



THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE GENERAL POPULATION

The COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting economic recession have **negatively affected many people's mental health and created new barriers for people already suffering from mental illness and substance use disorders.**

During the pandemic, about [4 in 10 adults in the U.S.](#) have reported symptoms of anxiety or depressive disorder, a share that has been largely consistent, up from one in ten adults who reported these symptoms from January to June 2019. A Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) Health Tracking Poll from July 2020 also found that many adults are reporting specific negative impacts on their mental health and well-being, such as difficulty sleeping (36%) or eating (32%), increases in alcohol consumption or substance use (12%), and worsening chronic conditions (12%), due to worry and stress over the coronavirus. As the pandemic wears on, ongoing and necessary public health measures expose many people to experiencing situations linked to poor mental health outcomes, such as isolation and job loss.

THE IMPACT OF MENTAL HEALTH IN THE EU

The pre-pandemic **impact of mental health in the EU** is [summarized by the following key figures](#): 84 million people (1 out of 6) are diagnosed with mental health issues; the **overall cost of mental health amounts to EUR 600 billion, or 4% of the total EU GDP**; the need for mental health and psychosocial support is expected to substantially increase.

Today, increasing numbers of people report experiencing a **constant state of underlying emotional distress**, with **worries** over employment and money, **uncertainty over the future**, and the isolation arising from multiple lockdowns

exacerbating **fears** of contracting the virus or infecting loved ones. In essence, people around the world are experiencing a form of **trauma response** in unprecedented numbers; and the mental health sector is not equipped to provide the support they need – in part because professionals in the field of healthcare are among the worst affected.

[Sophie Corlett, Director of External Relations at UK mental health charity Mind, says:](#) “It’s worrying to see an **increase in the number of people experiencing depression**. We cannot underestimate the impact that the pandemic has had on the nation’s mental health – whether that’s bereavement, the devastating loss of life, the impact of lockdown, or the recession we are now in. We know people already struggling with their mental health or with related issues like problems with employment, housing, benefits and debt have been hardest hit by coronavirus, but today’s figures also show how the pandemic has affected **people who were previously well and are now experiencing depressive symptoms for the first time**. As more and more people ask for support for their mental health, well-resourced timely treatment must be available for anyone who needs it.”

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION - A PRACTICAL AND EFFECTIVE INSTRUMENT TO PROMOTE PEOPLE’S MENTAL HEALTH

The critical need for scientifically documented, non-pharmacological interventions for this crisis can be effectively addressed through the Transcendental Meditation programme, being it an effective instrument to **reduce stress, anxiety, depression, burnout, substance abuse, PTSD** and **improving mental health & well-being**.

Governments could consider including TM as a **mental health** and **psycho-social measure** within the **national COVID-19 response** and exit strategies, in order to improve people's coping skills during the crisis, reduce suffering, and accelerate the recovery and the rebuilding of communities.

Discover more at: friends-project.eu/impact-savings-health