

European Commission Green paper on Mental Health - First Thematic Meetings “Promotion and Prevention in Mental health”

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Session 4: The role of the European Community

Introductory Statement
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The Context:

- EU-Policy objectives
- Mandate for action at Community level in health and non-health policies

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The Treaty (art. 152 (4) on public health):

- A high level of human health protection shall be ensured in Community policies
- Community action shall complement the Member States' action
- The Community shall encourage the cooperate between Member States

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Added value of cooperation:

- Mental disorders in population compromise EU's strategic policy objectives
- Exchange between Member States helps to address inequalities in and between them
- Gives support to implementation of Helsinki Ministerial conference

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Addressing Member State-level:

- Creation of a framework for exchange and cooperation between Member States

(GP, p.7)

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Community level:

- “Helping to increase the coherence of actions in different policy areas” (GP, p. 7):
...identify in which way the Community’s policies and financial instruments contribute to improving the mental health of the population...

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Element 1:

- Comprehensive strategic approach:
Development of a strategy, action plan and monitoring system on mental health for the EU, based on agreed objectives and indicators

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Element 2:

- Targeted actions, such as:
 - Council recommendation on promoting mental health
 - Council recommendation on the reduction of depression and suicidal behaviour

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Element 3:

Improving information and knowledge on mental health in the EU:

- Interface between policy and research
- “A horizontal contribution of the Commission could be to generate information and knowledge on the status of mental health in the EU, about the determinants and the possibilities to tackle mental ill health” (GP, p. 7)

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Building an action plan

- Identifying the status on the basis of agreed indicators
- Consensus on objectives and core actions addressing population groups, settings and disorders
- Timelines and targets
- Monitoring and reporting

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Questions for discussion:

- Would a comprehensive strategy on mental health at EU-level add value?
- Does the Green paper propose adequate actions for the field of promotion and prevention in mental health?

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First step:

- Transformation of the Working Party on Mental Health into Platform on Mental Health

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