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7th Apr 2020

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CORONAVIRUS

# WHO warning on lockdown mental health

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TODAY, 16:21

Spain plans to introduce universal basic income

TODAY, 12:13

EPP calls for EU data centre for pandemic response

TODAY, 07:27

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TODAY, 07:26

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Online consultations, particularly via video chat, can provide a feasible alternative to deliver psychological care and therapy during the pandemic (Photo: [Ian Pabelo](#))

By **ELENA SÁNCHEZ NICOLÁS**  

BRUSSELS, 27. MAR, 07:06

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TODAY, 07:22

**Libya's former revolutionary Jibril dies of corona**

3. APR, 17:04

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**EU depicts Africa's health system as a threat**

TODAY, 07:22

After visiting European nationals first brought the virus to Africa, the European Union is now worried it could spread throughout the continent and

"Isolation, physical distancing, the closure of schools and workplaces are challenges that affect us, and it is natural to feel stress, anxiety, fear and loneliness at this time," the director of the European branch of the WHO, Hans Kluge, said on Thursday (26 March).

As more and more people are obliged to remain in home quarantine or isolation with possible or proven coronavirus infection, experts agree that it is important to consider the effects of this pandemic on the mental health of people - while providing psychological support for the general public.

"It is essential to address the public mental health of people during the following weeks," Kluge said.

"This is not going to be a sprint, but a marathon," he added, urging countries to prepare their medical services for the mental health of people.

According to behavioural psychologist Virgine De Vos, this crisis could generate symptoms of depression or lack of participation over the next weeks.

However, she believes that one of the biggest problems for people's mental wellbeing can be [the shortage of testing and lack of diagnosis](#).



## Coronavirus exposes lack of common data approach

TODAY, 07:21

The enormous differences between coronavirus cases reported worldwide raise questions on how countries are tracking their outbreaks - or even deliberately underreporting them.

### STAKEHOLDERS' HIGHLIGHTS

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Meanwhile, the European Federation of Psychologists Association believes that online consultations, particularly via video chat, can provide a feasible alternative to deliver psychological care and therapy during this pandemic.

"Mental health should be part of the public health response to Covid-19," stressed the mental health expert from WHO Aiysha Malik, who believes that health workers and children are among the groups psychologically most-affected by this crisis.

## Doctors at risk too

Besides the clinical pressure that medical professionals face every day at work, they are also considered to be a high-risk group. One-in-10 coronavirus cases registered in Europe are from this sector.

On Thursday, a dozen of European organisations representing health professionals urge countries to ensure [adequate working conditions](#).

"Staff must have breaks and time off between shifts, to be able to carry on in what could be a long-term global crisis. Working in such conditions takes its toll on the psychological health of staff, so appropriate support services must also be put in place," they said in a statement.

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6 APR 07:23

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Additionally, the pandemic and the school closures can also negatively affect children's mental health as they may no longer have that sense of structure and stimulation that is provided by that environment, said Malik.

"Children are likely to be experiencing worry, anxiety and fear and this can include the hopes and fears that are very similar to the fears adults are experiencing: fear of dying, fear of their relatives dying, fear of what it means to receive medical treatments," she added.

However, according to De Vos, the attitude of the parents during the crisis is fundamental

"If the parents show that they are anxious that will have a negative impact on the children's behaviour," she said, adding that stress is something that children perceive very well.

The WHO announced that the agency is preparing a set of guidelines addressing children's mental wellbeing for youngsters aged four to 10 which will be soon released.

Additionally, Malik stressed that the stigmatisation of the virus is a "very concerning issue" because it can lead to discrimination.

**EU depicts Africa's health system as a threat**

6. APR, 07:22

**Greenland watches ... and waits for virus**

6. APR, 07:21

**Coronavirus exposes lack of common data approach**

6. APR, 07:20

**Virus recovery talks should ditch old taboos: EU's Vestager**

3. APR, 07:16

**EU's 'Irinì' Libya mission: Europe's Operation Cassandra**

3. APR, 07:16

**Slovak army deployed to quarantine Roma settlements**

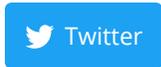
3. APR, 07:15

**Lockdown: EU officials lobbied via WhatsApp and Skype**

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coronavirus pandemic will be used to erode democracy and civil rights.

Crises, whether terrorism, migration or pandemics, do not mean that "everything goes," experts warn over the measures EU states introduced to fight the coronavirus. Health and democracy should not be seen as a binary choice.



#### OPINION

### Renew MEPs raise alarm on coronavirus civil liberties

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### ANALYSIS

## Coronavirus: What EU can and can't do

25. MAR, 07:06

Legal limitations means the European Commission's role when it comes to tackling the Covid-19 pandemic is broadly limited to coordination and support. It is up to member states to work together.



## EU depicts Africa's health system as a threat

TODAY, 07:22

After visiting European nationals first brought the virus to Africa, the European Union is now worried it could spread throughout the continent and bounce back to Europe.

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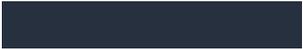
## Greenland watches ... and waits for virus

TODAY, 07:22

It would take relatively few seriously ill patients on Greenland, the world's largest island, to outrun the capacity of the nation's health services.

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