Overview

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Background

• The COVID pandemic raised awareness for mental health struggles in all areas of life.

• In October and November 2021, a Swiss-wide survey was conducted to get an estimate for the mental health status of students. An emphasis was also put on assessing correlations with different socio-economic factors.

• This report summarizes some of the most relevant findings.
Preliminary Notes

• The survey was conducted during COVID times (higher education institutions were open). Therefore, variables such as loneliness or depression might have been elevated.

• Nevertheless, other aspects such as the correlation between socio-economics factors and mental wellbeing are likely to be stable over time.

• The survey respondents are not fully representative of all Swiss students (e.g., 74% or respondents are female). It is also reasonable to assume that people with a connection to mental health issues were more likely to complete the survey.
Respondent Overview

• 2932 responses were recorded in total
• 2664 responses remained after filtering (failed to complete control question or submitted survey in less than 5 minutes)
• The following graphs display a summary of respondents according to different socio-economic factors
Mental Health
– Overall
Anxiety

![Anxiety Chart]

- **Minimal anxiety**: 738 (27.7%)
- **Mild anxiety**: 925 (34.7%)
- **Moderate anxiety**: 559 (21%)
- **Severe anxiety**: 442 (16.6%)

Anxiety level
Mean anxiety score of participants is 8.52
Values greater than 9 indicates clinical anxiety
Depression

- Minimal Depression: 708 (26.6%)
- Mild Depression: 838 (31.5%)
- Moderate Depression: 589 (22.1%)
- Moderately severe Depression: 351 (13.2%)
- Severe Depression: 178 (6.7%)
Mean anxiety score of participants is 9.15
Values greater than 10 indicates clinical depression

PHQ_SUM scores greater than 10 are indicative of clinical depression
How often have you felt lonely over the past 2 weeks?

- Never: 29.4%
- On some days: 17.8%
- On over half of the days: 38.1%
- Almost every day: 14.8%

N = 2458
Have you ever tried to take your own life?

N = 2458
Mental Health – By Socio-Economic Factors
Anxiety by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anxiety level</th>
<th>Caucasian/European (n=2345)</th>
<th>Non-European (n=308)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimal anxiety</td>
<td>28.1 (860)</td>
<td>24 (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild anxiety</td>
<td>35 (820)</td>
<td>33.4 (103)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate anxiety</td>
<td>20.8 (488)</td>
<td>22.1 (68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe anxiety</td>
<td>16.1 (377)</td>
<td>20.5 (63)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Depression by Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depression level</th>
<th>Caucasian/European (n=2345)</th>
<th>Non-European (n=308)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimal Depression</td>
<td>27.1 (636)</td>
<td>23.1 (71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mild Depression</td>
<td>32.1 (752)</td>
<td>26.9 (83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Depression</td>
<td>21.8 (511)</td>
<td>23.7 (73)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Severe</td>
<td>12.8 (300)</td>
<td>16.6 (51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe Depression</td>
<td>9.7 (30)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency % (count)
Discrimination Experience
Discrimination Source

- Never discriminated: 288 (10.8%)
- Sex: 148 (5.6%)
- Age: 133 (5%)
- Language: 131 (4.9%)
- Gender: 116 (4.4%)
- Social class: 100 (3.8%)
- Migrant background: 96 (3.6%)
- Ethnicity: 74 (2.8%)
- Mental illness: 69 (2.6%)
- Sexual orientation: 44 (1.7%)
- Religious belief: 35 (1.3%)
- Skin colour: 28 (1.1%)
- Disability: 28 (1.1%)
Discrimination divided by ethnicity group

- **Never discriminated**: 63.7% (1717)
- **Sex**: 9.7% (262)
- **Age**: 4.6% (125)
- **Language**: 4.9% (23)
- **Gender**: 3.6% (97)
- **Social class**: 4.5% (121)
- **Migrant background**: 2.1% (10)
- **Ethnicity**: 2.4% (64)
- **Mental illness**: 1.5% (41)
- **Sexual orientation**: 2.3% (62)
- **Religious belief**: 2.1% (12)
- **Skin colour**: 2.6% (64)
- **Disability**: 2.1% (57)

