



PROJECT NUMBER
101080161

Transnational Final Event

Work Package 11



Co-funded by
the European Union

The COVID-19 coronavirus pandemic has affected our lives in many ways and manifested itself in many undesirable forms, such as the negative impact of coronavirus on individual lives, it has caused many deaths, the negative impact has also been on the global economy and employment, and on the quality of life in society in the form of restrictions on social rights, such as the right to be protected from poverty and social exclusion, the right to housing and education, and restrictions on medical care. COVID-19 also has effects on the democratic debates and the enjoyment of fundamental rights in the different countries of Europe. The impact was even more pronounced from a gender perspective, because as the United Nations (2020) noted, "from health to the economy, security to social protection, the impacts of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls simply by virtue of their sex". Given the mentioned situation, the European Commission has awarded the project partners with the project HEARD, which focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the democratic debate, the enjoyment of fundamental rights and the work and life of women through a gender perspective.

HEARD focuses on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the democratic debate, the enjoyment of fundamental rights and the work and life of women through a gender perspective. The search for an adequate response to overcome the crisis that occurred during the pandemic of COVID-19 should be a result of the participation of the involvement of various social partners, civil society and decision-making bodies of a given state. By involving partners from 9 different European countries in all the phases of the project we aim to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of respect for the rule of law, democratic values, and the enjoyment of fundamental human rights, with special attention to the social rights of citizens and residents of the given state.

The project HEARD consists of 11 Work packages. In this document - the Report of the Transnational Final Event - we summarise the following project results/ deliverables of Work package 11 (WP 11):

1. Event Description Sheet for the Transnational Final Event (See Appendix 1),
2. Report of the Results of the Transnational Final Event (See Appendix 2).

About the deliverables of Work package 11

Within the WP 11, the in-situ Transnational Final Event was conducted by 10 project partners in-situ in Mislata, Spain (all project partners from Slovenia, Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Sweden, Cyprus, Greece participated in the preparation of the event and presentations) and with 57 eligible participants in total (in-situ). (**See Appendix 1**).

After the Transnational Final Event the feedback of the participants was processed, the report in English language was prepared (**See Appendix 2**).

We ensured the minimal number of participants (51/75) and a minimum number of countries, from where the participants are coming from (7-9 countries). At the event we had 57 eligible in-situ participants coming from 8 different countries (Slovenia, Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece).

Meet the partnership



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Co-funded by
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Appendix 1: Event Description Sheet for the Transnational Final Event

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET**For Work Package 11 (Transnational Final Event)**

PROJECT	
Participant:	01 - FAKULTETA ZA ORGANIZACIJSKE STUDIJE V NOVEM MESTU (FOS) 02 - Associazione InCo-Molfetta APS (InCo) 03 - INSTITUTO ANAPTIXIS EPICHEIRIMATIKOTITAS ASTIKI ETAIREIA (iED) 04 - CBE SUD LUBERON (CBE) 05 - Comune di Vimercate 06 - FONDATSIA ZA PREDPRIEMACHESTVO, KULTURA I OBRAZOVANIE - Foundation for Entrepreneurship, Culture and Education 07 - NORDIC DIASPORA FORUM (NDF) 08 - AYUNTAMIENTO DE MISLATA 09 - Federação de Associações Juvenis do Distrito de Braga (FAJUB) 10 - CARDET CENTRE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT IN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY LIMITED (CARDET)
PIC number:	01 – 943692340 02 – 922855576 03 – 998069182 04 - 950177275 05 – 905191003 06 – 940414710 07 – 916641562 08 – 897272796 09 – 929027880 10 – 999738552
Project name and acronym:	The impact of COVID-19 crisis on diverse democratic perspectives through gender perspective - HEARD

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	11
Event name:	Final event
Type:	Transnational final event
In situ/online:	In-situ
Location:	Mislata, Spain

Date(s):	17. 10. 2024		
Website(s) (if any):	https://heard-project.eu/		
Participants			
Female:	43		
Male:	14		
Non-binary:	0		
From country 1 [Slovenia]:	4		
From country 2 [Italy]:	3		
From country 3 [Greece]:	1		
From country 4 [France]:	2		
From country 5 [Bulgaria]:	3		
From country 6 [Sweden]:	1 online (not counted under eligible participants)		
From country 7 [Spain]:	40		
From country 8 [Portugal]:	2		
From country 9 [Cyprus]:	2		
Total number of participants:	57	From total number of countries:	8
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
A transnational event titled "HEARD: transnational final event" was organized and held on Thursday, October 17, 2024, in person at the Parc Infantil de Trànsit La Canaleta in Spain. At the event we had 57 eligible in-situ participants coming from 8 different countries (Slovenia, Italy, France, Portugal, Spain, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece). This insightful event brought together experts, project members, external participants, and stakeholders from various fields to present and discuss the results obtained in the project. The speakers and guests included experts and project members from Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Cyprus, Spain, Portugal, France, and Sweden (online). The event commenced with a welcome speech by Dr. Maja Pucelj, Assistant Professor and leader of the HEARD project, who introduced the topic of the project and presented the main activities and results achieved, along with an introduction of all project partners, country by country. Following the welcome, each representative of the project's partner organizations presented both the successful and challenging (good and weak) practices in COVID-19 management. Participants offered insights into practices around mental health, human rights, and specifically the rights of women. A summary			

of the "policy recommendations" was then shared, which stands as a crucial outcome of the European CERV project HEARD, with an emphasis on the need for political authorities tied to each participating organization to take note and act upon these recommendations. An evaluation of the project was also conducted and formally signed among the project's partner organizations.

The event culminated in a round table discussion, structured to encourage dialogue among all participants. This discussion offered a platform to exchange perspectives on critical topics, including the most significant project results to be upheld, steps necessary to mitigate future pandemic-related impacts on human rights and democracy, and how cross-partner collaboration enhanced understanding of the pandemic's effects. The round table allowed each participant a turn to present their ideas and personal reflections on these issues, fostering a collaborative atmosphere and demonstrating the commitment to continued progress and future research in these vital areas.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	25.10.2024	Faculty of Organisation Studies in Novo mesto

Appendix 2: Report of the Results of Transnational Final Event

PROJECT NUMBER
101080161

Report of the Transnational Final Event



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INTRODUCTION

Reaching the end of the project's execution, the transnational final event was held on October 17, 2024 in Mislata, in the Canaleta Park Children's Park, in a room set up for this purpose. A set of activities were organized and held, which will be detailed below.

The final event was part of the European project "HEARD" and was conducted in English. The speakers and guests included experts and project members and people from Slovenia, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Cyprus, Spain, Portugal, France, and Sweden. There was a big participation of the women associations of Mislata. Participants engaged in discussions, gained insights into research methodologies, and contributed to shaping resilient and inclusive responses to global challenges.

The agenda of the transnational workshop that was prepared collaboratively by all the partners is provided below:


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17 October 2024

Agenda

IN-PERSON EVENT

9.00 – 9.05	Opening of the final event with welcoming remarks by ddr Maja Pucelj, Assistant Professor, Head of CERV HEARD Project.
9.05 – 9.15	Presentation of CERV HEARD project.
9.15 – 9.45	Plenary speech.
9.45 – 10.45	Presentation of good and weak practices of covid-19 management in relation to human debate.
10.45 – 11.00	Coffee break.
11.00– 11.30	Presentation of good and weak covid-19 management practices in relation to women's rights.
11.30– 12.00	Presentation of good and weak covid-19 management practices in relation to mental's rights.
12.00– 13.00	Presentation of policy recommendations .
13.00– 14.30	Round table with project partners and participants.
14.30– 15.30	Lunch.
15.30– 16.30	Evaluation of project results and conclusion of the event.


Ajuntament
de Mislata


Fakulteta za
organizacijske študije
Faculty of organization studies

The event commenced with a welcome speech by ddr Maja Pucelj, Assistant Professor and leader of the HEARD project. She introduced the general topic of the project. Ddr. Pucelj continued with an overview of the project, introducing the project partners and reviewing overall the progress and implementations achieved by the consortium thus far.

What we did in the project?



Surveys

Executed by all the partners either online or in-situ with a bottom-up approach to identify critical societal issues during the COVID-19 crisis



Topic-Based Group Discussion

Between partners and professionals from the field of democratic debate, human rights generally and women's rights specifically. Held in Novo-Mesto, Slovenia and online, in October 2023



3 panel debates

Organized by all partners to promote social engagement through debates. **Topics** of the Panel Debates:

- 1) democracy and covid-19
- 2) human rights and covid-19
- 3) work and life balance for women in covid-19



International Conference

"The impact of COVID-19 crisis on diverse democratic perspectives through gender perspective" Held online, on January 30th, 2024



Transnational panel discussion with political representatives

Executed by all the partners in-situ with politicians to identify political recommendations (today)



Transnational workshop and publications

Organized workshop with all partner countries in Greece to evaluate project findings. Prepare different publications to disseminate findings (a scientific monograph, political recommendation and informational material)



Topic-Based Group Discussion

Transnational final event in Spain to present final project results



3 additional event

Organized 3 additional events on the topic of mental health, human and women rights in order to promote social engagement through debates, present good and weak practices of handling the pandemic and reflect with participants on identified future pandemic recommendations, prepared by the project partners.

Then, every partner represented by one speaker presented their good and weak practices of covid-19 management in relation to project topics.

Examining the good and weak practices of covid-19 management in relation to human debate

BULGARIA

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Unified Information Portal	The unified information portal Coronavirus.bg was created during the first weeks of the declared state of emergency. It contains up to date information on the infection, all restrictions and decisions of the public authorities.
Level system for appropriate actions	In the late period of Covid-19, the authorities created a methodology to link the restrictions to the infection rates in the respective region.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Deeping community inequalities	Stricter restrictions were imposed in Roma neighborhoods than for the rest of the population; this sometimes led to job losses, which indirectly lead to more poverty and further isolation from democratic and informational flows. This contributed to alienation and the even more determined spread of conspiracy theories and disbelief in the data disseminated by the authorities/
Rise of conspiracy theories	An atmosphere of " shared disbelief " had been created between ethnic communities, authorities, the media, and the ethnic majority in the population, which ultimately reinforced the influence of "alternative facts", delusions and attitudes, further worsening the public conversation

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
E-Diaries for Monitoring Women's Experiences	Utilization of e-diaries to track the stress and role conflicts experienced by mothers with children under 12 during the pandemic, providing valuable data on gender expectations and psychological impacts.
Economic Support for Working Mothers	Economic support for mothers who decide to stay at home and look after their children instead of working during the pandemic. Enlarging the number of paid leave for looking after their children in case of closed educational institutions or Covid-19 infection.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Rise of domestic violence	There are no official statistics on cases of domestic violence in Bulgaria, but the NGO sector reports that calls to hotlines for victims of domestic violence have increased by 30 to 50% during the pandemic. Shelter and protection centers for such victims are woefully inadequate and victims often do not have access to them.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Self-improving of social services	Social service providers, charity and volunteering organizations, caregivers and mental health specialists improved their services (adding new ones) to answer the needs of population with the support of local authorities.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Bulgaria

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Lack of measures to protect the mental health of children and young people	The long period of online remote learning, which mirrored the in-person curriculum, had led to fatigue, social deficits and isolation for students.
Neglecting mental health	During the first year of Covid-19, no authority considered the mental health issues raised because of the pandemic and no preventive measure had been taken to tackle the problem.

CYPRUS

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Cyprus

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Proactive Pandemic Response	The general lockdown was announced on the 23rd of March, a few days after the first death of a patient. The new measures announced by the President of the Republic of Cyprus include a ban on unnecessary movement from 06.00 p.m. on 24 March 2020 until 13 April 2020, with exceptions, as well as a ban on parks, playgrounds, outdoor sports areas, etc. From May 2020, the restrictions were relaxed, with fewer positive cases reported on the island.
Right to safe and healthy working conditions	The Ministry of Labour, Welfare, and Social Insurance (MLWSI) were working closely with the Ministry of Health to give to the employees and employers in the island all the relevant information for the protection from COVID-19 in the workplace. The document was translated into 5 languages. Other than that, the healthcare professionals in different facilities (either public or private) were trained on basic hygiene rules, related to gloves, masks etc.
CRESTART project	One good practice that implemented in Cyprus during the pandemic was the CRESTART - CReative rESilient leARning communiTies meeting COVID challenges project. The material created in the project aimed to help local communities prepare for potential crises, building on the experience of COVID 19 pandemics. It contains theoretical and practical knowledge on active citizenship and community participation, and presents lessons learned from the pandemic. Additionally, it provides thorough knowledge on crisis, its effects and measures leaders can/should do to minimize the effects on their community, the methodology of public involvement and co-creation and share good practices.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Cyprus

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Educational barriers	Schools closed on 10 March 2020 and teachers had to take learning online and contact students' families about connectivity and equipment availability. Teachers were unable to reach some parents, especially immigrant and refugee families who did not speak Greek. In addition, some parents were not digitally literate and could not help their children. According to NGOs assisting migrant communities, the children of migrants/refugees were not able to benefit from the use of the online platform. The government issued a press release about supporting families and that TV channels would broadcast more children's programs; however, the press release did not specify assistance to children facing connectivity or equipment gaps.
Boarders: Turkish Cypriot community	Turkish Cypriots and Greek Cypriots affected by the closure of the checkpoints. People who were staying in the occupied side of the island could not pass the checkpoints and as a result did not have access to schools, universities, jobs, hospitals or government services.
Asylum seekers and refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees at the Kofinou Reception Centre shut its gates and “resembling a detention centre rather than a reception facility.” Other than that, the population in the camps is too high , with six to eight persons sleeping in a single tent.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Cyprus

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Domestic Violence Awareness campaign	One of the initiatives that took place during the pandemic was from the Media and social media a poster around the country with the message "Violence against women kills... Put. An End. File a complaint", with SPAVO helpline on it. Also, two videos were created for the violence against women, with SPAVO's phone number, the European emergency number, a phone number to send texts, the Facebook page of SPAVO and the website with communication through email. Even with this initiative, the SPAVO helpline had difficulties in answering all the calls it might receive.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Cyprus

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Lockdown impact	During the pandemic, the individuals experience domestic violence were increase by 30%. The specific number was given by an NGO SPAVO, which supports victims of domestic violence, and the number was regarding the phone calls in their helpline following the outbreak. Specifically, the increase of 30% on the phone calls took place from 9 March 2020 (first case of coronavirus) until the 17th of March 2020. NGO states “that the home restriction of women with their abuser under crisis conditions such as these, their isolation from social and working life and their exclusion from social support offer fertile ground for the perpetrator to consolidate control over the victim.” (SPAVO, 2020). By the end of March 2020, SPAVO received 2075 calls, with 921 to be answered and 1154 to remain unanswered due to line fullness.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Cyprus

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Flexible working	The Ministry of Finance on the 17th of March announced measures regarding the public service and the wider public sector. The measures included “flexible working schedule under conditions, work from home where possible, a special partly paid leave of absence only one of the two parents who have children aged under 15 years for up to four weeks for the time being, leave for persons belonging to vulnerable categories, such as persons aged over 60 years of age, persons with specific chronic illnesses, pregnant women irrespective of age.” (Coronavirus COVID-19 Outbreak in the EU Fundamental Rights Implications, 2020).
Domestic Violence Awareness campaign	One of the initiatives that took place during the pandemic was from the Media and social media a poster around the country with the message “Violence against women kills... Put. An End. File a complaint”, with SPAVO helpline on it. Also, two videos were created for the violence against women, with SPAVO’s phone number, the European emergency number, a phone number to send texts, the Facebook page of SPAVO and the website with communication through email. Even with this initiative, the SPAVO helpline had difficulties in answering all the calls it might receive.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Cyprus

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FRANCE

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Creation of an Observatory on the State of Health Emergency and Containment	The aim was to inform on fundamental rights in this period of COVID-19, while pursuing the objectives of limiting COVID-19 contaminations and the overwork of hospitals. That allowed to keep a constant eye on the measures taken and their impact on the enjoyment of fundamental rights . It has also formulated recommendations in order for a better respect human rights.
Protection of Public Health and Safety	The vaccination campaign, including the introduction of the Sanitary Pass and the creation of the Anti-covid phone app , aimed to protect public health and ensure workplace safety, despite being controversial regarding privacy concerns.
Right of education	Despite the closure of schools and universities, teachers and professors managed to give online courses in order for the students and pupils to continue their learning . Even if it highlighted some pre-existing inequalities, teachers really made a huge effort for the continuation of school.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
State of emergency	The taking of the measures of State of emergency was contrary to the pre-existing texts, and therefore without legal basis, the violation of fundamental rights was unjustified . On several occasions, the statements of the CNCDH, the body that guarantees human rights in France, was not followed.
Right to healthcare	The influx of COVID-19 patients and their need for intensive care for some, imposed the cancellation of so-called “non-urgent” medical interventions in order to requisition equipment and staff to treat people with the virus. Moreover, the social inequalities affecting the health of populations have been shown to be a factor in excess mortality in the case of COVID-19 infection .
Freedom of movements	In order to limit the spread of the virus, French people were not allowed to go out and traveled. They had to stay at home during lockdown, except for some situations :work, compelling family reasons, essential shopping, health, or physical activity within a maximum radius of 1km from home and for a maximum duration of 1 hour.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Childcare	The government has set up a number of schemes to help mothers who have to continue working. In fact, some schools took in the children of medical staff or essential personnel so that they could go to work.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Anxiety and frustration	Some women have had to organise their lives differently by having their children at home all the time. They had to take care of shopping, home schooling and keeping the children occupied, without having any time to rest, which may have caused psychological problems and frustration.
Domestic violences	Nothing specific has been put in place to protect domestic violence. In fact, women have been the victims of more violence as a result of confinement, and few loopholes have been developed to help them.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Free sessions with a psychologist	After the COVID-19 crisis, the government allowed people with mental health issues to have a specific number of free sessions with a psychologist. Despite some restrictive conditions to follow, it was a good practice that continued after the crisis until today.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of France

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Lack of mental health support	During the COVID-19, there was a lack of the mental health support in France.

