

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS
CO-CREATED BY THE REGIONAL POOL OF EXPERTS AT THE KICK-OFF EVENT OF THE
YOUTH POLICY LAB ON MENTAL HEALTH

GROUP 1: Mental health awareness and knowledge

1. All respective institutions on local and central levels to find the solution to continuously employ psychologists in schools who will provide quality institutional support in mental health for young people. There is an increased need for support among young people with mental health problems while the universities are educating a large number of psychologists, who are unemployed after graduation.
2. In every municipality among the WB6 region should be established youth clubs with the programmes of mental health. The programmes should be developed and implemented in cooperation with mental health professionals and youth workers.
3. Health and educational institutions should develop policy measures to mainstream mental health in education policies. The main goal is prevention of early intervention and awareness raising by development and implementation of promotional and preventive programs.

GROUP 2: Prevention in Mental Health of Young People

1. All educational systems should include a subject focused on Mental Health, since there is not a subject on both educational levels (primary and secondary). Including subject on Mental Health in the educational system will help raising awareness on Mental Health to young people, adolescents, teachers and future generations,
2. Creating a policy framework for strengthening the cooperation and coordination between different stakeholders tackling socio-economic youth issues in WB6 economies.

Government should organise annual forums for representative of Ministries (in charge of youth, health, labour, education, finances, economy, human rights), representatives of UYOs/NYCs, youth-led and youth-oriented CSOs, international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in order to better cooperate and coordinate policies, program, activities and budget allocation in order to better tackle socio-economic issues affecting mental health of young people whilst aiming to improve their position.

3. Supporting cooperation mechanisms on local level for cross-sectoral cooperation and coordination of key stakeholders working with youth in WB6 economies.



Governments should create a supportive mechanism for local actors (schools, public health institutions and CSOs working with youth) to work more efficiently and collaborate on creating a supportive environment for youth development, therefore contributing to overall mental health prevention for young people.

4. Create more accessible safe spaces for youth in formal education systems in the WB6 economies.

The ministries in charge and CSOs should create non-formal methodologies of working with youth on mental health issues and incorporate them as extracurricular activities in formal education systems. In this way they will be easily accessible by youth regardless of their demographic background and the territory on which they live.

5. A local government with the Ministry of health, education, youth and culture in WB6 economies should focus on developing psycho-educational programs whose mission should be the prevention of mental health issues from an early age. These programs should be a collaboration based on the promotion of free mental health services and developing more productive group dynamics and overall healthy growth of children and youth.

GROUP 3: Support measures for mental health of young people

1. All respective institutions (Ministry of youth, Ministry of health, social services) through structured dialogue with other stakeholders at all levels (mental health professionals, civil society organisations, business sector, academia, student councils, citizens) should establish the national inter-sectoral coordination body with the aim to plan and implement necessary activities and resources to contribute to the improvement of mental health of young people.
2. All respective institutions and bodies (Ministry of health, Ministry of youth, Social service, civil society organisations, academia) should develop and implement a plan for improvement of the access of mental health services and expand the diversity of mental health support services for young people at all levels (local and national) to fit to their different needs and current trends.
3. All respective institutions and bodies (Ministry of health, Ministry of youth, relevant bodies and mental health professionals) to prioritize and streamline the topic of mental health of young people and ensure enough resources to gather relevant data on youth mental health through implementing an in-depth qualitative research, analysing it thoroughly and providing concrete input for different stakeholders.
4. All respective institutions (Ministry of youth, Ministry of health, social services) in cooperation with other stakeholders at all levels (mental health professionals, civil society



organisations, academia, student councils, youth clubs, parent associations) to develop and provide comprehensive capacity building in form of trainings, counseling, manuals and other resources, support groups to parents, teachers, professional peers (psychology, social work) and other people who work with youth in order to be better prepared and equipped to support young people in need, but also to recognise and prevent potential causes of mental health issues in young people.

