

# Seminar on Youth Mental Health & Well-being

**18-19 MARCH 2025**

**EUROPEAN YOUTH CENTRE STRASBOURG**

## **Youth Partnership**

Partnership between the European Commission  
and the Council of Europe in the field of Youth



# Opening remarks

**Tobias Flessenkemper**

Head of the Youth Department  
Council of Europe

**Ambassador Vesna Batistić Kos**

Head of Delegation  
Delegation of the European Union to the  
Council of Europe

**Sina Riz a Porta**

Board member  
European Youth Forum



**Tobias Flessenkemper**  
Head of the Youth Department  
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**Tuesday 18  
March**

**Day 1**

**9:00 Opening**

**9:30 Mindfulness moment**

**9:40 Youth mental health and  
well-being**

# Tuesday 18 March

## Day 1

**10:10 Youth Partnership Study  
Policy frameworks and strategies**

**10:30 Break**

**11:00 Sharing rounds**



# Tuesday 18 March

## Day 1

**12:30 Lunch break**

**14:00 Services & tools supporting  
youth mental health and well-being**

**14:30 Parallel sessions  
Example and case studies of  
mental health services**

# Tuesday 18 March

## Day 1

**16:00 Break**

**16:30 Harvesting highlights**

**17:00 Closing of the day**

**Tuesday 18  
March**

**Day 1**

**18:30 - 20:00 Dinner**

**20:00 Evening program (optional)**

**Wednesday  
19 March**

**Day 2**

**9:00 Opening**

**9:15 Youth work, youth mental  
health and well-being**

**9:30 Thematic parallel sessions**

**Wednesday  
19 March**

**Day 2**

**10:30 Break**

**11:00 Sharing insights from  
parallel sessions**

**11:20 Panel discussion  
Supporting young people's mental  
health and well-being**

**Wednesday  
19 March**

**Day 2**

**12:30 Lunch break**

**14:00 Parallel sessions**  
Inspiring practices: How do youth  
organisations work with young people?

**15:30 Break**

**Wednesday  
19 March**

**Day 2**

**16:00 Reflection and exchange**

**16:45 Final remarks**

**17:00 Closing of the seminar**

**Wednesday  
19 March**

**Day 2**

**18:30 - 20:00 Dinner**



# Rapporteur

**Tijana Milosevic**, researcher PEYR

# Psychological support

**Daniele Luzzo**, psychologist

18th afternoon - 19th morning

If you have  
any  
questions

Programme:  
**Aleksandra & Alexandre**

European Youth Center and logistics:  
**Reception**

Administrative and troubles:  
**Adrian** (on spot) & **Mojca** (email)

Other questions:  
**Lana**

# Mindfulness moment



# Getting to know each other #1

Present yourself and your role in the youth / mental health field

What are the most common trends in young people's mental health in your reality?

How do you recharge after a stressful day?

Groups of 5 people  
10 min talk

# Getting to know each other #2

Present yourself and your  
role in the youth field /  
mental health field

What kind of work around  
youth mental health and  
wellbeing do you do?

Groups of 5 people  
10 min talk

What's a book, podcast, or  
resource on mental health that  
you recommend?



# Youth Partnership study on Young people's mental health and well-being

**Lana Pašić**  
EU-CoE Youth Partnership

# Youth Partnership research on Young people's mental health and well-being

The effects of Covid-19 on young people's mental health and psychological well-being. An updated literature review (2022 & 2021)

Youth services during the Covid-19 pandemic (2022)

Covid and young people's mental health- podcast (2021)

Coyote magazine, issue 32 – Well-being?! (2021)

T-kit 16 on well-being and mental health of young people



# Youth Partnership study

Policy frameworks and  
strategies on young  
people's mental health and  
well-being

Stefanos Mastrotheodoros,  
Department of Psychology,  
University of Crete

# Policy frameworks and strategies on young people's mental health and well-being

Stefanos Mastrotheodoros  
University of Crete  
Utrecht University

Mette Ranta  
University of Helsinki

Main drivers of mental health issues

European policies

National policy frameworks

# Young people's mental health and well-being

## Well-being

- **Broader** concept compared to mental health
- Including **various aspects** of life
  - Physical
  - Social
  - Financial, etc.

- Approx. **1/7 adolescents** experience mental health troubles (WHO 2024)
- **Annual cost** of declining mental health of children and youth EUR 50 billion (UNICEF 2021)

## Mental health

- **Psychological** and **emotional** state
- Allows individuals to **realise own abilities**, cope with stress, work productively, and contribute to the community.
- Crucial for **positive youth development**, otherwise risk for mental health difficulties (esp. developmentally sensitive periods)

(WHO, 2013, 2022; CDC, 2024)

# Main drivers of mental health issues

Socio-economic factors  
and precarity

Climate change

Global conflicts and crises

Digitalisation  
and social media

# Socio-economic factors, precarity, and housing

- **Family socio-economic** situation (WHO, 2020)
- Rising **economic uncertainty** challenges financial well-being.
- **Precarious employment** with irregular and insufficient income
- Experience of excess **stress** (even burnout) due to **pressure in career planning** (Salmela-Aro et al., 2021)
- **NEET** youth experience **sense of lack of life control** and social relationship support (Mazzocchi et al., 2024)
- **Housing crisis** of 25-34 yrs. since 2008 (especially in Spain, Croatia, Italy, Cyprus, Belgium, Greece, Ireland)
- **Age** at which 50% of young people **live independently** increased **from 26 years to 28 years** (2007-2019) (Eurofound, 2023)

# Global conflicts and crisis situations

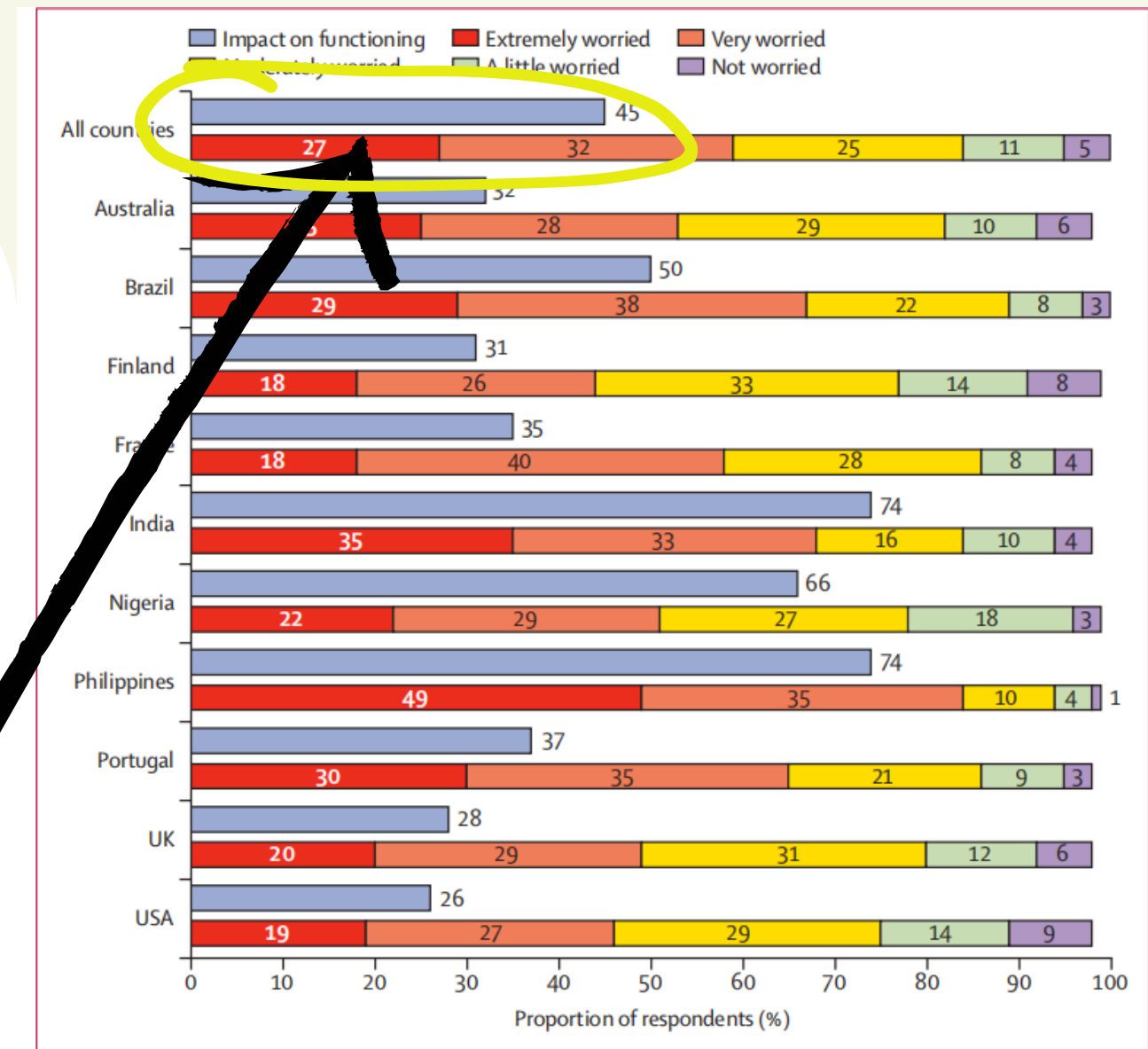
- **COVID-19:** Social, political, and psychological stressors and short- and long-term effects on mental health (Mastrotheodoros 2021; Mastrotheodoros & Ranta 2022; YIminds, 2023).
  - **Risk** for psychiatric disorders (Schoeps et al., 2023), depression, suicide (OECD & EU, 2022)
  - **Depressive symptoms** 18-29 yrs. **doubled** in Belgium, Estonia, France, Sweden, and Norway
  - Youth with **pre-existing** mental health disorders even worse during the pandemic and anxiety and depression prevalence not declined.
- Russia-Ukraine **war** since 2022 and global insecurity, record-high inflation, and sharp rise in living costs (Eurofound, 2022).
- **Labor market precarity** as a possible explanation for the rise in right-wing populist parties (Zagórski et al., 2021).

# Climate change and youth mental health

- Climate change as a new source of stress for youth.
- Several related terms and concepts, for example:
  - Climate anxiety
  - Climate stress
  - Climate worry
- Overall term ***climate emotions*** (Pihkala, 2024).
- Youth often ***feel powerless*** due to perceived ***governmental inaction*** regarding climate change.

# Climate change and youth mental health

- This graph shows climate emotions of youth (aged 16-25 years) from 10 countries. Across all participating countries, 57% of youth reported being “Very worried” or “Extremely worried” about climate change, whereas 45% reported that climate emotions have a negative impact on their daily lives.



