

**Question for written answer E-003338/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

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Subject: OECD and children's mental health

Mental health problems affect millions of people and generate economic costs of over 4% of GDP. The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has demonstrably had a significant impact on the mental wellbeing of the population. However, the speed and magnitude of the response by OECD countries and the steps taken to protect mental wellbeing have not been uniform and have often not been commensurate with the new challenges that have arisen.

An OECD study report (A New Benchmark for Mental Health Systems: Tackling the Social and Economic Costs of Mental Ill-Health) outlines a range of programmes to help children develop positive coping strategies using learning methods and social interactions. Evidence-based programmes to promote mental health in schools (including Zippy's Friends and the KiV anti-bullying programme) have been widely supported by the Commission under the European Platform for Investment in Children (EPIC) and are being widely implemented in Member States (Bulgaria, Denmark, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia).

1. What actions to promote mental resilience in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic does the Commission plan to launch, especially as regards promoting self-care strategies for mental health?
2. How can new programmes obtain funding from the EU's long-term budget, in combination with NextGenerationEU and, in particular, the dedicated funds – the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund?