

Mental health, well-being and the environment:

Bringing nature back into people's lives

25 May, 15:00-17:00 CEST | Online dialogue

EU GREEN WEEK 2021 PARTNER EVENT

ABOUT THE EVENT

Scientific evidence has demonstrated that people exposed to certain air pollutants are more likely to experience mental health problems. Poorly planned urban settings with unsustainable transport systems and a lack of access to green areas increase air pollution, noise and heat, reduce opportunities for physical activity, and have a negative impact on people's physical and mental health. The state of our mental health and natural environment are thus intimately intertwined.

The Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) and the Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal) produced a [background paper](#) and a [policy brief](#) on this correlation. These focus on both the environmental stressors as a threat to mental health and the role of nature as enabler of better mental health outcomes.

The socio-health benefits of nature need to be more widely recognised and nature-based initiatives should be prioritised to regenerate cities (e.g., urban forests, parks and gardens, urban farms, green roofs, green walls, and tree-lined streets) and provide benefits to health and well-being. The paper provides a set of policy recommendations to ensure consistent consideration of the impact of environmental determinants of mental health and well-being in policy planning and decision-making processes in the European Union (EU). The COVID-19 pandemic recovery plans and the zero-pollution action plan expected in 2021 provide a unique opportunity to put citizens' health and well-being at the centre of policymaking.

IEEP, ISGlobal and Mental Health Europe are co-hosting an interactive online dialogue to discuss the nexus between the state of the environment and people's mental health and how European policies and the COVID-19 recovery plans can mainstream them for people-centred and nature-based future. The aim of this event is to provide an open space for dialogue to experts working in think tanks, NGOs, European institutions and the scientific community. Participants will be sharing perspectives, ideas, and experiences in breakout rooms on the online platform Zoom with the presence of moderators.

ISGlobal Barcelona
Institute for
Global Health



ZERO #EUGreenWeek
POLLUTION
for healthier people and planet



AGENDA

15:00 Welcome and house rules by moderator, *Tsvetelina Filipova*, Lead of People-centred Environmental Policy Area (IEEP)

15:10 Keynote address by *MEP Cyrus Engerer*, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety and the Coalition for Mental Health and Wellbeing

15:20 Key messages:

- *Céline Charveriat*, Executive Director (IEEP)
- *Oriana Ramirez*, Global Health Policy Analysis Coordinator, and *Ximena Goldberg*, Assistant Research Professor (ISGlobal)
- *Catherine Brogan*, President (Mental Health Europe)
- *Tadhg Macintyre*, Project Coordinator (Go Green Routes Program H2020)

16:10 Conversations in breakout rooms with moderators and participants

Some questions we would like to address include:

- How to enhance the interlinkages between mental health, well-being and the environment at EU and Member States level? How to ensure that mental health and well-being considerations are mainstreamed in the implementation of the European Green Deal, the new the Zero Pollution action plan, the 8th Environmental Action Programme and the Biodiversity strategy? What still needs to be done to ensure the positive impacts of these policies on people's mental health and wellbeing?
- What policies and activities have been successful in the EU and MS at the nexus of environmental health and people's mental health? Do we explore the potential of nature-based solutions for mental health? What prevents us from creating a healthy environment for healthier citizens?
- How to ensure that social/economic/health inequalities (gender, age, race, ethnicity, social status, disabilities) are considered when defining the impact of the environment on mental health, both risks and benefits? How to establish forms of meaningful and inclusive participation in shaping and implementing environmental and mental health policies?

16:45 Plenary session: Bring conversations together, hear major ideas and proposals that came up from the breakout rooms and share knowledge

16:55 Closing remarks

We want to invite you to discuss together the nexus between the state of the environment and people's mental health. We strive to create an open space where all voices can feel welcomed. Participants are kindly asked to come ready to share their knowledge and experiences, and to hear the ideas of others!

REGISTER [HERE](#)

QUESTIONS?

Please contact *Tsvetelina Filipova*, Lead of People-centred Environmental Policy Area (IEEP), at filipova@ieep.eu.