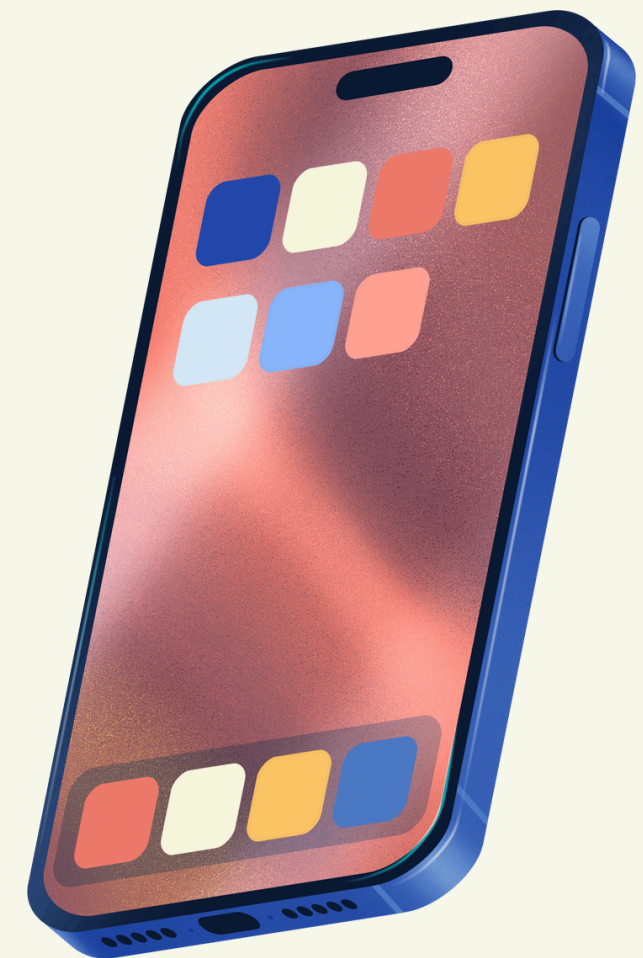
**Figure 1: Worry about climate change and impact on functioning**

The graph shows the proportion of the sample reporting a negative impact on functioning from their feelings about climate change and various levels of worry about climate change. Data are shown for the whole sample (n=10 000) and by country (n=1000 per country)



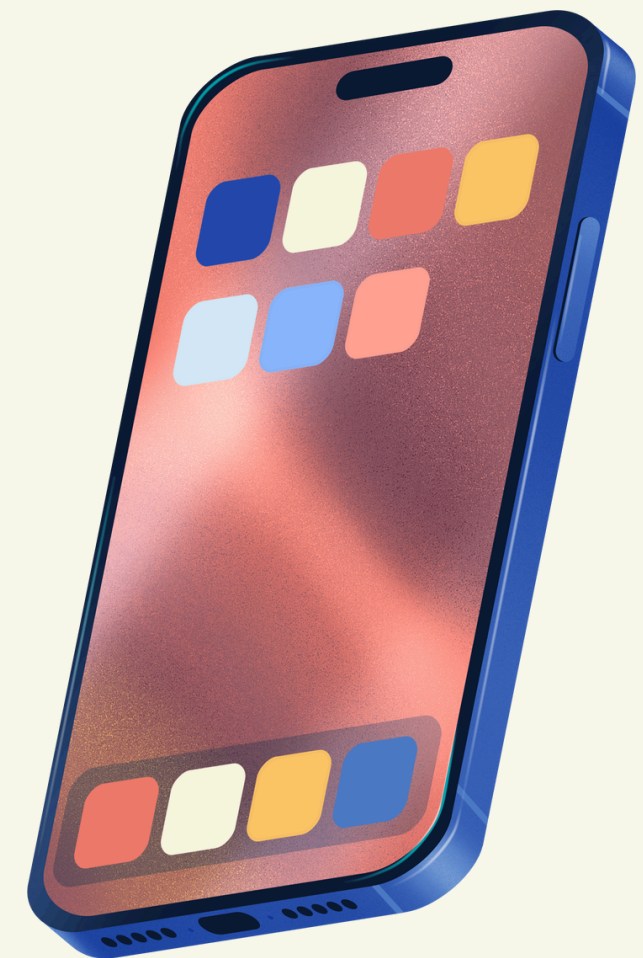
# Digitalisation and social media

- Youth develop in a ***digital environment***, where access to the internet is almost constant.
- Much research has examined the impact of digital media use on youth.
  - Not only a recent topic of study - screen time has been examined for decades (i.e., effects of TV and video games exposure).
- The ***effect*** of smartphone use and social media use ***on youth mental health*** and well-being specifically, has been ***a much debated topic***.



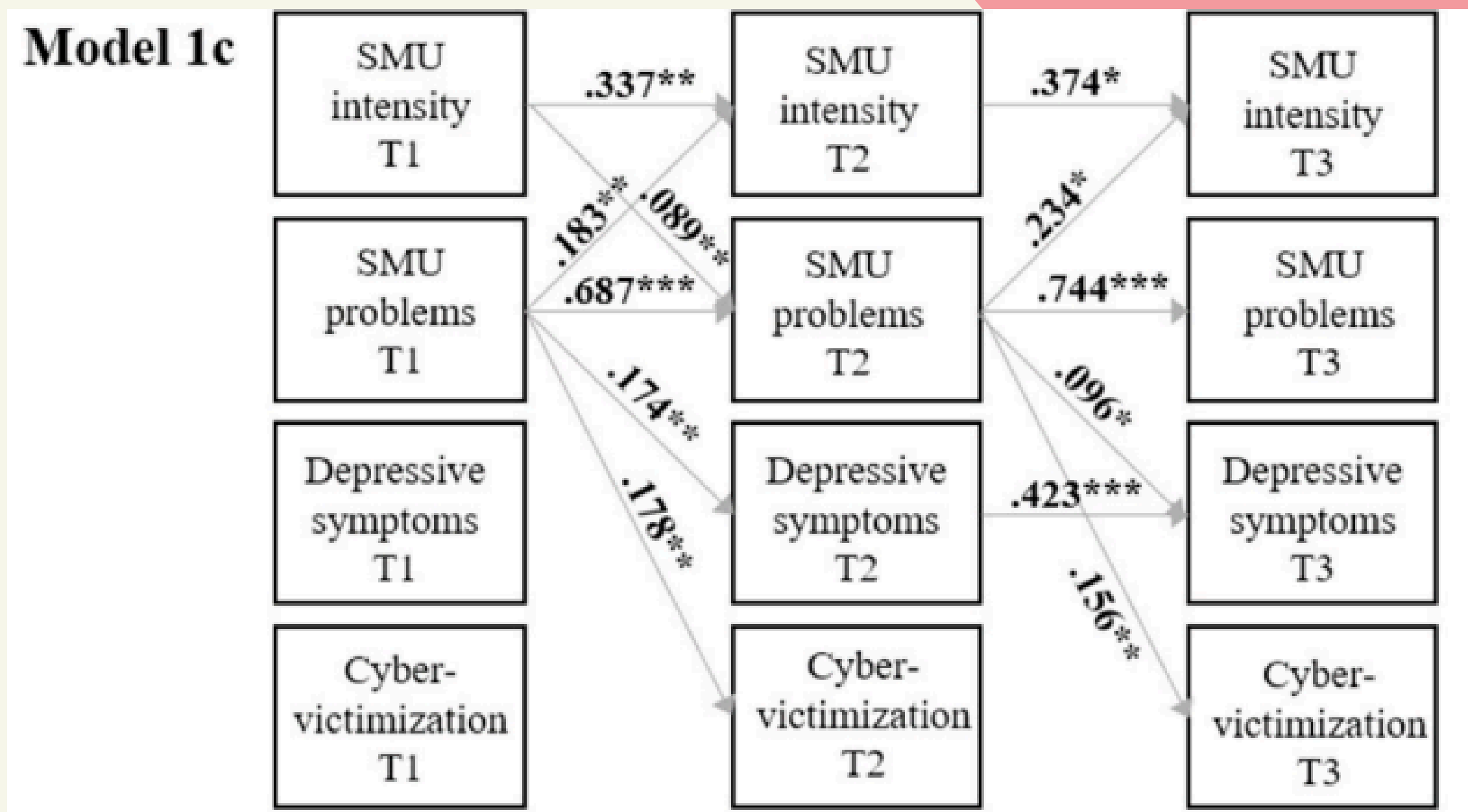
# Digitalisation and social media

- There have been high-profile studies claiming that social media use has ***destroyed a generation***.
- However, other studies show that the effects of social media use on youth well-being are ***not as straight forward to examine***, due to several ***different definitions*** and ***different ways to assess*** target-variables.
- Meta-analytic evidence suggest that the effects seem to be ***mixed*** (***positive and negative***) and ***small***.
- Studies distinguishing social media use ***intensity*** from social media use ***problems*** found the only the latter is linked with worse well-being.



# Digitalisation and social media

- This graph shows the longitudinal links between social media use intensity **and** problems (controlling for each other) with depressive symptoms and cybervictimization (Boer et al., 2021).



# European policy frameworks and strategies: Child and youth specific – EU

## The European Youth Strategy (2019-2027)

- European Commission, national governments, local authorities, youth organisations, etc.
- Social and civic engagement: Engage, Connect, and Empower (11 European Youth Goals)
- Social inclusion, stigmatisation, mental health training for professionals

## The European Youth Guarantee

- Access to education, employment or apprenticeship within 4 months (-30 yrs.)
- Reinforced in 2020.
- Related to policies in family, housing, childcare, discrimination (Eurofound, 2024)

## The European Child Guarantee

- Social exclusion (EC, 2024)
- Child poverty and access to mental health services
- Monitors share of children feeling low more than once a week by gender and family affluence

## European Council Recommendation on Pathways to School Success (2022)

- School well-being at all levels
- Prevention, intervention, and compensation measures

# Policy frameworks and strategies: Mental health specific

## European Health Union

- European Commission's 20 flagship initiatives with €1.23 billion for multi-sectoral, early prevention-oriented and multi-stakeholder initiatives
- "Putting people and their mental health first" across all policies

## European Parliament resolution of mental health in the digital world of work (2022)

- High levels of work-related mental health problems
- Mental health as a fundamental human right
- Cooperation with employers' and worker's representatives



# Policy frameworks and strategies – Council of Europe

## **Council of Europe** **Youth Sector Strategy 2030**

acknowledges the well-being problems of young people, notably their mental ill-health due to anxiety and uncertainties as an increasing concern for policy

## **Resolution 2521 Mental health and mental well-being of children and young adults**

Parliamentary Assembly of the  
Council of Europe (2023)

- member states should foster an environment where young people feel valued and understood and can affect change by inviting young people to parliamentary hearings for empowering young people and supporting their mental well-being
- member states should advance the right to mental health with timely and appropriate mental health care and treatment with a holistic approach to overall well-being.

# National policy frameworks and strategies on young people's mental health and well-being

- Overall, there is a ***lack of targeted national policies***, focusing on specific youth mental health threats like climate change, digital media use, job precarity, housing challenges.
- Some examples:
  - ***Netherlands***: “Mental health of us all”, multi-pillar program, including multiple layers of actions targeting mental health on the ***society at large***, on the ***neighborhood***, at ***school***, on the ***workplace***, and on the ***web***.
  - ***North Macedonia***: youth mental health strategy based on the UN SDGs, and aiming to include youth in the design and implementation of the policy.

# National policy frameworks and strategies on young people's mental health and well-being

- **Greece:** “Child and Adolescent Mental Health Initiative” (CAMHI), a privately-funded 5-year project (launched in 2021) with the aim to promote youth mental health, but also improve the public infrastructure for supporting youth mental health.
  - Youth Engagement Scheme (YES) to include youth's voice in youth mental health promotion.



# Coffee Break

Until 11:30



# Youth mental health and well-being

*A first glance at  
participants'  
perspectives*

# Youth mental health and well-being

A first glance at participants' perspectives

**Group of 5  
20 minutes**

**What are the factors that are negatively impacting young people's mental health?**

# Youth mental health and well-being

A first glance at participants' perspectives

**Chose 1 or 2 factors negatively impacting young people's mental health**

**menti.com**  
**code: 3765 8848**

# Youth mental health and well-being

A first glance at participants' perspectives

**Same group**  
**15 minutes discussion**  
**2 minutes sharing in plenary**

**Share policies regarding youth mental health**

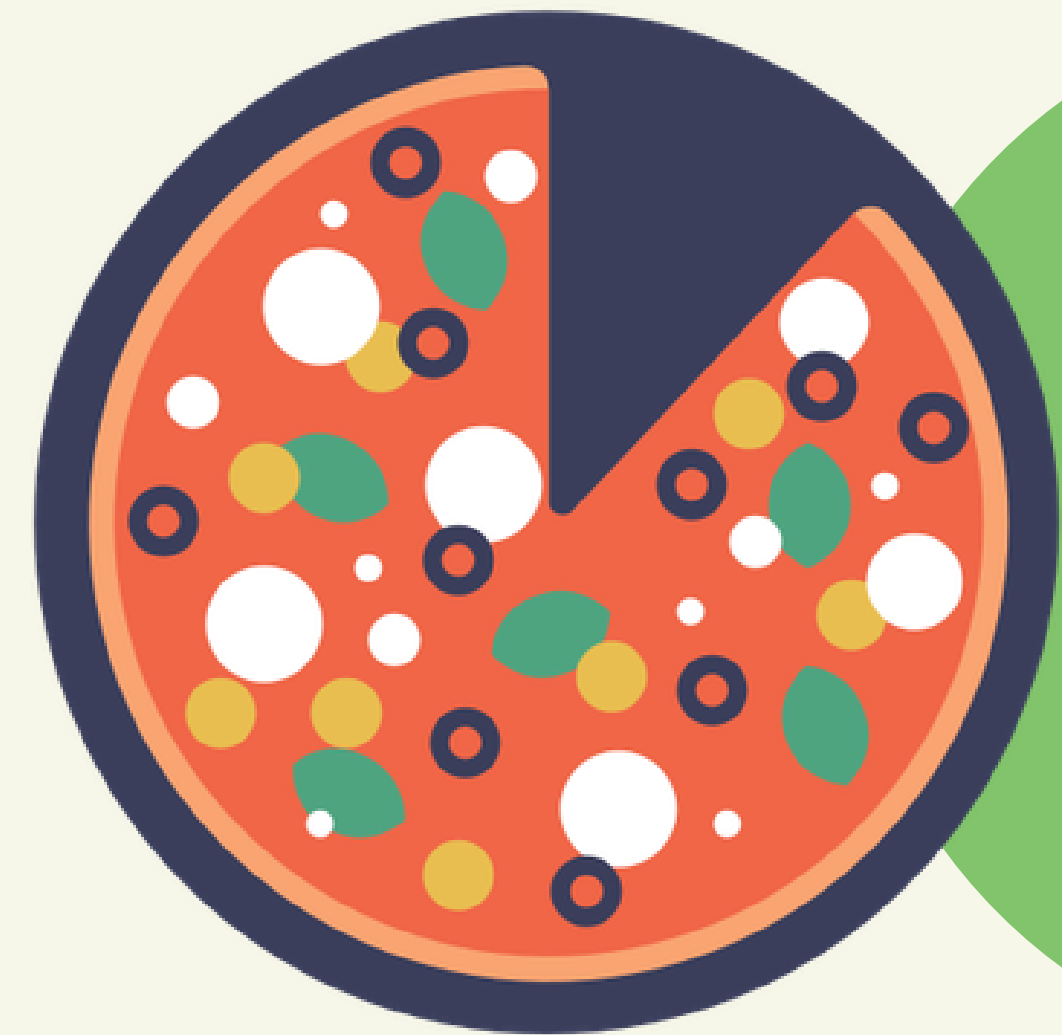
# Youth mental health and well-being

A first glance at participants' perspectives

**Share one-two policies per group**

# Lunch Break

Until 14:00



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**Daniele Luzzo**  
Psychologist

# Youth Partnership study

Services and tools  
supporting youth mental  
health and well-being

Veronica Stefan  
Researcher

# Services and Tools supporting young people's mental health and well-being

Ela Serpil Evliyaoğlu  
Researcher  
European University Institute

Overview of services by  
provider, age, type

Examples of services

Challenges and recommendations

# Services identified through the online survey

46 examples from 18 countries

*Austria, Belgium, Germany, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, France, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, and Poland*

+

Awareness & Visibility

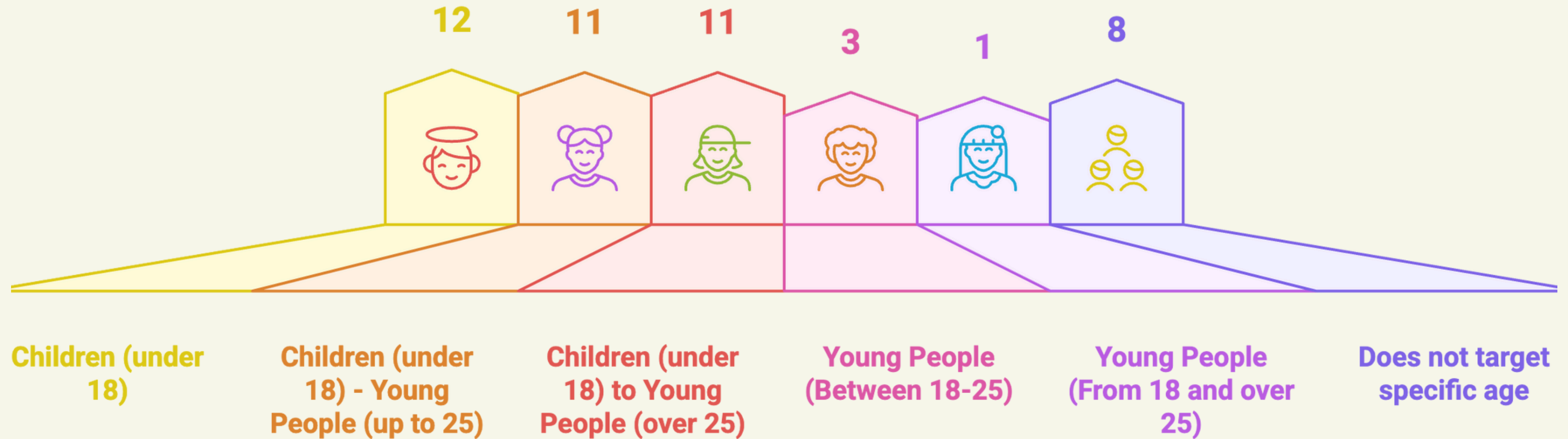
Respond to needs,  
resources & capacities

?

Are they a response to  
policy? Or are they in any  
way informed by policy?

Is this affecting access to  
resources? competences  
of professionals?

# Mental Health Services by Age



Targeted age groups vary considerably

Lack of standardisation/ Lack of focus?

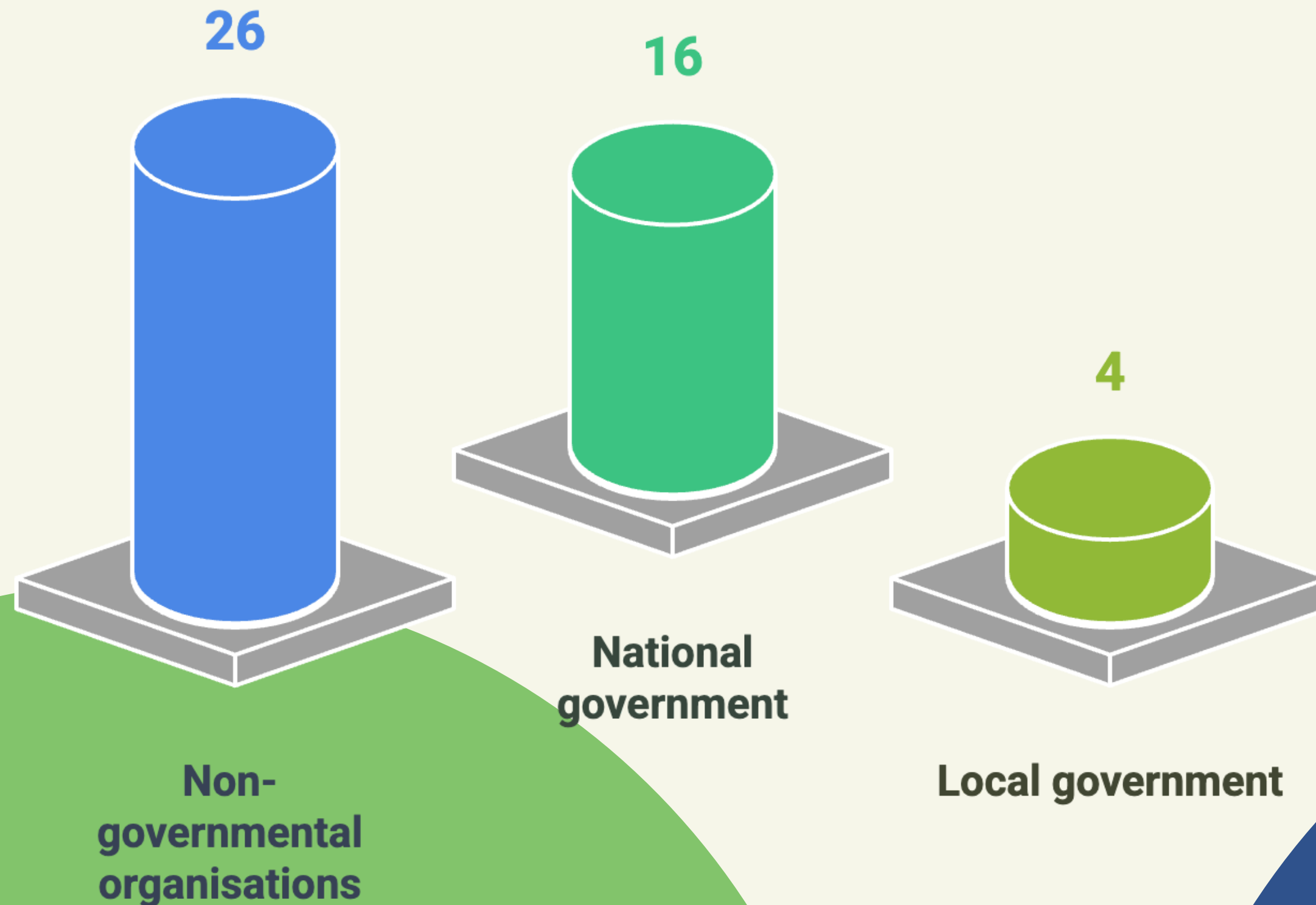
How does it impact the quality of youth services?