GREECE

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Efforts to balance Health and Education	The Greek government made efforts to balance public health and educational needs by closing schools and transitioning to remote learning.
Remote learning initiatives	Despite lacking prior infrastructure and digitalization, the government took steps to provide remote learning by developing digital platforms and offering vouchers to students and teachers to purchase necessary equipment. This demonstrates a response to ensure continued access to education.
Public health prioritization	Greece prioritized public health over economic considerations, which is crucial during a pandemic. 2 lockdown periods were implemented, from March 2020 until May 2020 and from November 2020 until February 2021. The COVID-19 "Stay Safe" campaign was a public health initiative aimed at raising awareness and promoting responsible behaviors to limit the spread of the virus. The main goal was to cultivate a sense of collective responsibility among citizens by emphasizing how one's behavior could either contribute to the spread of the virus or help to curb it.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Digital divide and educational exclusion	The sudden shift to online education exposed a significant digital divide , with many students lacking access to digital tools and internet connectivity. The lack of digital skills among teachers and families further widened educational inequality , impacting the right to education for vulnerable groups, including immigrants and refugees.
Healthcare system deficiencies	The pandemic revealed significant pre-existing deficiencies in Greece's healthcare system, such as limited critical care capacity, underfunding, and shortages of healthcare personnel . This lack of preparedness exacerbated the inequalities in access to healthcare and protection of health rights.
Neglect of vulnerable populations	There was inadequate provision for the protection of vulnerable groups, such as refugees and the Roma , who were already living in poor conditions. This neglect increased their risk of COVID-19 infection and highlighted broader systemic issues of inequality and discrimination in accessing basic health services.
Unequal treatment of religious gatherings	Authorities were more lenient with religious places of worship compared to other public places . This inconsistency raised questions about equality and fairness , potentially undermining public health efforts and causing division in public opinion.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Recognition of women's vulnerability and support needs	The pandemic indeed highlighted specific vulnerabilities for women, particularly concerning mental health, work-life balance, and economic insecurity, due to factors like increased caregiving responsibilities, gender-based violence, and the nature of their employment sectors. This recognition by international organizations (like UN Women and OECD) creates policy outreach in Greece with new initiatives for the support of women.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Increased gender-based violence and lack of effective response	There was a notable rise in gender-based violence and domestic violence against women during the pandemic, yet there were insufficient measures or support systems to effectively address this issue. The increase in femicide cases in 2021 and 2022 further highlights the inadequacy of protective measures for women in crisis situations.
Limited support for work-life balance	Women faced more difficulties in balancing work and family life compared to men, with a significant increase in the burden of household responsibilities and caregiving during lockdowns. The lack of policies or support systems to mitigate these challenges exacerbated gender inequality, especially for those with unregistered or part-time jobs.
Economic vulnerability and job insecurity	Women in Greece were disproportionately affected by economic impacts, being more likely to lose jobs or face income insecurity due to their concentration in sectors severely impacted by the pandemic (e.g., caregiving, sales, hospitality). The lack of targeted economic relief or policies to support women in precarious employment conditions exposed their economic vulnerability.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
24/7 Mental Health Helplines for citizens and for healthcare workers	Greece launched nationwide psychological support helplines (e.g., "10306") that operated around the clock, providing free mental health services during the pandemic.
Psychological support programs in Hospitals for the staff and peer-support groups and networks	Many Greek hospitals set up in-house psychological support services during the pandemic. In addition to formal counseling programs, many hospitals and healthcare institutions in Greece established informal peer-to-peer support networks to foster emotional resilience and solidarity among healthcare workers.
Online counseling and teletherapy	The government and private organizations promoted telemedicine, including online mental health consultations, to ensure access to psychological support.
Public health campaigns	The Greek government and media platforms implemented awareness campaigns, emphasizing the importance of mental health and sharing tips on coping mechanisms. An example was the campaign "We Stay Safe" focusing on informing citizens about the importance of mental health and safe practices as lockdown measures were gradually lifted.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Expansion of Community Mental Health Units through Law 4662/2020	This law established the legal framework for national emergency response mechanisms , including health services related to public health crises such as the pandemic. The law authorized the Ministry of Health to take rapid action in expanding healthcare services, including mental health care, to respond to emerging needs during the pandemic.
Targeted support for families	Family counseling through the 10306 Helpline (Ministry of Health), online counseling programs for families (The Smile of the Child) and initiatives by NGOs
Mental Health Support for refugees and migrants	Mental Health Programs by NGOs and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Cultural mediators for Mental Health Services, National Health System (ESY) Integration for Refugees

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Greece

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Limited access to Mental Health Services in many Rural Areas	While mobile mental health units were introduced, their coverage was often insufficient to meet the needs of all rural areas, leaving some regions underserved while for many areas there were difficulties accessing telehealth services due to poor internet connectivity and lack of digital literacy.(Greek Ministry of Health Reports)
Healthcare workers overwhelmed by insufficient staffing	Many healthcare workers reported high levels of burnout and stress while the demand for mental health services often exceeded the available resources.
Challenges in providing multilingual mental health support for refugees	Despite the presence of multilingual services, some refugees faced language barriers that limited their ability to access appropriate mental health care. There were instances where the mental health services provided did not fully address the cultural context of refugees, potentially reducing their effectiveness.
Delayed Implementation of telehealth services	Although telehealth was introduced, the implementation was sometimes slow, leading to delays in accessing mental health services.

ITALY

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Implementation of Remote Learning	Despite challenges, the introduction of " Didattica a distanza " (Dad) enabled continuity in education. Measures like allowing in-person attendance for students with special educational needs ensured inclusivity.
Protection of Public Health and Safety	The vaccination campaign, including the introduction of the Green Pass, aimed to protect public health and ensure workplace safety , despite being controversial regarding privacy concerns.
Specific Measures for Vulnerable Groups	Recognizing the impact on women and the elderly , efforts were made to address their specific needs, such as acknowledging the burden on women caring for children during school closures .
Legislative Actions	The Italian Constitutional Court's decision to maintain compulsory vaccination for healthcare personnel highlights a commitment to protecting public health while navigating legal and ethical considerations.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Economic Disparities	Many workers faced economic hardships due to restrictions, with layoffs and the inability to work leading to financial strain . The support measures provided were not always sufficient to address these disparities. Although not always adequate, there were weak efforts to provide financial support and other measures to mitigate economic disparities for workers unable to go to their workplaces or who were laid off.
Confusing and Inconsistent Regulations	In Apulia, the imposition of distance learning through Ordinance No. 407, which exceeded national requirements, caused confusion and inconsistency . This prolonged remote learning beyond the national mandate, negatively impacting students' educational rights and well-being.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Mental instability among young people	A consequence of the lockdown on adolescents and young people in Lombardy was a change in relations with the outside world, concerning mostly young males during the period of «imprisonment» because of anti-Covid norms.
Mobility restrictions	The mobility restrictions affected women and the elderly the most. This is because it is mainly women who take care of their children when schools are closed.
Legal and Human Rights Concerns	Some legal practitioners and citizens argued that measures like mandatory vaccinations and the Green Pass infringed on fundamental rights, such as the right to privacy and free movement, raising concerns about the balance between public health and individual freedoms.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Specific Measures for Vulnerable Groups	Recognizing the impact of school closures on women, especially those aged 25-44 who often had to care for children, highlighted the need for targeted support.
Healthcare and Reproductive Rights	Access to Reproductive Health Services: Maintained access to essential reproductive health services, including contraception and maternity care, despite the strains on the healthcare system. Telemedicine Services: Expanded telemedicine services to provide remote consultations and support for women's health issues.
Educational Support and Digital Inclusion	Support for Remote Learning: Provided resources and support to ensure that women and girls could continue their education remotely, addressing the digital divide.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Impact on Women's Mobility	Mobility restrictions severely limited the free movement of women, particularly those aged 25-44, who often had to stay home to care for children during school closures.
Economic Disparities	Women faced economic hardships due to layoffs and the inability to work, with many not receiving sufficient support to mitigate these impacts.
Increased Caregiving Burden	School closures disproportionately increased the caregiving burden on women, limiting their ability to balance professional responsibilities and personal freedom.
Confusing and Inconsistent Regulations	Apulia's prolonged remote learning mandate, which exceeded national requirements, created additional stress and responsibilities for women managing their children's education at home.
Lack of Targeted Economic Support	The support measures did not adequately address the specific economic challenges faced by women, particularly those balancing work and increased caregiving duties.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Acknowledgment of Psychological Impact	The recognition of the psychological effects of social isolation, particularly among young people, led to discussions on the need for better mental health support. This is not properly good practice, but it is the only result on the highlighted topic.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Italy

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Psychological and Social Impact	Prolonged social isolation and restrictive measures had significant negative effects on mental health, particularly among young people. The increase in aggressive and transgressive behaviours highlighted the need for better mental health support and social assistance.
Inadequate Mental Health Support	There was a lack of sufficient national social assistance and specialized psychological pathways within schools to support young people in difficulty, despite the recognized need.
Increased Stress from Educational Disruptions	The prolonged remote learning mandate in Apulia, which exceeded national requirements, contributed to stress and anxiety among students and their families, exacerbating mental health issues.
Impact on Women's Mental Health	Increased caregiving responsibilities and restricted mobility due to school closures disproportionately affected women's mental health, leading to higher stress levels and emotional strain.

PORTUGAL

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Protection of Workers' Rights	The Portuguese government introduced several measures to protect workers' rights during the pandemic. This included the " simplified layoff " scheme which provided financial support to companies to retain employees and ensured that workers received partial salaries during periods of reduced work or temporary closure . These measures helped prevent mass unemployment and provided financial stability to workers, ensuring that their economic and social rights were upheld during the crisis.
Protecting Vulnerable Populations	Special attention was given to protecting vulnerable populations, including the elderly, migrants, and individuals with disabilities . Measures included providing additional support and resources to care homes, ensuring migrants had access to healthcare and financial aid, and enhancing support services for people with disabilities . By focusing on the needs of vulnerable groups, Portugal upheld the principles of equality and non-discrimination, ensuring that these populations were not left behind during the crisis.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Challenges in Long-Term Care Facilities	Long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes, experienced significant challenges during the pandemic, including shortages of personal protective equipment (PPE), insufficient staff, and high infection rates. The elderly, a particularly vulnerable population, faced heightened risks, and many experienced isolation and inadequate care. This revealed weaknesses in the support systems for long-term care facilities and highlighted the need for better preparedness and resources.
Disparities in Access to Healthcare for Migrants	Migrants, especially undocumented migrants, faced significant barriers in accessing healthcare services. Language barriers, fear of deportation, and lack of information about available services contributed to these disparities. Migrants were less likely to seek medical help when needed, leading to untreated health issues and greater spread of COVID-19 within these communities. This highlighted gaps in inclusive healthcare provision and the need for policies ensuring that all residents can access necessary services without fear.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Support for Domestic Violence Victims	Implementation of Safe Spaces: Portugal established safe spaces in pharmacies and supermarkets where victims of domestic violence could report abuse discreetly. Helplines and Online Support: Strengthened and promoted helplines and online support services to ensure continuous support for victims of domestic violence.
Economic Support for Women	Targeted Financial Assistance: Provided financial support to women, particularly those in precarious jobs or single mothers, to help mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic. Job Retention Programs: Ensured job retention programs specifically included provisions to support women, who are often overrepresented in the hardest-hit sectors.
Healthcare and Reproductive Rights	Access to Reproductive Health Services: Maintained access to essential reproductive health services, including contraception and maternity care, despite the strains on the healthcare system. Telemedicine Services: Expanded telemedicine services to provide remote consultations and support for women's health issues.
Educational Support and Digital Inclusion	Support for Remote Learning: Provided resources and support to ensure that women and girls could continue their education remotely, addressing the digital divide.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Healthcare and Reproductive Rights	Access to Reproductive Health Services: Maintained access to essential reproductive health services, including contraception and maternity care, despite the strains on the healthcare system. Telemedicine Services: Expanded telemedicine services to provide remote consultations and support for women's health issues.
Educational Support and Digital Inclusion	Support for Remote Learning: Provided resources and support to ensure that women and girls could continue their education remotely, addressing the digital divide.
Lack of Support for Women's Employment	Despite government efforts to provide financial aid, there was insufficient focus on protecting women's employment. This worsened the existing gender pay gap and pushed more women into economic precarity, highlighting the need for better-targeted policies to safeguard women's labor rights during crises.
Economic Disparities	Women in Portugal were overrepresented in sectors hardest hit by the pandemic, such as tourism, retail, and caregiving. Government support measures, however, were insufficiently targeted at these sectors, exacerbating pre-existing economic inequalities and limiting women's financial independence during and after the pandemic.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Expansion of Telehealth Services for Mental Health	Portugal rapidly expanded telehealth services to provide mental health support remotely. This included video consultations, phone counselling, and online therapy sessions, ensuring continued access to mental health care despite lockdowns and social distancing measures. This initiative allowed individuals to seek help for anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues without needing to leave their homes. It also alleviated the burden on in-person healthcare facilities.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Portugal

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Delays in Mental Health Support Implementation	There were delays in the implementation of mental health support programs, particularly at the beginning of the pandemic when the need for such services was rapidly increasing. Early in the pandemic, many people experienced heightened stress, anxiety, and uncertainty without sufficient access to mental health resources. This delay hindered the timely provision of critical support during the initial and most stressful phases of the crisis.
Underutilization of Preventive Measures	There was an underutilization of preventive measures aimed at mitigating mental health issues before they became severe. This includes a lack of proactive outreach and early intervention strategies. Without preventive measures, many individuals' mental health deteriorated to the point where more intensive and resource-consuming interventions were needed. Early intervention and preventive care could have reduced the overall burden on mental health services.

SLOVENIA

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Proactive Pandemic Response	Slovenia was one of the first European countries , which declared an epidemic and implemented early restrictions, like closing the borders and implementing lockdown measures, which were crucial in controlling the initial spread of the virus.
Ensuring Adequate Healthcare Capacity	The government strived to ensure the increase the healthcare system's capacity by postponing non-urgent medical procedures and increasing the number of hospital beds available for COVID-19 patients.
Slovenia's Effective Use of Technology and Infrastructure in Pandemic Testing and Tracing	Slovenia leveraged its existing public health infrastructure to implement testing and contact tracing effectively, established a large-scale testing system and used a mobile application for effective contact tracing ('#Stay Healthy).
Slovenia's High Ranking in Mental Well-Being During Pandemic	The WHO-5 mental well-being index , which gauges people's moods, has shown that Slovenia was ranked on the second place on positive feelings during COVID-19 . The share of those who worried about work even when they were not working (SLO: 23.5%, EU: 30%) and those who reported that they could not devote time to their family due to their work was below the European average. (SLO: 17.8%, EU: 18.8%).

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Legal Challenges and Constitutional Concerns	The Constitutional Court of the Republic of Slovenia, the Information Commissioner and many legal experts warned the Slovenian government, that any encroachment on human rights must be regulated by law, a decree alone is not enough and that governing with the decrees should be allowed only in the state of war.
Inconsistency and Politicization in Slovenia's Crisis Communication	Slovenian government faced criticism about the inconsistency and non-clarity of government communications, due to changing guidelines and the perceived politicization of decisions , which sometimes led to public confusion and reduced trust in the measures being implemented.
Slovenian Government's Hostile Stance Towards Media, Civil Society and NGOs	The government has been accused of creating a hostile environment for media, civil society and NGOs . The failed attempts to evict NGOs and change the rules for public tenders led to international accusations of undermining freedom of expression and human rights. Slovenia also noted rise of fake news and increased threat for media freedom, as international media advocacy groups noted an increasingly hostile environment toward the media and a worrying increase in violence against journalists.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Inadequate Economic Support for Young and Other Vulnerable Groups and Small Businesses	The government did introduce economic support measures, while they were not sufficient to cover all vulnerable groups or sectors, particularly young, small businesses and self-employed individuals who faced significant financial difficulties.
Negative Impact on Human Rights	Measures, like movement restrictions and quarantine measures, raised concerns about their impact on human rights (like the right to privacy and freedom of movement), as their enforcement sometimes led to legal challenges and public debate.
Educational Disparities	The closure of schools and the shift to online learning posed challenges, while students without access to adequate technology or support at home , were exposed to educational equality and had their children's rights affected.
Overcrowded Public Facilities	Prisons and asylums were overcrowded.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Legislative Progress	The adoption of amendments to the Criminal Code to recognize non-consensual sex as rape aligns with international law was a significant step towards strengthening legal protections against sexual violence and improving women's rights.
Comprehensive Support Measures	Slovenia implemented a broad package of measures, which aimed at supporting both individuals and the economy during the pandemic, like facilitating work-from-home arrangements to help maintain employment and economic activity despite the public health crisis. But we have to acknowledge that this measures were not directly targeting women.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

To more effectively address this inconsistencies, there is an urgent need for a gender-segregated comprehensive approach to tackling the future pandemic situations.

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Surge in Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Murders	According to the National Institute of Public Health (NIJZ), the number of reported cases of gender-based violence increased in 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, while the cases of gender-based violence continued to rise in 2021; the number of domestic murders reached the pre-pandemic average by the end of March.
Exacerbated Gender Disparities	The measures of COVID-19 have disproportionately affected the female labour market due the gender imbalances in various jobs in the economy. Women, particularly those in low-paid and temporary jobs, faced increased economic and social vulnerabilities. Pandemic also affected their employment opportunities and increased their unpaid work burden.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Economic Crisis Impact	The economic downturn affected employment, reflected in job losses in sectors predominantly staffed by women such as personal services and retail. The government's economic support measures were crucial but did not fully address the deeper, structural gender disparities in the labor market.
Inadequate (Mental) Support for Work-Life Balance for Women (especially Mothers)	The shift to remote work and school closures placed a disproportionate burden on women, exacerbating conflicts between professional and private life. This was particularly challenging for parents of young children, with women more likely than men to report difficulties in balancing work and family responsibilities. Mentioned also reflected in poor mental health challenges for women.
Greater Strain on Women's Health and Careers During the Epidemic	Women were more physically and mentally strained by the epidemic than men, which caused short-term and long-term career interruptions of women.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
High Ranking in Mental Well-being During Pandemic	The WHO-5 mental well-being index, which gauges people's moods, has shown that Slovenia was ranked on the second place on positive feelings during COVID-19. The share of those who worried about work even when they were not working (SLO: 23.5%, EU: 30%) and those who reported that they could not devote time to their family due to their work was below the European average (SLO: 17.8%, EU: 18.8%). The proportion of people who felt tension, loneliness and depression during the restrictive measures was lower in Slovenia than in the EU average.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Pandemic's Disproportionate Impact on Women's Mental Health	The pressure caused by pandemic affected the mental well-being of women more than men, especially when young children were present. In April 2020, women were also more likely than men to feel stressed (23% compared to 19%), lonely (14% compared to 6%) and depressed (14% compared to 9%). As women are more physically and mentally strained by the epidemic than men, the epidemic can cause short-term and long-term career interruptions of women. Also, women have a greater mere empathy, the fear of risking the health of family and friends put additional pressure on women. They are also socially inculcated to seek emotional support from others, which was greatly challenged by the power of social distancing.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Slovenia

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
High Prevalence and Inequality in Mental Health Disparities	In Slovenia, the prevalence of mental health problems has increased in recent years and is higher than the average of EU. Slovenia stands out in particular due to the high proportion of women with mental health problems and, at the same time, very high inequalities in mental health in relation to income.
Insufficient Support for Vulnerable Groups in Slovenia During the Pandemic	Slovenia experienced insufficient targeted interventions to support those most at risk, such as low-income populations, youth and women, who were disproportionately affected by mental health challenges during the pandemic.
Decline in Trust and Optimism	Despite high levels of well-being in Slovenia, people's trust in the European Union and the government was low, and people's optimism about their future also decreased.

SPAIN

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF THE IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Identification of gender violence as a serious problem to be	Since the beginning of the pandemic , the focus has been on providing care to women victims of gender violence, both by the administration, professional associations, and associations specializing in the subject. They are offered personalized attention, both in person and by telephone, depending on their needs. Once the restrictions were lifted, complaints filed for gender violence increased.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF WEAK PRACTICES IDENTIFIED
Limited support for work- life balance	Women have taken on greater responsibilities during the pandemic, showing greater difficulty in terms of realities such as double shifts, mental burden and real problems of work-life balance, work and family, since during confinement the burdens of domestic, academic, work, health and care responsibilities increased
Economic vulnerability and job insecurity	In Spain, women mostly have leave to care for children in their care, reduced working hours for care, part-time jobs, so they were the ones who saw themselves affected by the economic fallout, as they were more likely to lose their jobs or face income insecurity due to their concentration in sectors severely affected by the pandemic (e.g. care, retail and hospitality). The lack of targeted financial assistance or support policies for women in precarious employment conditions exposed their economic vulnerability.

Good Practices to address the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to human rights : an overview from Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF THE IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Reorganization of teaching	The Spanish government was to close classrooms to stop and prevent infections, and the transition to online teaching was quickly organised, making the necessary technological means available to the most vulnerable families.
Fundamental essential	Fundamental essentials were identified and articulated as essential services , while the rest of the professions saw their professional activity temporarily limited. The objective was to reduce infections as much as possible but without neglecting essential services such as health, access to food, transport of goods, waste management, care for victims of gender violence, care for vulnerable groups, among others.
Proximity	Authorities have reorganised their activities to be able to serve citizens in terms of disinfection needs, supplying food and pharmaceutical products to vulnerable groups, offering a local online cultural and sports programme and supporting primary healthcare for the detection of infections and subsequent vaccination.

Weak Practices to address the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to human rights : an overview from Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF WEAK PRACTICES IDENTIFIED
Neglect of mental health	No attention was paid to the mental health needs generated in the population as a result of the pandemic, nor were specific concrete measures taken into account for people with previously diagnosed mental health illnesses.
Deficiencies in the health system	The pandemic revealed significant deficiencies in the health system for dealing with exceptional situations caused by the pandemic, such as limited capacity for intensive care, lack of protective equipment for healthcare personnel, and neglect of illnesses other than COVID-19.
Inequalities in restrictions depending on the territory	Initially, the restrictions were national in nature, but as the pandemic progressed, the government delegated management to the autonomous communities so that restrictions on movement, the use of spaces, the management of vaccinations and access to health and educational resources were different depending on the place of residence, taking as a reference the incidence of the disease in each area.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF THE IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Reorganization of teaching	The Spanish government was to close classrooms to stop and prevent infections, and the transition to online teaching was quickly organised, making the necessary technological means available to the most vulnerable families.
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Proximity	Authorities have reorganized their activities to be able to serve citizens in terms of disinfection needs, supplying food and pharmaceutical products to vulnerable groups, offering a local online cultural and sports programs and supporting primary healthcare for the detection of infections and subsequent vaccination.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Spain

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Denialism	In Spain, various public figures championed the denialist movement, which they echoed through social networks, causing confusion among the population, uncertainty and unease among citizens.
Inadequate mental health support	Although the need was identified, no specialized human, material or financial resources were provided to offer the necessary psychiatric, psychological and social care in terms of mental health, both for people with previous chronic illnesses and for mental illnesses caused by the pandemic.
Impact on the mental health of women and healthcare personnel	The increase in responsibilities for caring for children, families and dependent persons, Restricted mobility , school closures and teleworking affected women's mental health to a greater extent , generating higher levels of stress and conflicts at the household level. emotional . The health and social situation experienced by healthcare personnel during the most critical moments of the pandemic and prolonged throughout it generated mental health problems in healthcare personnel, a sector in which $\frac{3}{4}$ of its professionals are women.

SWEDEN

Identification of good and weak practices in connection to:

- Human rights
- Women's rights and
- Mental rights

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Transparency and Communication	Sweden prioritized transparency in its pandemic response, providing regular updates and explanations for its strategy to the public. Clear communication helped maintain public trust and ensures that individuals understand the rationale behind recommendations.
Voluntary Measures	Rather than implementing strict lockdowns or mandatory restrictions, Sweden largely relied on voluntary measures . This approach aimed to empower individuals to make informed decisions while encouraging collective responsibility.
Protection of Vulnerable Groups	Sweden focused on protecting vulnerable groups , such as the elderly and individuals with underlying health conditions . Efforts included targeted recommendations and support services to minimize their risk of exposure.
Education and Awareness	Public education campaigns have been crucial in Sweden, providing information on hygiene practices, social distancing, and other preventive measures.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to human rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Protection of Vulnerable Groups	Despite efforts to protect vulnerable groups, such as the elderly and those with underlying health conditions, critics argue that more targeted and stringent measures could have been implemented earlier to prevent higher mortality rates in these populations.
Impact on Minority Communities	The pandemic response affected minority communities in Sweden, including immigrants and refugees . These communities faced barriers to accessing healthcare, information, and support services, exacerbating existing inequalities.
Employment Rights	The pandemic highlighted disparities in employment rights and protections, particularly for low-wage workers and those in precarious employment. Measures to contain the virus, such as restrictions on business operations, have disproportionately impacted these groups, leading to economic insecurity.
Healthcare System Strain	Sweden's healthcare system faced significant strain, raising questions about the adequacy of preparedness and response measures. This strain had implications for the right to access timely and quality healthcare services.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Impact on Women in Essential Services	Many women working in essential services like healthcare and elderly care, had limited access to protective gear and support for their mental health. Balancing work and caregiving responsibilities was tough during this time.
Increased Domestic Burdens	Women, especially those from marginalized communities or with limited resources, faced barriers to accessing healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services.
Access to Healthcare Services	Women, especially those from marginalized communities or with limited resources, faced barriers to accessing healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services.
Domestic Violence	There were reports of increased incidents of domestic violence during lockdowns, highlighting gaps in prevention and support services that need to be addressed.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to women's rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Gender-Responsive Health Policies	Sweden prioritized gender-responsive health policies during the pandemic. This includes ensuring that health services remain accessible to women, including sexual and reproductive health services.
Economic Support	Recognizing the disproportionate economic impact of the pandemic on women, Sweden implemented economic support measures. These include extended parental leave benefits, financial aid for childcare, and support for businesses owned by women.
Domestic Violence Support	Sweden strengthened support services for victims of domestic violence during the pandemic. This includes maintaining accessible helplines, shelters, and legal aid services for women facing violence at home.
Remote Work Policies	Sweden encouraged flexible working arrangements and remote work options to support women who may face challenges balancing work and caregiving responsibilities during the pandemic.