**Ethnicity**
- **Caucasian/European**
- **Non-European**

**Counts**: (numbers in parentheses)
Assault Experience
All the participants
Assault/Abuse divided by ethnicity group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Caucasian/European</th>
<th>Non-European</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No discrimination/abuse</td>
<td>59.2% (223)</td>
<td>68.9% (1834)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal assault</td>
<td>13.8% (52)</td>
<td>9.9% (263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassment/Mobbing/Intimidation</td>
<td>7.4% (37)</td>
<td>6.4% (198)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>6.4% (24)</td>
<td>9.8% (186)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats/Humiliation</td>
<td>5.3% (142)</td>
<td>6.6% (140)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical assault</td>
<td>1.3% (34)</td>
<td>1.3% (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual assault</td>
<td>2.4% (30)</td>
<td>2.4% (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Psychological Support
Have you ever experienced mental health problems during your studies?

- Yes: 82.7%
- No: 17.3%

N = 2664
Have you ever talked about your problem with anyone?

- Yes: 91.8%
- No: 8.2%

N = 2664
With whom have you talked about your psychological problems?

- Friends: 1728 (64.9%)
- Family member/relative(s): 1268 (47.6%)
- Fellow student(s): 767 (28.8%)
- Psychologist or psychotherapist: 622 (23.3%)
- Psychiatrist: 351 (13.2%)
- General Practitioner (GP) or other doctor: 320 (12.0%)
- Someone with similar life experiences: 295 (11.1%)
- Work colleague(s): 220 (8.3%)
- Academic supervisor: 208 (7.8%)
- Boss or superior at work: 105 (3.9%)
- Teaching staff, lecturer: 100 (3.8%)
- Online services, telephone helplines: 81 (3.0%)
- Coach: 60 (2.2%)
- Social worker: 58 (2.1%)
- Nursing staff: 28 (1.1%)
- Help desk/counselling service offered by university: 27 (1.0%)
Have you ever felt the need for psychological help during your studies?

- Yes, there is a service but I have never used it: 10.1%
- Yes, there is a service but I have never used it, even though there would have been a need: 16.1%
- I don't know but would actually quite like to know: 20.3%
- Yes, and I have used the service: 42.9%
- I don't know, and am not interested in finding out: 9.7%
- No, there is nothing on offer: 0.8%

N = 2664
Why have you not sought help?

- Unsure if there was a real need: 607 (83.7%)
- No need: 568 (78.3%)
- Shame/stigma/unease: 153 (21.1%)
- No financial means: 108 (14.9%)
- Unsure what service/help to search for: 89 (12.3%)
- Bad prior experience, distrust, etc: 50 (6.9%)
- Excessive wait times: 25 (3.4%)
- Missing Information: 17 (0.3%)
University
Psychological Support
Do you know if there is psychological counseling at your university/college?

- Yes, there is a service but I have never used it: 42.9%
- Yes, there is a service but I have never used it, even though there would have been a need: 10.1%
- I don't know but would actually quite like to know: 16.1%
- Yes, and I have used the service: 20.3%
- I don't know, and am not interested in finding out: 9.7%
- No, there is nothing on offer: 0.0%

N = 2664
**Service cost**

The offer is free of charge (N = 474)

**Service satisfaction**

The offer has met my expectations. (N = 317)

**Appointment time**

I got an appointment within 4 weeks (N = 352)

**Service affordability**

I can't afford the offer. (N = 416)

**Service satisfaction**

have had a good experience with the offer. (N = 322)

**Service referral**

I have been referred to other services. (N = 289)
My university/college offers me the framework conditions, to have a healthy life.

N = 2521
My university/college supports me in maintaining a healthy study-work-life balance.

- 53.4% Fully agree
- 21.1% Agree somewhat
- 15.3% Disagree somewhat
- 10.2% Fully disagree

N = 2521
My university/college encourages me to take care of my mental health

- Fully agree: 20.2%
- Agree somewhat: 37.9%
- Disagree somewhat: 11.3%
- Fully disagree: 30.6%

N = 2433
I feel comfortable talking about
my mental health issues at university/college

N = 2243
I would never talk about my mental-health problems in a university setting

N = 2458
My university/college supports/encourages me to set up a social network at my place of study

- Fully agree: 44.8%
- Agree somewhat: 21.8%
- Disagree somewhat: 12.7%
- Fully disagree: 20.7%

N = 2458