How do we decide about the services we are offering?

Young people beneficiaries or co-creators (service design)?

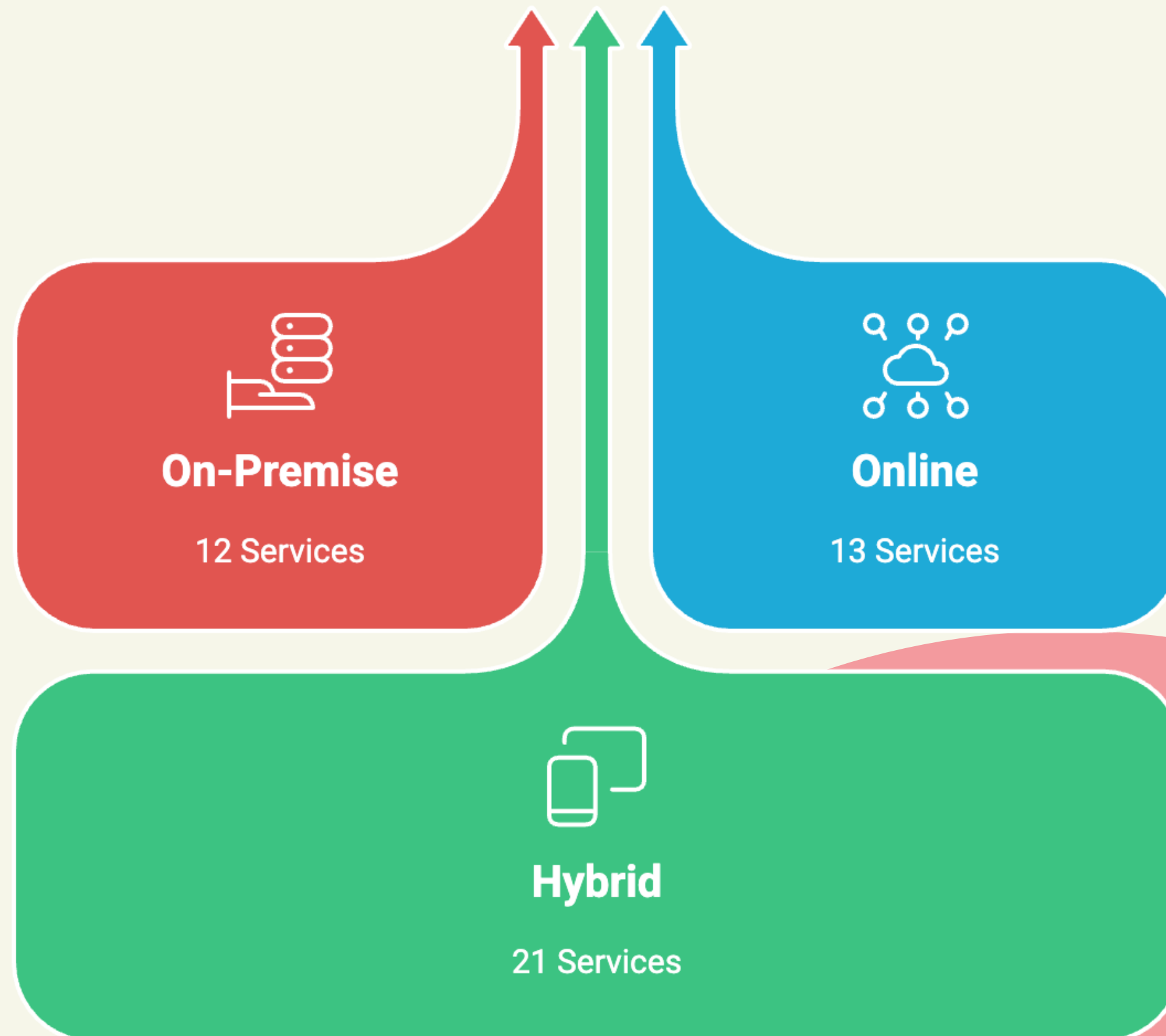
Are services corresponding to the needs of young people?

# Mental Health Services by Provider



- NGOs seem to be the main providers
- some of them in collaboration with national governments or financed by public institutions
- some countries (FR, DE, NL) have long standing cooperations - aligned with national strategies
- (+) relevance of partnerships in delivering effective support
- (?) dependent on public funding - critical role of public resources in sustaining these services

# Mental Health Services by Type



## Online services

only digital tools, including hotlines, chat services, emailing, mobile applications, digital training materials and digital consulting services.

## On premise services

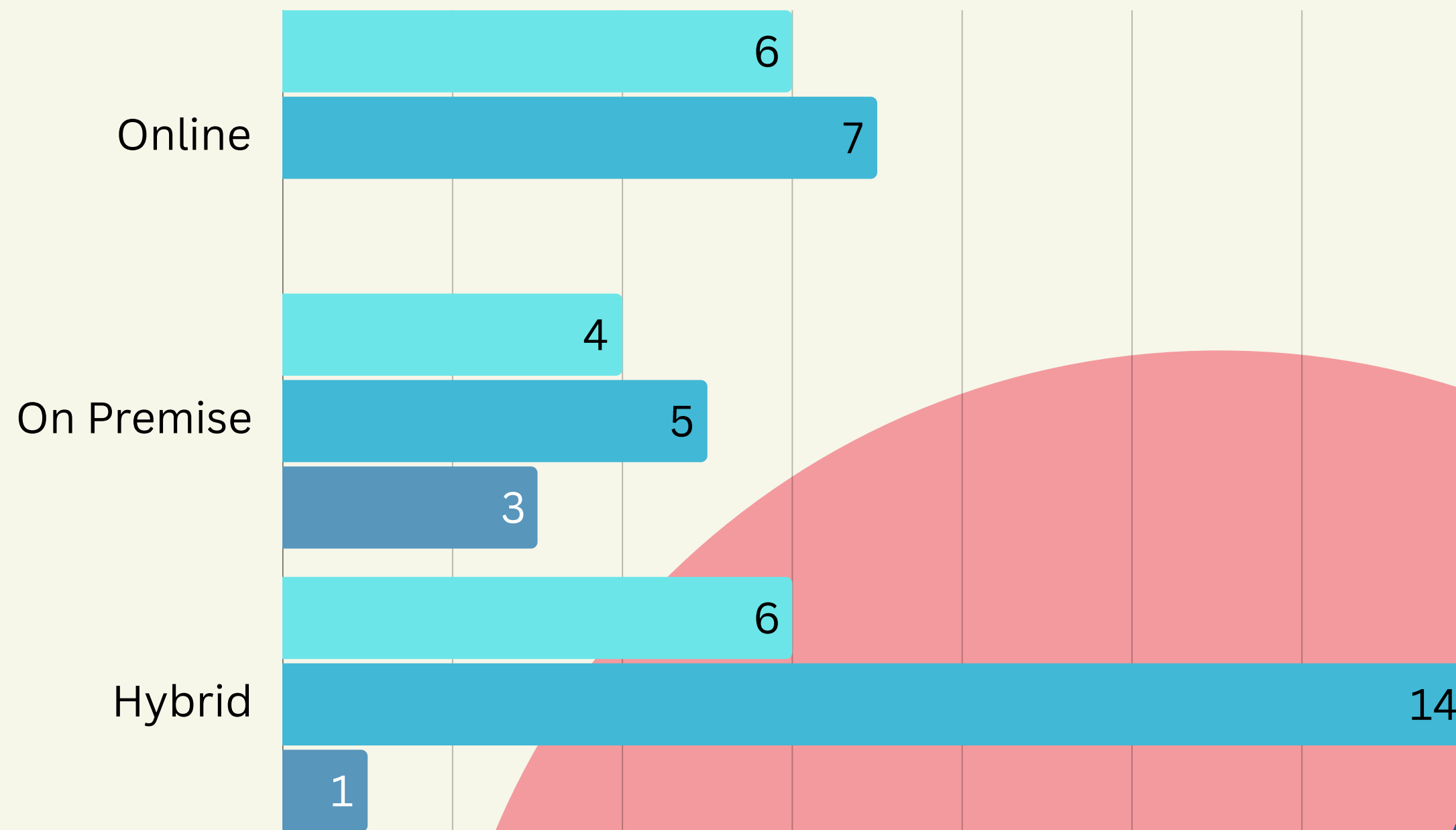
physical places allocated to provide mental health services with limited digital resources but which do not providing consulting services through online platforms.

## Hybrid services

combine both approaches by providing services in a physical premise and also offer consulting service and rich digital material on digital tools.  
Hybrid (?!)- include online informative material on their websites.