Good practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF GOOD PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED GOOD PRACTICES
Transparent and Clear Communication	Sweden emphasized clear and transparent communication from health authorities and the government regarding COVID-19 updates, guidelines, and safety measures. This helps in reducing uncertainty and anxiety among the population.
Supportive Measures for Vulnerable Groups	There was a focus on providing support to vulnerable groups such as the elderly, individuals with pre-existing mental health conditions, and those facing socio economic challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.
Promotion of Mental Well-being	Efforts were made to promote mental well-being through public health campaigns, online resources, and encouragement of healthy coping mechanisms
Workplace Support	Initiatives were implemented to support mental health in workplaces, including guidance on remote work, stress management, and fostering a supportive work environment.

Weak practices in navigating covid-19 pandemic in connection to mental health's rights: An Overview of Sweden

IDENTIFICATION OF WEAK PRACTICES	DESCRIPTION OF IDENTIFIED WEAK PRACTICES
Delayed Recognition of Mental Health Impacts	Swedish authorities initially focused more on physical health aspects of the pandemic, with delayed recognition of the significant mental health impacts, such as anxiety, depression, and social isolation.
Lack of Targeted Support for Vulnerable Groups	Adequacy of targeted mental health support for vulnerable groups, including the elderly, individuals with pre-existing mental health conditions, and those in socioeconomically disadvantaged situations. These groups needed more tailored interventions to address their specific needs and challenges during the pandemic.
Limited Access to Mental Health Services	There were reports of limited access to mental health services, particularly during the early stages of the pandemic when healthcare resources were strained. This could have affected individuals' ability to seek timely support for mental health issues exacerbated by the crisis.
Impact of Isolation Measures	While Sweden advocated for a strategy that relied more on voluntary social distancing rather than strict lockdowns, concerns were raised about the mental health impact of prolonged isolation and lack of social interaction, especially for vulnerable groups and individuals living alone.

Presentation of Policy Recommendations

Key Recommendations

- R.1 Fostering Interdisciplinary, Cross-Sector, and Global Collaboration for Strategic Pandemic Preparedness*
- R. 2 Enhancing Adaptive Governance and Promoting Ethical Communication to Safeguard Human Rights and Prevent Discrimination in Crisis Management*
- R. 3 Building Resilient Structures Against Domestic Violence*
- R. 4 Balancing Public Safety, Human Rights, and Economic Safeguarding for Vulnerable Populations in Crisis Response Strategies*
- R. 5 Strengthening Inclusive and Resilient Health Systems to Ensure Equitable Access and Safeguard Human Rights During Crises*
- R. 6 Strengthening Social Security and Essential Services to Build Resilience During Crises*
- R. 7 Implementing Proportionate and Time-Limited Movement Restrictions for Effective Pandemic Management*
- R. 8 Strengthening Support and Innovation for Artists and Cultural Institutions*
- R. 9 Implementing Proactive Mental Health Support and Crisis Preparedness in Education Systems*

Key Recommendations

- R. 10 Enhancing Mental Health Systems and Promoting Fair, Stigma-Free Support Through Equitable Resource Allocation and Integrated Crisis Management Strategies*
- R. 11 Enhancing Workforce Resilience by Supporting Remote Work, Promoting Work-Life Balance, and Strengthening Workers' Rights and Advocacy*
- R. 12 Strengthen Childcare Systems and Support for Working Parents*
- R. 13 Foster Community Support Networks for Women*
- R. 14 Simplify Government Support Systems*
- R. 15 Promote Awareness and Advocate for Equitable Distribution of Caregiving and Domestic Responsibilities*
- R. 16 Implement a Comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Recovery Plan*
- R. 17 Enhance Support for Single Parents, Especially Women*
- R. 18 Ensuring Compassionate Care and Visitation Rights During Pandemics to Protect Mental Well-being*

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 1	Fostering Interdisciplinary, Cross-Sector, and Global Collaboration for Strategic Pandemic Preparedness	Effective pandemic preparedness requires strong partnerships between governments and experts across sectors like health, transportation, finance, and public services. This interdisciplinary approach ensures coordinated public health strategies, minimizes disruptions, and enhances resilience. Strengthening global supply chain coordination is also crucial for maintaining essential goods flow during crises. Best practices in pandemic management should be documented and integrated into a dynamic guidance framework, drawing from diverse experiences and historical pandemics. This framework will provide strategic insights for long-term planning and informed policymaking, improving global preparedness and response.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 2	Enhancing Adaptive Governance and Promoting Ethical Communication to Safeguard Human Rights and Prevent Discrimination in Crisis Management	Governance systems must be flexible and responsive to emerging challenges. Governments should use real-time monitoring to inform policy adjustments, fostering a culture of learning and continuous improvement. This approach better equips societies to handle uncertainties and mitigate future crises. Independent bodies should oversee decision-making, manage risk assessments, and uphold democratic values and human rights during crises. These entities promote ethical governance and protect against conflicts of interest. Governments must develop ethical guidelines that prioritize justice, equality, and human rights, with special attention to vulnerable groups. Recognizing the unequal impact of crises on marginalized populations, targeted interventions should be implemented to support their well-being and safeguard their rights.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 2	Enhancing Adaptive Governance and Promoting Ethical Communication to Safeguard Human Rights and Prevent Discrimination in Crisis Management	Governments should implement measures that promote ethical communication practices by encouraging the use of inclusive language. These practices should be integrated across public institutions, media, and educational platforms to foster a culture of respect, inclusivity, and equal representation. By prioritizing communication that is free from bias and actively promotes diversity, governments can contribute to building a more equitable and inclusive society. Pandemic response policies should be designed to prevent any form of discrimination or bias, ensuring that all individuals receive equal treatment regardless of health status, race, gender, or other factors. These policies must actively promote inclusivity, fairness, and equity, addressing the unique needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups. By prioritizing non-discriminatory practices, governments can foster a more just and effective response that protects the rights and dignity of all citizens.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
		Identify and monitor potential cases of domestic violence and ensure that victims have unhindered access to support services and safe environments during the lockdown period. Support should also be given to non-direct victims of domestic violence (such as children, etc.).
R. 3	Building Resilient Structures Against Domestic Violence	Governments should implement a comprehensive strategy to combat domestic violence by reinforcing legal frameworks and expanding social support systems to provide holistic assistance to victims. This approach should include strengthening law enforcement measures, increasing the accessibility and availability of support centres, and addressing harmful social norms that contribute to the acceptance of domestic violence. Additionally, governments should introduce integrated social and health initiatives across housing, employment, and education sectors to empower and support victims in rebuilding their lives.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 3	Building Resilient Structures Against Domestic Violence	It is recommended that additional support centres be set up to provide temporary shelter for victims of domestic violence, with a particular focus on creating a specific code of conduct for pandemic or crisis situations. This protocol would address scenarios where potential victims are forced to stay at home with their abuser, as has been the case during the Covid-19 pandemic. The directive should ensure rapid access to safe accommodation, emergency services and alternative reporting mechanisms to protect vulnerable people during lockdowns or similar crisis situations.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 4	Balancing Public Safety, Human Rights, and Economic Safeguarding for Vulnerable Populations in Crisis Response Strategies	Future crisis responses should prioritize both public health and human rights. This includes effective quarantine protocols, border controls, and health infrastructure, alongside coordinated national and international measures like short-term lockdowns for highly contagious diseases. Adopt a holistic approach with efficient testing, contact tracing, and digital infrastructure for remote work and telemedicine. Policies should ensure freedom of movement while respecting basic rights, with guidelines for safe assemblies and promoting digital platforms for civic engagement. Establish early economic relief packages for affected sectors and provide resilience training for businesses to adapt during crises. An integrated approach balancing public health, human rights, and economic stability is essential for navigating future emergencies.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 4	Balancing Public Safety, Human Rights, and Economic Safeguarding for Vulnerable Populations in Crisis Response Strategies	Governments should establish clear guidelines and robust oversight mechanisms to protect human rights during crises. Any restrictions on rights must be carefully evaluated to ensure they are necessary, proportionate, and time-limited, avoiding excessive or unjustified limitations. Regular assessments should be conducted to balance public safety with the preservation of fundamental rights, ensuring that human rights remain at the forefront of crisis response and recovery strategies. In addition, special attention should be paid to homeless people, as they need increased protection in times of crisis, such as pandemics. Restricted freedom of movement and limited access to healthcare make homeless people particularly vulnerable. Crisis response strategies must ensure that they have access to safe shelter, healthcare and basic services to prevent their further marginalization and ensure that their rights are respected. This includes customized measures to provide medical care, food and hygiene supplies, as well as clear guidance on how to apply lockdowns and quarantines to people without stable accommodation.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 5	Strengthening Inclusive and Resilient Health Systems to Ensure Equitable Access and Safeguard Human Rights During Crises	Governments should prioritise inclusive healthcare by addressing the inequalities revealed during the pandemic and ensuring equal access to medical services, testing and treatment for all, especially for vulnerable populations. Universal access should be guaranteed regardless of socio-economic background or immunisation status. Expanding online consultations and services is important to reach those facing barriers while protecting privacy in shared living spaces. In addition, governments must reduce stigmatisation, provide psychological support and ensure the safety and dignity of medical staff. Strengthening healthcare systems requires clear communication between experts, policy makers and the public.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 5	Strengthening Inclusive and Resilient Health Systems to Ensure Equitable Access and Safeguard Human Rights During Crises	To strengthen resilience, governments should diversify medical supply chains, improve hygiene and immunisation efforts and strengthen social distancing measures. Healthcare reform should address poverty and inequalities and focus on improving diagnosis and treatment. Frameworks for free or affordable testing and timely care should be created to avoid delays caused by overburdened systems. Digital tools must be used judiciously to prevent inequalities from widening and to ensure accessible alternatives for marginalised groups. Finally, the development of healthcare infrastructure is crucial to ensure equal access to basic services, especially maternal and child health, while providing cost-effective healthcare options.

