health and Well-being

- To be implemented under lead of Portugal between 2013 and 2016. Now finalising first draft reports and recommendations.
- Objectives:
  1. Review of literature and EU-projects;
  2. Analyse situation in participating Member States, building on study "European profile of prevention and promotion of mental health (EuroPoPP-MH)"
  3. Identify good practices;
  4. Develop policy recommendations and agree on a common framework for action.

# The Joint Action Mental Health and Well-being

- Five themes addressed through work packages:
  1. Taking action against depression and to prevent suicides, eHealth;
  2. Promoting the transition to community care;
  3. Mental health at workplaces;
  4. Mental health and schools;
  5. Mental health in all policies.

# The place of research in the Joint Action Mental Health and Well-being

1. The Joint Action builds on the existing knowledge base, including from EU-research, which it maps and summarises;
2. The Joint Action includes itself a research dimension: it maps and analyses the situations in countries;
3. The key objective of the Joint Action is to translate the existing knowledge into operational recommendations and a commonly supported framework of action,
4. The Joint Action may also issue recommendations for future research.



# **A first reaction to the ROAMER recommendations for Mental Health research in Europe**

General first feedback:

- Congratulation to the work undertaken, both as a process and also the resulting recommendations on research priorities and research advances needed for mental health research in Europe.
- An encouragement to give good visibility policy brief and the consensus document.

## Some spontaneous personal reflections (1)

### **The health and well-being dimension:**

- Mental health should be seen as a priority across the whole lifespan, from childhood and youth via adulthood into old age;

### **Body and soul are one:**

- Mental health and physical health are intrinsically linked, and there is a need for research into the interaction between them, including co-morbidity aspects;



## **Some spontaneous personal thoughts on specific points (2)**

### **EU-objectives on growth and employment:**

- Mental health is a key resource for the employability and productivity of people at work, while work is itself a factor supporting mental health and unemployment is highly detrimental;

### **Research and practice**

- The application of research knowledge will be promoted if academic researchers and practitioners, including those outside of the health field, have a dialogue.

## **Next steps: Mental Health Compass**

**Further development and implementation of EU Mental Health Compass, with the objective of disseminating the Joint Action Action Framework and inspiring investment in mental health:**

- The Mental Health Compass is an internet based database of good practices. It will be developed into an interactive process to give better visibility to good practices and leadership :
- Member States and stakeholders (from health, social affairs, education, workplaces, civil society, etc) will be invited to share reports about their activities and good practices;
- Annual reports will be prepared, including recommendations;
- Annual Forum events will bring leaders and good practices together.
- A process starting in 2015 to run over three years.