# Mental Health Services by Type and Provider

- National Government
- Non-Governmental Organisations
- Local Government



- **NGOs** - dominant in hybrid services; governments provide mostly traditional services.
- **On-premise** centers provide integrated services (in one place), engage educational specialists, family involvement, nutritionists, sports coaches, vocational/sexual health/ psychological counseling
- **Online** - additional flexibility to target more specific needs - social anxiety, public speaking, worries about appearance due to scars and injuries



# Examples: Online Services

## Norway, Young Face It (Ung Face it)

- One of 17 tools provided by The Directorate of Health to increase awareness and accessibility of health services.
- Target group: 12-17 yo.
- Self-help tool for young people with a condition or injury that affects their appearance.
- **Self-help material, videos, self-assessment surveys, mental health information provided by experts, online consultations,**

## Germany, JugendNotmail

- A non-profit platform
- Target group: 10-19 yo
- Provides **web & mobile services; only text based support via chat or email options with peers (group chats) and experts at allocated times and dates**
- Website includes materials such as articles, guidelines, tips and discussion forums on various topics

## Austria, The institution Rat auf Draht

- A non-profit emergency contact point for children, teenagers, and adults in crisis
- Started as an individual **emergency hotline**; expanded services to **e-mail** consulting, **web-based** information sharing and consulting, **missing children hotline, chat consultation, peer consulting for young people, a digital information center for parents.**

# Examples: On Premise Services

## Croatia, Zagreb Youth and Child Protection Center

- Service of local government.
- Target group: **children (under 18) with traumas and their families** (sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect, impacts of war or displacement).
- **Provides diagnostic & forensic assessment; individual and group counseling; support for children and parents**
- Delivers **training to professionals** such as lawyers, gynecologists, pediatricians, kindergarden nurses.

## France, Quartier Jeunes

- Service of local government - community center.
- Target group: young people 16-30
- **Holistic approach to well-being**; support on job enhancement, legal consulting, access to social and cultural activities; health consulting.
- **Individual or group consultations with psychologists/ psychiatrists** based on needs, with a special focus on addiction prevention.

# Examples: Hybrid Services

## Netherlands, MIND US

- Non-governmental organisation
- Target group: 12-27 year olds.
- Aims to reach young people in **three different settings: online, schools/trainings, and neighborhoods.**
- In person activities; mental health week; open space for discussion on mental health challenges.
- Trainings to influencers on mental health awareness.

## Slovenia, MIRA Program

- Service of the national government aligned to the national strategy.
- No specific targetgroup/ age.
- Aim is to **connect existing mental health services within the country and establish 50 centers.**
- In person individual and group psychotherapy consultations for individuals and parents, training, and awareness programs for parents and guardians
- Digital training and awareness raising materials

## Latvia, The Adolescent Resource Center (PRC)

- Non-profit organisation
- Target group: 10-18 year olds.
- Focused on reducing addiction risks, depression risks, and dialectic behavioural therapy.
- Consultations are provided in **9 cities on physical premises & via online platforms. Their website also offers chat options, videos, and blog articles** for adolescents and parents.
- Digital resources for specialists

# Recommendations

- **Enhanced data collection of services:** Service providers and policy-makers - data collection and impact analysis procedures. Outcomes should feed into assessment mechanisms of *effectiveness and potential scalability* of mental health services.
- **Strategic planning:** Mental health services can be provided in different forms and by different stakeholders. Ensure a sustainable impact through *long-term strategic planning and monitoring*, including by identifying *relevant resources and stakeholders*, at all levels.
- **Expand service scope:** Broaden the range of services to incorporate the perspectives and needs of *diverse youth demographics*, including *marginalised groups* but also providing *multilingual approaches* (insufficient evidence about rural youth, LGBTQI+).
- **Maintain a balance - online & on-premise services**
  - **Leverage digital tools:** NGOs and government institutions can utilise the *flexibility of digital tools to bridge accessibility gaps*, ensuring that mental health services are available to all young people, regardless of their location, identity and specific needs.
  - **Maintain physical premises:** Due to the scope of their services, physical centers need to be well equipped and accessible, particularly by expanding to rural areas in order to provide comprehensive, multifaceted support.
- **Specific service for targeted age groups:** Services should provide options for specific age groups based on their different needs (besides general services).

# Parallel sessions

## Example and case studies of mental health services

**45 minutes**

### 14:30 - 15:15 Round 1

Germany: Mental Health Coaches in schools,  
Christine Schubart and Yolanda Uloho Jones

**Room 0.1**

France: Nightline, Érina Bréhéret

**Room 0.2**

### 15:15 - 16:00 Round 2

Serbia: NAPOR, “Hej tu smo” programme,  
Jelena Stojanović

**Room 0.1**

Wales, UK: Mind Our Future Gwent, Cindy Chen

**Room 0.2**

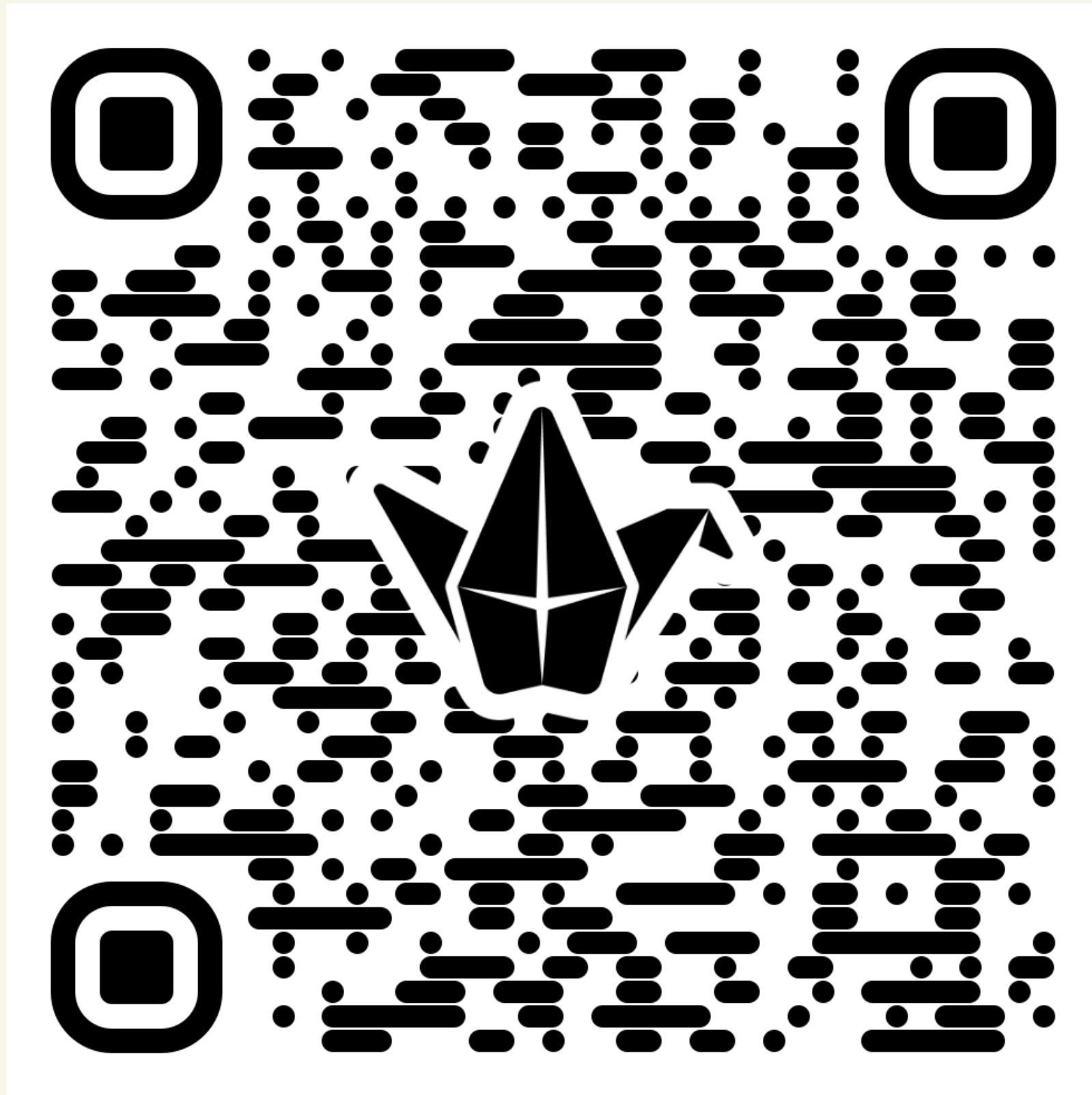
# Appoint a rapporteur

for sharing insights from the session in  
plenary (5 min)