Political recommendations

NR	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 6	Strengthening Social Security and Essential Services to Build Resilience During Crises	Governments should enhance social security systems to provide robust support during crises by simplifying eligibility criteria, ensuring seamless access to unemployment benefits, and offering direct financial aid to workers impacted by economic disruptions. In addition, comprehensive financial assistance programs should be established for individuals who lose their jobs or face financial hardship due to pandemic-related measures. These programs should offer tailored support, such as rental assistance or food and utility vouchers, addressing the specific needs of those most affected by the crisis. Governments should establish robust policies to ensure uninterrupted access to essential services, including food, water, electricity, and healthcare, for all individuals during lockdowns. These policies must prioritize the needs of vulnerable populations and those who have lost their livelihoods, ensuring that no one is deprived of basic necessities. Targeted support programs streamlined access to services, and resilient supply chain management are crucial to maintaining equitable access. By implementing these measures, governments can safeguard the well-being of all citizens and build resilience in times of crisis.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 7	Implementing Proportionate and Time-Limited Movement Restrictions for Effective Pandemic Management	Governments should implement clear, time-limited, and proportionate movement restrictions, such as lockdowns or travel bans, only when necessary to protect public health. These measures should be supported by efficient testing, contact tracing, and quarantine protocols. Governments should invest in digital solutions for remote work, education, and telehealth to reduce the need for extended restrictions. Strengthen international coordination for synchronized pandemic responses, balancing public safety and economic stability. Decisions for movement limitations should be based on previously executed research.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 8	Strengthening Support and Innovation for Artists and Cultural Institutions	Governments should address the funding gaps and programmatic shortfalls that have adversely impacted artists and cultural institutions, particularly during times of crisis. In addition to providing sustained financial support, governments should develop innovative strategies that enable artists to explore new forms of audience engagement and creative expression. Emphasis should be placed on the role of culture in community-building and collective action, promoting an inclusive approach that bridges societal divides and celebrates diverse cultural expressions. By fostering creativity and resilience within the cultural sector, these measures can ensure long-term sustainability and enrich the social fabric.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 9	Implementing Proactive Mental Health Support and Crisis Preparedness in Education Systems	Educational institutions should be equipped to provide comprehensive mental health support and crisis preparedness training for both students and staff. This includes integrating mental health education into curricula, providing accessible counselling services, and training faculty to recognise and treat signs of stress or trauma. In addition, institutions should ensure clear and effective communication with students and staff to prepare them for potential disruptions, including guidance on mental health resources, safety protocols and crisis response plans. By fostering a culture of openness and preparedness, education systems can improve academic continuity while protecting the mental well-being of their communities in times of crisis.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 10	Enhancing Mental Health Systems and Promoting Fair, Stigma-Free Support Through Equitable Resource Allocation and Integrated Crisis Management Strategies	Mental health must be a core element of crisis plans, ensuring universal access through well-funded services, digital platforms, and helplines. Special attention should be given to vulnerable groups, such as frontline workers and the elderly, with tailored support initiatives. Create safe meeting places for older people where they can socialise with their loved ones without putting their health at risk. The isolation that many older people have faced during the pandemic, which in some cases has led to severe loneliness or death, emphasises the need to maintain social contact in a safe environment even in times of crisis. Improve the provision of mental health services by providing accessible counselling, stress management initiatives, and counselling centres, with a focus on addressing the particular difficulties women face as a result of increased caring responsibilities.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 10	Enhancing Mental Health Systems and Promoting Fair, Stigma-Free Support Through Equitable Resource Allocation and Integrated Crisis Management Strategies	A crisis unit should be set up to provide targeted psychological support, especially for young people who have suffered social disruption as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This unit would focus on the treatment of trauma, anxiety and mental health issues, including the increasing use of anxiolytics and the increased suicide rate among young people. The trauma that many young people have experienced during the pandemic is comparable to that of war or attack. The initiative should also include a public campaign to raise awareness of the dangers of substance abuse. Fostering community spirit, promoting physical activity, and advocating for healthy coping mechanisms should serve as an essential tools to combat mental health challenges during pandemic. Promote early intervention, public awareness, and healthy coping mechanisms to address mental health challenges. Governments should ensure fair resource allocation, prioritizing high-risk groups like refugees.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 10	Enhancing Mental Health Systems and Promoting Fair, Stigma-Free Support Through Equitable Resource Allocation and Integrated Crisis Management Strategies	International exchange of best practices should be facilitated to create a unified mental health response during crises, integrating mental health into public health plans for comprehensive care. Introduce workshops and resources aimed at reducing mental health stigma and improving societal understanding, particularly in response to increased mental health challenges during the pandemic. These initiatives should be integrated into public health policy to ensure broad access and support, address the psychological impact of the pandemic, and promote a more informed, empathetic approach to mental health issues in all communities. To prevent the lingering effects of isolation and social mistrust after the pandemic, proactive efforts must be made to manage the post-Covid period. Policies should aim to restore social cohesion and trust within communities to prevent the persistence of isolation-related mental health problems.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 10	Enhancing Mental Health Systems and Promoting Fair, Stigma-Free Support Through Equitable Resource Allocation and Integrated Crisis Management Strategies	Ensure access to cultural facilities such as libraries, cinemas and theatres as these places play a crucial role in maintaining mental health and social wellbeing. Whilst there have been digital alternatives such as streaming at home during lockdown, experiencing culture together in physical spaces is just as important for community building and emotional health as physical exercise. Future public health communication should be designed to inform the population without fueling unnecessary fear or promoting guilt and mistrust. Public messaging during the Covid-19 pandemic has often caused fear and social division. A more balanced approach should be taken in future crises, focusing on clear information and mutual trust to avoid further mental health impacts.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 11	Enhancing Workforce Resilience by Supporting Remote Work, Promoting Work-Life Balance, and Strengthening Workers' Rights and Advocacy	Governments should support remote work by providing companies with tools and resources, such as equipment and digital software, to enhance productivity and communication. Introduce policies that promote work-life balance, prevent job losses, and ensure fair compensation, particularly during economic downturns. Safeguard employees from unfair dismissals and protect their rights. Foster inclusive workspaces with flexible arrangements and support for childcare. Invest in digital infrastructure and training to ensure equal access to teleworking tools and close the digital divide. Governments should offer educational programs to foster financial independence, especially for vulnerable workers. Strategies must formalize informal workers, granting access to social protection and labor rights. Governments should support workers' rights to organize and advocate for their interests, ensuring stronger enforcement of labor laws. Empowering workers through formalization and collective action builds more equitable labor markets.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 12	Strengthen Childcare Systems and Support for Working Parents	Create inclusive, cost-effective, and high-quality childcare facilities by promoting cooperation between the public and private sectors. Ensure that childcare services are aligned with working hours to effectively support working mothers. Encourage flexible working arrangements such as teleworking, adaptable working hours, and part-time alternatives to support caring responsibilities, with employers prioritizing productivity over conventional working hours. Extend generous paid parental leave for both mothers and fathers to provide career stability and economic security during care leave.
R. 13	Foster Community Support Networks for Women	Establish community platforms to promote networking and mutual support for women to meet, share, and support each other.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 14	Simplify Government Support Systems	Simplify government support systems to improve accessibility and practicality while minimizing the excessive complexity of bureaucratic processes.
R. 15	Promote Awareness and Advocate for Equitable Distribution of Caregiving and Domestic Responsibilities	Implement initiatives aimed at educating the public about the importance of sharing caregiving responsibilities and recognizing women's important contribution to the economy and family dynamics. Eliminate cultural biases that impose unequal care responsibilities on women and advocate for a more equitable distribution of domestic tasks.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 16	Implement a Comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Recovery Plan	Government should establish robust social safety nets that provide economic support and health care services tailored to women's needs, including low-cost childcare and expanded telemedicine services. Improve access to digital education to ensure that women and girls can continue to learn and work remotely if necessary. Governments should provide financial and logistical support to women entrepreneurs and small business owners who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Offer grants, low-interest loans, and tailored support programs to help women rebuild and sustain their businesses. Governments should implement gender-specific policies to reduce the gender pay gap, combat discrimination, and remove barriers to women's career advancement. Ensure fair treatment and equal opportunities in all professional environments.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 16	Implement a Comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Recovery Plan	Flexible working arrangements that consider the caregiving responsibilities often shouldered by women should be encouraged and support should be given to initiatives that allow for teleworking, adaptable working hours, and part-time opportunities without penalizing career progression. Awareness of the gender pay gap should be promoted and the critical role of paternal involvement in caregiving should be highlighted. Advocate for equitable sharing of domestic responsibilities and encourage the establishment of effective support systems that cater specifically to the needs of women. Measures to combat gender-based violence, which has increased during the pandemic, should be implemented. This includes improving legal protections, access to justice for victims, and supporting services such as shelters and counselling.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 16	Implement a Comprehensive Gender-Inclusive Recovery Plan	Childcare facilities should be enhanced to better support working parents, particularly mothers. Ensure that these facilities are affordable, accessible, and aligned with working hours to facilitate greater participation of women in the workforce. Governments and institutions should address the digital divide that disproportionately affects women, especially in low-income households. This includes ensuring access to digital infrastructure, such as affordable internet, devices, and digital literacy programs, to empower women in remote work and education. By investing in these areas, women will be better equipped to navigate future pandemics and crises, minimizing educational and professional disparities.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 17	Enhance Support for Single Parents, Especially Women	Single-parent households, particularly those headed by women, faced significant challenges during the pandemic. Governments should create support programs tailored to the needs of single parents, including financial assistance, accessible and affordable childcare services, mental health support, and job security measures. These initiatives should be prioritized during crisis planning and recovery to ensure that single parents are not left behind.

