

**Priority question for written answer P-003864/2021
to the Commission**

Rule 138

Dolors Montserrat (PPE)

Subject: The silent pandemic affecting the mental health of children and teenagers

A mental health emergency – a silent pandemic – is spreading across the EU.

It is hitting children and teenagers hardest, and having a serious impact on their development. The consequences of the pandemic, such as the lack of physical activity and social interaction, have affected the psychological development of children and teenagers.

In the first quarter of 2021, more than twice as many psychiatric emergencies were reported involving children in Spain than in the previous quarter, including cases of anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicide attempts among teenagers.

Suicide is still a major cause of premature death in Europe, accounting for more than 50 000 deaths per year. In Spain, it is now the main cause of death among young people aged between 15 and 29.

1. Is the Commission drawing up a mental health action plan to prevent and address the effects of this silent pandemic?
2. What strategy has the Commission come up with alongside the Member States to prevent mental health problems and suicide among teenagers?
3. Does the Commission think that Next Generation EU funding is a good opportunity for Member States to invest in bolstering their national health systems, and especially schemes for protecting people's mental health, treating mental health issues, and providing training for professionals?