# Padlet

for sharing insights  
from parallel sessions



# Coffee Break

Until 16:30





# Reporting from the parallel sessions

5 min per group

Germany: Mental Health Coaches in schools

France: Nightline

Serbia: NAPOR, “Hej tu smo” programme

Wales, UK: Mind Our Future Gwent

# Wrapping up the day



**We do not learn from  
experience...  
we learn from  
reflecting on  
experience.**

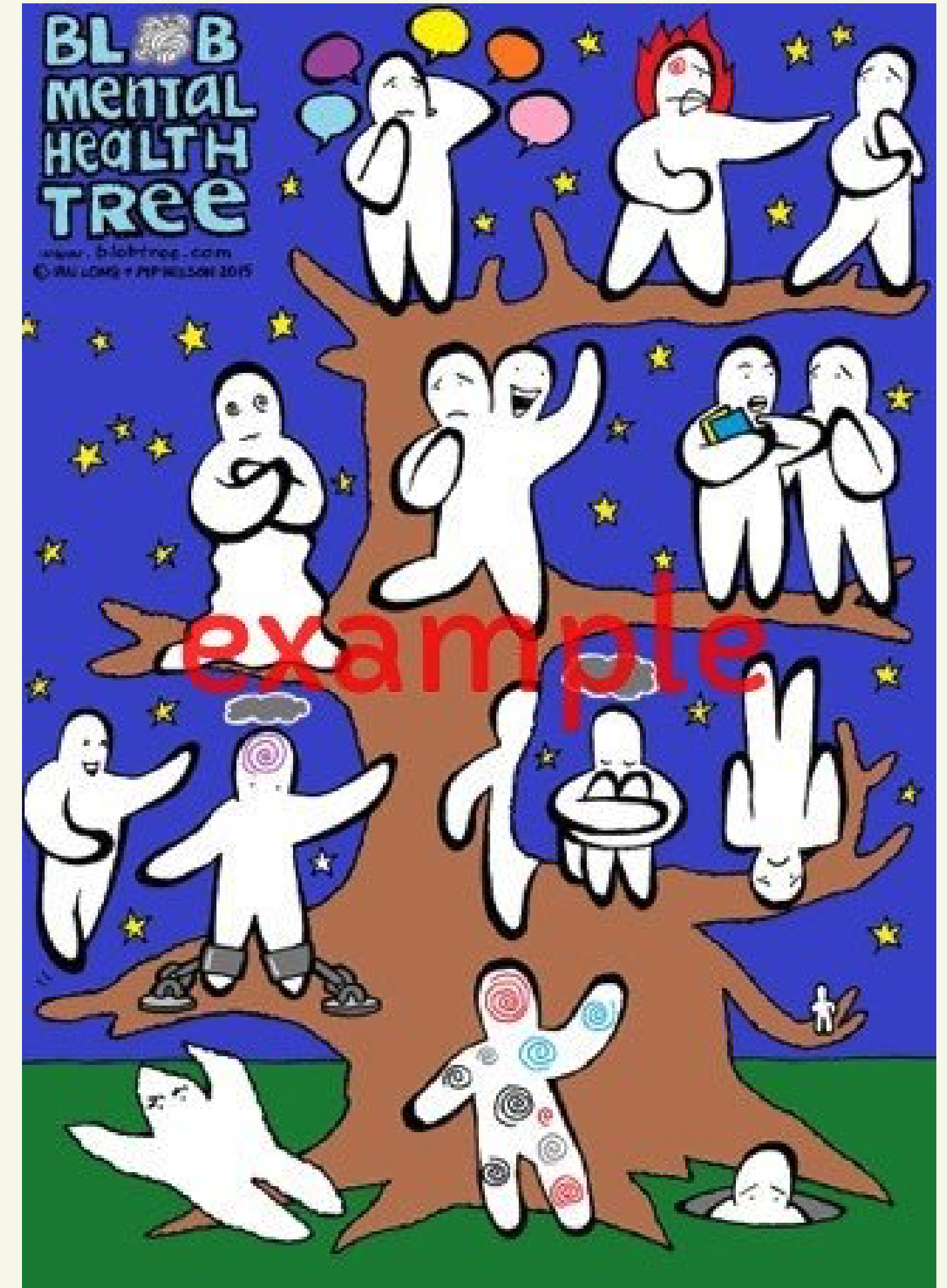
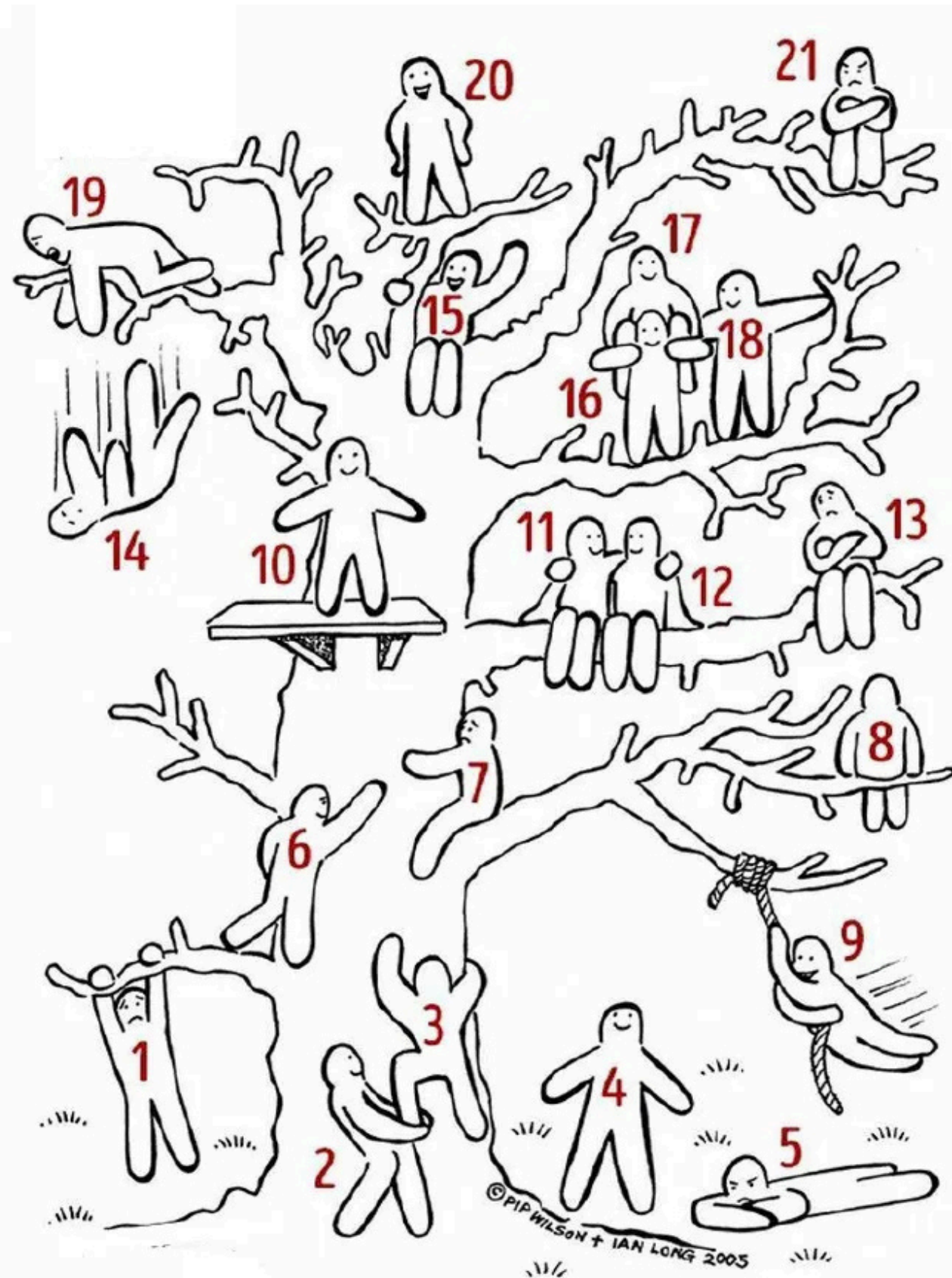
# Wrapping up the day – step 1: Individual reflection – 5'

What was an AHA moment for you today ?

aha moment, noun

: a moment of sudden realization, inspiration, insight,  
recognition, or comprehension

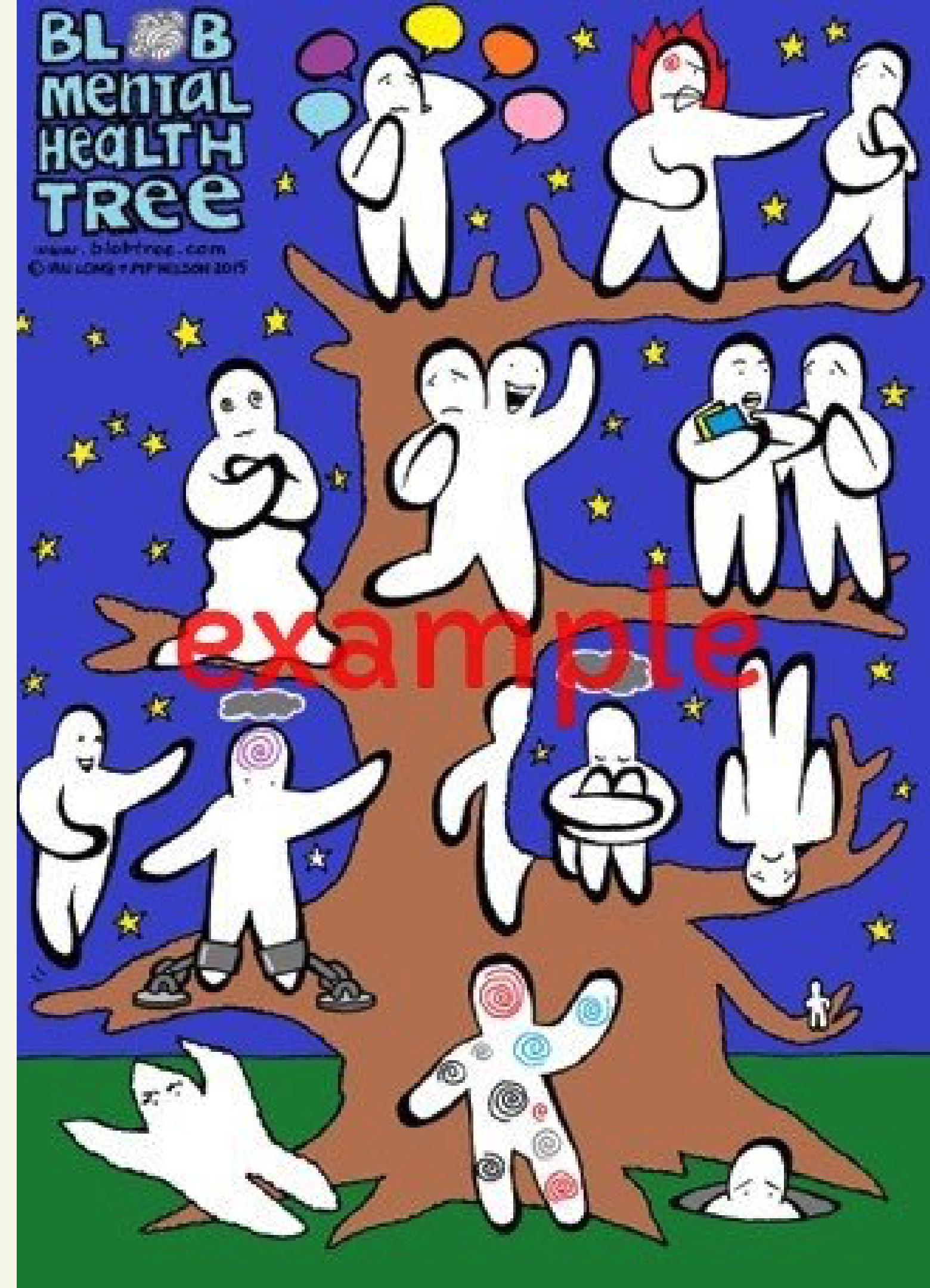
# How are you feeling?





Wrapping up the day – step 2:  
Pair up with someone and share  
– 10'

- What was your AHA moment
- How are you feeling?



**Wrapping up the  
day – step 3:  
Share on Menti**

**menti.com**  
**code: 81986984**

# Dinner

**18:30 - 20:00**

# Evening programme

**20:30 Mindfulness moment**  
**0.1 main meeting room**

**Games (fuseball, pool, piano)**  
**Ground floor Youth Center**



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# Morning stretch



# Wednesday 19 March

## Day 2

**9:00 Opening**

**9:15 Youth work, youth mental health and  
well-being**

**9:30 Thematic parallel sessions**

# Parallel sessions

## short intro

UNICEF programme, Serbia

**Stanislava Vuckovic**, Youth and Adolescent  
Development Specialist

**Room 0.1**

Youth Workers programme, Latvia

**Agnese Kalniņa**, Head of National Youth policy,  
Agency for International Programs for Youth

**Room 0.2**

Role of youth organisations in mental Health

**Carla Alvarez Gonzales**, Spanish Youth Council

**Room 3.2**

# Wednesday 19 March

## Day 2

**10:30 Break**

**11:00 Sharing insights from parallel  
sessions**

**11:20 Panel discussion**

# Wednesday 19 March

## Day 2

12:30 Lunch break

14:00 Parallel sessions

15:30 Break

# Wednesday 19 March

## Day 2

**16:00 Reflection and exchange**

**16:45 Final remarks**

**17:00 Closing of the Seminar**

# Psychological support

**Daniele Luzzo, psychologist**

19th morning



# Youth Partnership study

Youth work and youth  
mental health and well-being

**Veronica Stefan,**  
Researcher, PEYR

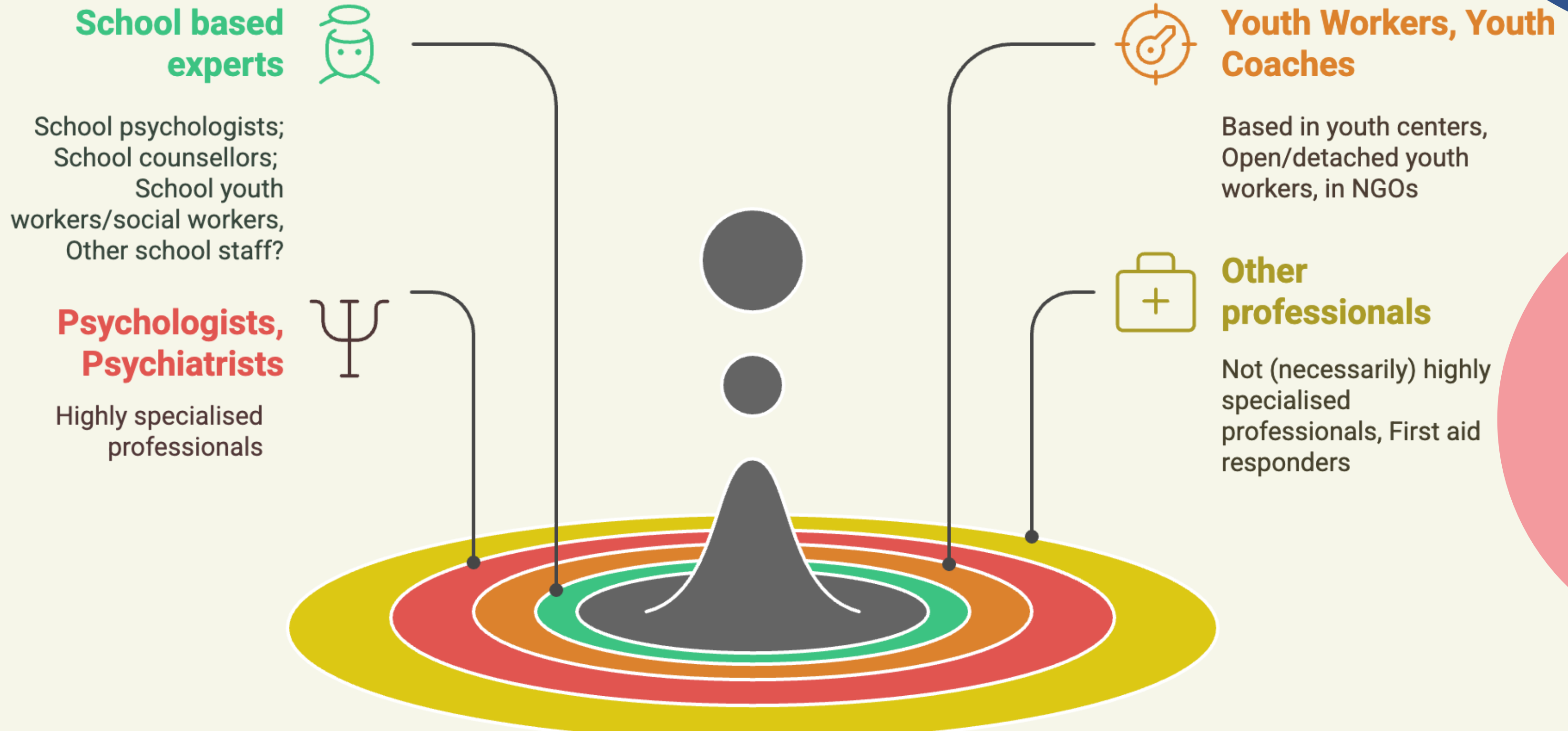
Who are the professionals?

What are the challenges?

Insights from practices

Considerations for the future

# Who are the professionals?



# First challenges

- **Paid vs. volunteers**
  - setting the correct expectations; there can be limits in what can be achieved by each
- **Standardised vs. non-standardised professions and/or practices**
  - **Psychotherapists/Psychologists'** profession is not regulated in all countries (e.g. Slovenia) but there can still be persons who practice under this title. (Youth workers too?)
  - **Youth quality register** - NL has a well-standardised system where youth professionals (youth care workers, youth & family professionals, pedagogues or psychologists) have to register. A system designed to ensure specialists meet a certain set of professional criteria while also undergo professional supervision.

# Structural challenges experienced by professionals

- **High professional expectations**
  - limited no. of professionals working in the field
  - organisational pressure, but also self-induced “they alone are responsible for the well-being of young people”
  - professionals experience fatigue & psychological distress
- **Burden of complex procedures**
  - processing sensitive information (special challenges brought by digital environments?)
  - hierarchical structures (schools/institutions)
  - struggle to prioritise interaction with the beneficiary
- **Lack of resources** (hire, train, retain talent)
  - lack of training opportunities or lack of funding for training (not subsidised by gov., sometimes paid by professionals)
  - lack of continuity of jobs & services provided (funding is not sustainable)
  - high cost of well-being and mental health services (when not subsidised; in some countries they are part of national health schemes, in some others just psychiatric ones are)

# Structural challenges experienced by professionals

- **Dealing with perceptions (stigma & prejudice)**
  - lack of trust from beneficiaries
  - long term impact -> limited use of services
- **Support mechanisms**
  - professionals perceive their work as done in isolation
  - there are some efforts already done BUT
  - more solutions could include: increased counselling, contact points, mentoring, coaching or peer networks (continuity is important)
- **Readiness of professionals (perceptions)**
  - many professionals are perceived as not being sufficiently qualified to deal with young people's mental health difficulties
  - educational programmes don't cover all necessary competences, especially emerging issues
  - lack of time to self-reflect on personal competences
  - lack of time to join upskilling initiatives (due to workload, fast working pace, pressure to deal with new issues)
    - further frustration for professionals (self-perception of competence; feeling powerless or not effective enough)



# What is out there?

**Portugal** - Campus FAD Juventud. Young people and Screens: use and risks in digital environments, Life goes by: selective prevention of cannabis consumption; Purple glasses (focused on how gender affects addictive behaviours).

**Germany** - Mental health online modules. Addiction prevention in child and youth work, Mental health in child and youth work, Conducting discussions in (school groups), Dealing with stress and self-protection online, Dealing with crises in children and adolescents, Violence in the digital space

**Wales** - Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being

**Latvia** - the Youth Workers Excellence Programme

**Serbia** - curriculum, training and mentorship for youth workers

Long-Term  
Implementation



Online practices  
and opportunities



Strategic/systemic  
practices

Low Standardization

High Standardization



Short-term  
capacity building  
opportunities



Toolkits and  
manuals

Short-Term  
Implementation

## Project based

Youth workers' capacity to support young people's mental health, focusing on the effects of COVID-19.

Peer school for youth mental health (peer educators)

**UNFPA Serbia** - Toolkit on Mental Health, Social well-being, and Healthy Habits of Youth -> local youth officers

**Denmark** - Psychological First Aid Training Manual for Child Practitioners

**Germany** - Juleica module on mental health -> part of a standardised nationwide training modul for young volunteers

# Main learning objectives of capacity building initiatives

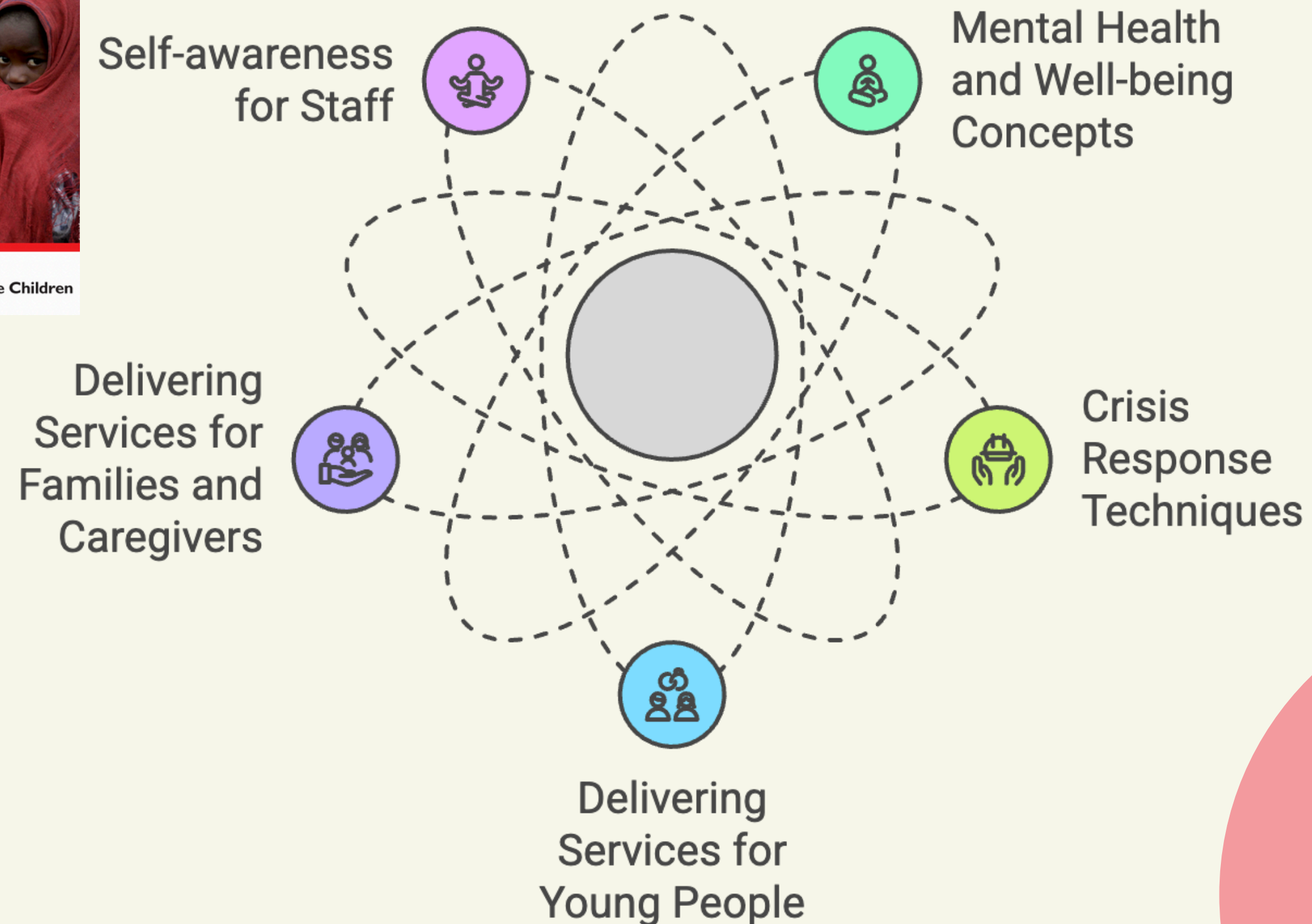
Training schedule

SESSION 1	Introduction: What is stress?
SESSION 2	Types of stress
SESSION 3	Over- and under-involvement
SESSION 4	Ways to reduce stress
SESSION 5	Practice