Political recommendations

NR.	PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S	ACTION PLAN FOR PANDEMIC SUGGESTION'S
R. 18	Ensuring Compassionate Care and Visitation Rights During Pandemics to Protect Mental Well-being	In future pandemic situations, it is crucial to implement compassionate care protocols that prioritise people's mental and emotional well-being, especially in end-of-life situations and long-term care facilities. Governments and healthcare organisations should ensure that people have the opportunity to say goodbye to dying loved ones by using safe, health-compliant measures such as personal protective equipment (PPE) and supervised visitation to provide comfort during these critical moments. They should establish and maintain visiting rights in nursing homes and long-term care facilities, balancing the need for infection control with the need to alleviate social isolation and prevent mental health issues. They should also develop clear guidelines that enable safe visiting protocols in coordination with public health measures to ensure both the protection of public health and the maintenance of emotional support for vulnerable individuals. These measures should be designed with sensitivity and flexibility to mitigate the negative psychological impact of isolation and separation during health crises.



Round table with project partners and participants

In this section, ddr Maja Pucelj presented a few questions to talk in a roundtable with project members. These questions are the next ones:

- What were the most important results of the project that should be supported as a reinforcement to improve the situation of human rights, women's rights and mental health in the future?
- What are the key steps that the country should take to avoid the negative impact of the pandemic on human rights and democracy in the future?
- How did the cooperation between the different partners within the project help to understand the broader effects of the pandemic on human rights and democracy?
- What are your ideas for further research or projects that would focus on the long-term effects of the pandemic and solving the identified problems?

The debate focused on the following aspects:

- Round table participants pointed out that the pandemic exuberated existing problems.
- Technology is an essential element to consider in future crises like pandemics. In a globalized world with so much technology, it is necessary that all people have equal access to technological channels for information transfer, data processing, etc.
- Bureaucracy needs to be reduced at a general level, but even more so in times of crisis. Bureaucracy paralyzes or slows down the rapid reaction to a crisis situation.
- We should strive to reduce the spread of fake news and populism. An anti-fake news system must be created through legislation. The fake news was the element of confusion in the pandemic that created chaos and confusion for many of the population.
- We have to be constant and "pressure" public authorities to consider the political recommendations resulting from this project.
- One of the advantages of the project is that it has been possible to see what has been done well and poorly in different European countries. This comparison has been enlightening and should be made known. The round table participants also acknowledged the quality of the project, which lays in the fact that we got in-depth insights from different actors in society (like academicians, professionals, NGO's, residents and citizens of different European countries, politicians etc.), which resulted in prepared recommendations from multidisciplinary groups, which is of vital importance to ensure quality recommendations, tailored to every group needs. They also complimented needs analysis, which is of great quality and is of great value for future pandemic situations.
- The need to protocolize protocols for future pandemic situations was emphasized.

- The need to gather as much data as possible from covid-19 pandemic and evaluate and research them to better prepare for future pandemic was emphasized.
- A big challenge was inadequate treatment of mental health as it should be treated. Due to this and the pandemic crisis, mental health is at a critical moment in society. It is necessary to create interdisciplinary structures between the different sectors that ensure that mental health is treated appropriately, with effective prevention mechanisms.
- A major challenge detected in terms of mental health has been the increase in mental problems experienced by health and education workers during the pandemic. To do this, it is necessary to include internal protocols that provide the necessary support to these groups.
- Decentralization and the creation of local figures is essential to reach as many people as possible.
- We should ensure suitable education of people in decisions powers, so they can handle the future pandemic situations better.
- We should also ensure that all people in general are better educated to handle the pandemic as now we are empowered with the knowledge and experience to do so (for example: the importance of active lifestyle etc., should be communicated with people). We must ensure that vulnerable groups are equipped with suitable skills, so we need to ensure suitable training and education for them.
- Increasing education in young people is essential to manage future crises.
- The importance of community for future pandemic situations was emphasized with focusing on the need to work as a unity in future pandemic.
- We must ensure that we (so people on general) are calmer in future pandemic situations (the example brought up was buying 10 kg of flour, which was a form of overexaggerating).
- As the project showed, women have suffered a more severe impact than men in the pandemic, so we need to ensure that the burden of future pandemic is not worn again on the “shoulders” of women.
- Processes must be protocolized and new effective technological tools must be established to be able to effectively face a future pandemic.
- Priority must be given to people at risk of social exclusion, such as homeless people, older people without social or family support, trans people, victims of gender violence, etc. and ensure that we have special solutions for address their needs.
- We must learn from our previous mistakes and prioritize solidarity in future pandemic situations and ensure that we have better regulations to ensure better human rights protection. One of the suggestions was to revise the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- We should foster the participation of all citizens and residents in finding suitable solutions for future health crises and ensure that they are heard!
- We should have solutions also for culture worker and artists, which were mainly “forgotten” part of the pandemic.

- Round table participants agreed that political recommendations, prepared by this project, should be upgraded in future if needed by the occurrence of different new circumstances (like climate change etc.).
- Round table participants also agreed that the pandemic helped in reducing taboos about the mental health challenges.
- It was emphasized that government should find suitable solutions how to communicate gained knowledge about pandemic to young people as the usual ways, like debates etc., are not so appealing to them – for example creating custom platforms, videos etc.

So, if we merge the findings, we can point out the following points:

1. Pandemic-Exacerbated Issues:

The pandemic amplified existing societal challenges, revealing weaknesses and areas needing improvement across multiple sectors.

2. Technology and Access:

Technology plays a crucial role in crisis response, requiring equitable access to technological channels for information dissemination, data processing, and communication. New technological tools should be implemented to better prepare for future crises.

3. Reducing Bureaucracy:

Bureaucracy must be minimized, especially during crises, to enable swift responses and actions.

4. Combating Fake News:

The spread of fake news and populism should be addressed through legislation and an anti-fake news system to prevent confusion and chaos during crises.

5. Policy Recommendations:

Public authorities should be pressured to consider and implement political recommendations, and these recommendations should evolve as new challenges (e.g., climate change) arise.

6. Learning from Experience:

The project enabled comparisons across European countries, identifying strengths and weaknesses in pandemic responses. It presents insights from various societal groups (academics, professionals, NGOs, residents, and politicians), which contributed to tailored recommendations for future preparedness. The emphasis should be given on collecting and analyzing COVID-19 data to improve responses to future pandemics.

7. Mental Health:

The pandemic highlighted a critical need to address mental health, particularly among healthcare and education workers. We need to establish interdisciplinary structures and internal protocols for better mental health support and prevention mechanisms.

8. Decentralization and Local Action:

Decentralization and the creation of local support structures are essential to reach diverse communities more effectively.

9. Education and Training:

We need to enhance education for decision-makers and the public is crucial for managing future crises. We should focus on educating young people through engaging platforms tailored to their interests. Also, special training and support for vulnerable groups should be prioritized.

10. Community and Solidarity:

Future responses should emphasize community unity, solidarity, and calmness during crises. Learning from past mistakes is vital to ensure a fairer burden distribution, particularly for women, who faced disproportionate challenges.

11. Protecting Vulnerable Groups:

Priority should be given to those at risk of social exclusion (e.g., homeless people, the elderly without support, migrants, trans people, and victims of gender violence) with tailored support strategies.

12. Support for Cultural Sectors:

Solutions are needed for culture workers and artists, who were often overlooked during the pandemic.

13. Participation and Inclusivity:

We must encourage all citizens and residents to participate in developing solutions for future health crises, ensuring their voices are heard.

Meet the partnership



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