

**Question for written answer E-002851/2026/rev.1
to the Commission**
Rule 144
Elena Kountoura (The Left)

Subject: Mental health of young people in the EU and the need for a coordinated European response

According to recent OECD and Commission data, the rates of adolescents and young people reporting mental health problems in the EU have increased significantly¹ due to social isolation, reduced physical activity and increased exposure to problematic internet and social media use and cyberbullying. Cases of anxiety, depression and other mental disorders have worsened and increased and the fact that suicide is ranked as the main cause of death among young people aged between 15 and 29 is particularly concerning².

Meanwhile, one in four countries lacks community mental health services for children, highlighting significant gaps in prevention, early diagnosis and cross-border cooperation on addressing mental health disorders³. According to the OECD, major depression disorders, generalised anxiety disorders and alcohol use disorders will reduce healthy life expectancy in the EU by 2.5 years over the next 25 years, corresponding to around 28 000 premature deaths per year⁴.

With this in mind, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Does the Commission intend to propose a European strategy on the mental health of young people or, alternatively, a dedicated action plan with clear and measurable objectives for the Member States?
2. Does it plan to adopt a psychosocial approach and include mandatory mental health impact assessments in employment, housing and education policies?
3. What additional steps does it intend to take to strengthen prevention, education and regulation of exposure to the internet, social media and online bullying?

Submitted: 9.7.2026

¹ According to the report 'Health at a Glance: Europe 2024: State of Health in the EU Cycle', the proportion of 15-year-olds in the EU reporting multiple physical and psychological problems, rose from 42 % in 2017-2018 to 52 % in 2021-2022, with this rate reaching 68 % among 15-year-old girls.

² Eurofound - Mental health: Risk groups, trends, services and policies, <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/all/mental-health-risk-groups-trends-services-and-policies>. According to a WHO survey on children's mental health in the EU, one in seven children live with a mental health condition.

³ It is estimated that 67.5 % of people in need of mental health care in the EU do not have access to treatment.

⁴ On 20 June 2025, the Council called for greater efforts to protect the mental health of children and adolescents in the digital era, through the safe and healthy use of digital tools and the creation of a healthier, safer and more age-appropriate digital environment.