Section C:



Save the Children





# Considerations for the future

- **Profesionalising mental health & well-being work**
  - clearly distinguish between fields of prevention/intervention related to mental health vs general well-being issues
  - there can be different implications in having lack of professional standards for psychotherapists vs. youth workers
  - all well-being services should be delivered by professionals having at least basic training on the topic (e.g. youth workers/coaches offering counselling services should do it based on their specific professional training, not based on their personal experience in the field)
- **Building trust with the beneficiaries - in the services provided; in the professionals delivering them**
  - dealing with stigma & prejudice might be a long term fight
  - in addition to profesionalising the work of professionals/volunteers, there is a need for more education for the young people themselves (and their families)
  - trust is an over-arching issue, with implications for all identified challenges

# Considerations for the future (2)

- **Recognising gaps - self reflecting on competences & existing expertise**
  - there is a **stronger expertise in dealing with certain crises** - generated by wars, conflicts and traumas of different nature (e.g. know-how provided by UN agencies, Save the Children, Red Cross etc.)
  - there is **less expertise dealing with technological disruptions** (they are emerging issues and changing at fast pace; focusing on time spent in front of screens or social media might not be enough anymore, but even in these contexts there is little evidence for new learning modules)
    - stronger understanding of algorithms & AI is also needed -> the effects relate to young people's self-esteem & identity shaping; learning behaviours; access to fundamental rights (education, social welfare, access to justice); perceptions of society & rising of extremist movements; suicide and new forms of harm.
- **Balance between digital and in-person services**
  - enhancing transparency about who is behind digital services "Am I talking to a real person?"
  - chat services vs. chatbots delivered services - over-reliance can bring additional challenges
  - consider benefits (costs and lack of human resources) vs. potential shortcomings (losing trust, losing beneficiaries)
  - consider the quality of the services provided - even if they are in a digital environment.
- **Do not neglect investments in resilience and well-being of professionals working in the field**

# Something from the news

- University of Toronto research, published Jan 2025, 4 dif experiments, 550 participants
- “On average, **AI-generated responses were rated 16% more compassionate than human responses and were preferred 68% of the time**, even when compared to trained crisis responders.”
- AI's success -> ability to **identify fine details and stay objective** as crisis experiences were described. Made the AI better able to **generate attentive communication** that gave the user the **illusion of empathy**. At the same time, the humans may have performed worse because **human responders are susceptible to fatigue and burnout**.
- "Also, people often find **dealing with a machine less daunting**, particularly with more **sensitive topics**. There's less fear of judgment or gossip."
- **Potential challenge** -"someone feeling lonely or isolated may become **reliant on talking to an AI chatbot** that is constantly **doling out empathy, instead of fostering meaningful connections with another human being**."
- **"AI aversion"**- skepticism about AI's ability to truly understand human emotion. "Participants initially ranked AI-generated responses highly when they didn't know who had written them, that preference shifted slightly when they were told the response came from AI. However, this **bias may fade over time and experience**, as **younger people who grew up interacting with AI are likely to trust it more**."

**Thank you!**

**Looking forward to  
your questions &  
experiences.**

**Veronica STEFAN**  
**Researcher, PEYR**

# Parallel sessions

See you at 11:00!

UNICEF programme, Serbia

**Stanislava Vuckovic**, Youth and Adolescent  
Development Specialist

**Room 0.1**

Youth Workers programme, Latvia

**Agnese Kalniņa**, Head of National Youth policy,  
Agency for International Programs for Youth

**Room 0.2**

Role of youth organisations in mental Health

**Carla Alvarez Gonzales**, Spanish Youth Council

**Room 3.2**

# Coffee Break

Until 11:15



# Parallel sessions

## Sharing highlights

UNICEF programme, Serbia  
Youth and Adolescent Development Specialist

Youth Workers programme, Latvia

Role of youth organisations in mental Health,  
Spanish Youth Council

**5 minutes per session**

# Panel discussion

## Supporting young people's mental health and well being

**Paavo Pyykönen**, Finnish National Agency  
for the Erasmus+ Youth Program

**Nicholas Morgan**, Euro Youth Mental Health

**Manca Kozlovič**, No Excuse Slovenia



# Lunch Break

Until 14:00



# Parallel sessions

## How does your organisation work with young people?

**Aagje Rottiers**, Playfield of mental well-being, De Ambrassade, Belgium

**Room 0.1**

**Masa Cvar L'mit**, "What Makes Me Happy" card game, Slovenia

**Room 0.2**

**Anna Aranzhii**, Council of Europe's work on mental health and well being

**Room 3.2**

40 minutes

# Parallel sessions

## How does your organisation work with young people?

**Lucia Merlino**, Mind the Gap research  
Project Manager AnciLab società benefit  
**Room 0.1**

**Nik Paddison and Eliza Popper**  
T-kit mental health,  
**Room 0.2**

**Ralu Baci**, youth trainer  
App for neurodiverse young people  
**Room 3.2**

# 14:00 – 14:45

Playfield of mental well-being, De  
Ambrassade, Belgium

**Room 0.1**

“What Makes Me Happy” card game,  
Slovenia

**Room 0.2**

Council of Europe’s work on mental health  
and well being

**Room 3.2**

# 14:45–15:30

Mind the Gap research Project Manager  
AnciLab società benefit

**Room 0.1**

T-kit mental health,

**Room 0.2**

A guide to neurodiversity in youth organisations

**Room 3.2**

# Coffee Break

Until 16:00

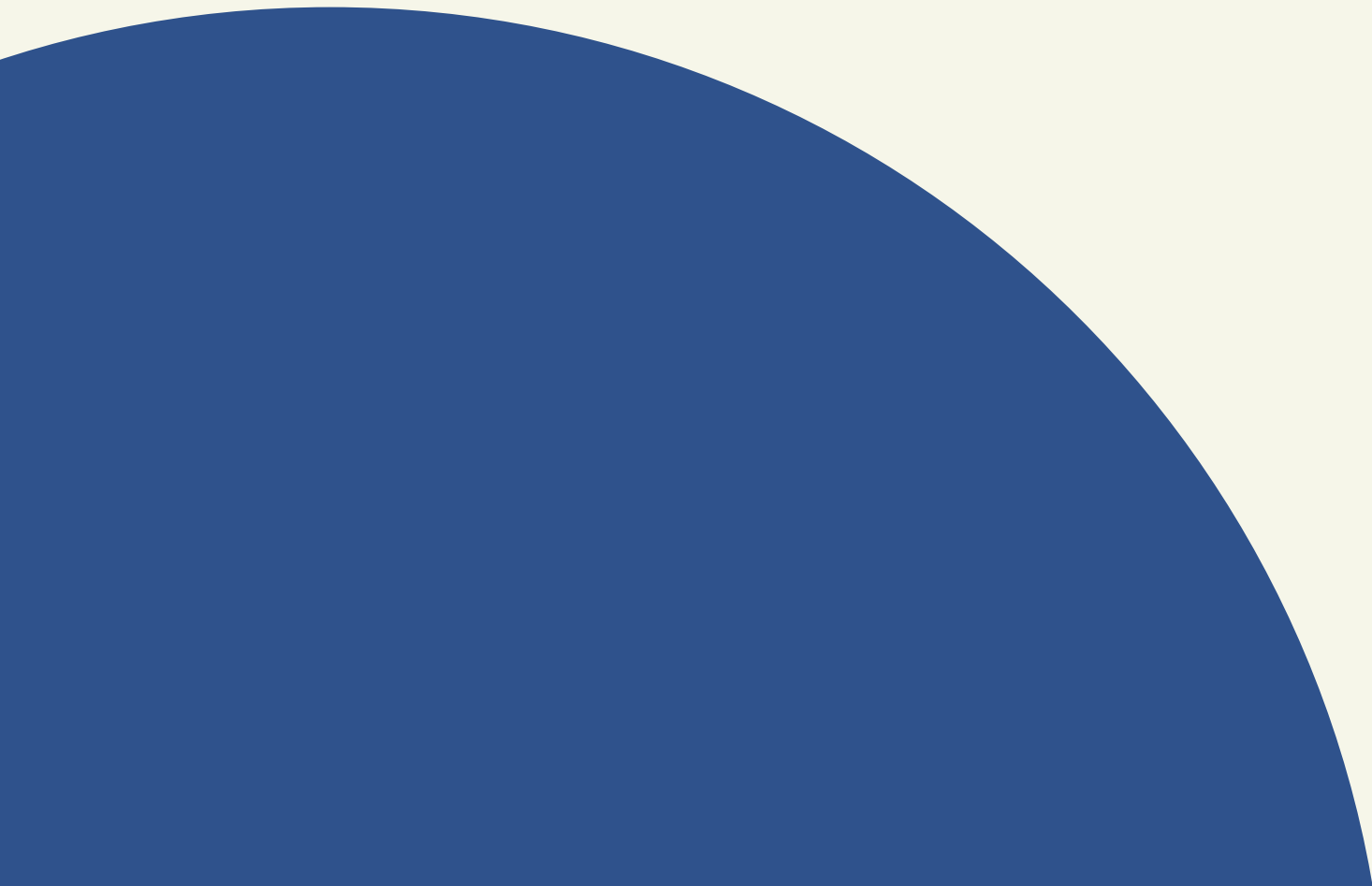


# Pompidou Group

Council of Europe International  
Co-operation Group on Drugs and  
Addictions



# Reflections and exchanges



# Reflections and exchanges

## Silent floor

What are your key take aways?



# Reflections and exchanges

**Silent floor**

**Evaluate the seminar**

**[menti.com / code 3765 8848](https://menti.com/37658848)**

# Closing Remarks

Tijana Milošević,  
rapporteur

# Closing Remarks

Clotilde Talleu,  
EU-CoE Youth partnership

# Dinner

**18:30 - 20:00**

# Evening programme

**Games (fuseball, pool, piano)**  
Ground floor Youth Center

**Free!**



THANK  
YOU!