

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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About PIN

PIN – Psychosocial Innovation Network is a non-governmental, non-political and non-profit organization, founded with the aim of achieving various goals in the field of psychological research and practice.

PIN is oriented towards the improvement of mental health policies and practices in Serbia through enhancing mental health promotion and protection, as well as overcoming societal barriers contributing to mental health, especially in regard to availability and accessibility of mental health services and mental health protection of vulnerable groups. Our work comprises of 4 sectors:

1. **Psychological research** - we conduct qualitative and quantitative research on mental health and psychosocial support, especially of different vulnerable groups, with the aim of better understanding mental health needs, risk and protective factors, as well as creating data-driven practices. In addition, we focus on analyzing policies and their implementation mechanisms.
2. **Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services** - our team of psychologists provide comprehensive mental health support, including individual and group counselling, psychotherapy and psychosocial support.
3. **Advocacy** - information from research and practice is then combined and allow for evidence-based advocacy activities aimed at improving mental health policies and practices on a local, regional and international level.
4. **Capacity building** - our team of experts provide educational trainings on various topics related to staff welfare, mental health at work, and trauma-informed care. We are also dedicated to teaching through practice and we regularly organize volunteering programs for youth.

About CoReMH



Consortium on Refugees' and Migrants' Mental Health ([CoReMH](#)) is an informal international network founded by PIN in December 2020. CoReMH currently has 25 members from 10 countries along the transit route dedicated to improving mental health practices and policies for refugees in transit. Our work is organized in 4 Working Groups: 1) Policy and Practice, 2) Research, 3) Advocacy and Networking, and 4) Capacity Building. Annual CoReMH report is available at the following [link](#).



About MH Movement

Mental Health (MH) Movement is an informal network founded by Serbian CSOs working in the area of mental health (PIN, Association Prostor, Caritas Serbia, Network of Associations of Psychiatric Users "Naum" and Initiative "Za Tebe #Vaznoje"), in July 2021. The aims of the MH Movement are 1) mental health promotion, 2) improving availability and accessibility of mental health care in the community, 3) improving the position of people with psychosocial disabilities, 4) combatting stigma, and 5) advocacy for the implementation of the Program on Mental Health Protection in the Republic of Serbia (2019-2026). Annual MH Movement report is available at the following [link](#).

Memberships | We are members of...



Mreža za borbu protiv beskućništva



Our work: research

PIN's research work strives to bridge science with practice and advocacy, with the aim to provide comprehensive and evidence-based solutions to identified gaps in mental health promotion and protection. With the research work, we strive to better understand the needs of various groups, risk and protective factors, to map the availability of services, and to provide and continuously adjust evidence-based mental health support programs.

In 2022, we completed...



KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

- **35% of population** of Serbia can be considered **psychologically vulnerable**, but those who face mental health problems rarely seek out help.
- In their lifetime, **only half** of those who suffered from **depression** and **only fifth** of those who **had suicidal thoughts** sought out professional help.
- Mental health and psychosocial **support services are scarcely available** in local communities.
- Beside availability, the most prominent **barriers** in professional help seeking are: **adverse financial status** of a person and **self-stigma** (viewing professional help seeking as a personal failure).



OUR PUBLICATIONS

1. Mental health in Serbia

- [Mental health in Serbia: Assessment of needs, risk factors and barriers to receiving professional help](#)
- [Mental health in Serbia: Availability of psychosocial support services](#)
- [Experiences with Programs for psychosocial support for youth, older adults and persons in crisis; and recommendations for future practice](#)
- [Report on the Action Plan for the implementation of Programme for the protection of mental health in Serbia](#)

2. Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants

- [Mental health and wellbeing of refugees and asylum seekers in Serbia](#)
- [Meaning, role and sources of hope among refugee children and youth](#)
- [Mental health and psychosocial support for refugee children and youth: practices in Serbia](#)

3. People experiencing homelessness

- [Mental health of persons experiencing homelessness: the analysis of public policies and individual needs](#)

4. Users of psychiatric services

- [Evaluation of the Program “Creative space for mental health” and results of the study on experiences of users of psychiatric services.](#)

5. Activists

- [Do you hear? Do you feel? Mental health and activism](#)

Scientific research papers

1. [Common experiences and psychological difficulties during the pandemic: Insights from psychological support sessions](#)
2. [Coping with Secondary Traumatic Stress](#)
3. [Mental Health in the Transit Context: Evidence from 10 countries](#)

Our work: MHPSS services

PIN has extensive experience in mental health promotion and protection and provision of comprehensive mental health services and is focused on the provision of mental health protection for vulnerable and marginalized groups in Serbia. Within our MHPSS services we have a team specialized for mental health protection of children and youth.

PIN direct support services are:

- Individual and group counselling and psychotherapy
- Psychoeducational and psychosocial programs
- Psychological first aid and crisis interventions
- Psychological assessment

In 2022, PIN provided support to:

- refugees, migrants, asylum seekers
- children without parental care
- people at risk of homelessness
- psychiatric care users
- youth in local communities
- elderly people in local communities
- people in crisis in local communities

In order to respond to the needs of the local communities for available and accessible mental health services, PIN developed and piloted **three programs of psychosocial support** (both individual and in group) in **eight municipalities** in Serbia:

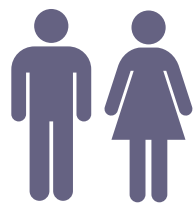
- Program of psychosocial **support for youth** was provided in Sjenica, Prijepolje and Užice
- Program of psychosocial **support of elderly** was provided in Sremska Mitrovica, Šid and Loznica
- Program of psychosocial **support in crisis** was provided in Kosjerić and Ruma



The programs of psychosocial support for youth, elderly and in crisis are **empirically tested and proven effective in reducing psychological difficulties** such as symptoms of depression and anxiety.

Our work: MHPSS services

In 2022 PIN has been providing MHPSS services to various groups at over 18 different locations in 11 municipalities in Serbia.



1053 people were provided with direct psychological support



PIN **team for children and youth** has implemented various activities with **young people from the local and refugee population**, e.g. creation and implementation of preventive and integration activities, crisis interventions and specialized MHPSS support.

In 2022, we provided...

2491 individual sessions

107 group counseling sessions

97 psychoeducational activities

11 psychological assessments for the asylum procedure

Our work: advocacy

PIN continuously advocates for the right to mental health as well as systemic improvements of mental health promotion and protection in Serbia that includes an evidence-based, multisectoral and psychosocial approach, available, accessible and high-quality services in the community, as well as interventions directed towards overcoming stigma in the society. Additionally, PIN drafts policies needed for the improvement of the mental health promotion and protection in Serbia, in cooperation with relevant government bodies and academic institutions.

Main advocacy activities in 2022 at the national and local level:

Results of the advocacy activities in 2022:

Submission of the **first alternative report on the right to mental health** to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural rights.



The Committee went on to recommend the improvement of the mental health legislative and development of community-based services.

Submission of a proposal of **Standards for the provision of counselling and therapy services within social protection** to the appointed Ministry.



Established **collaboration** with the Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs and reached **agreement** on the actions to be taken for the adoption of the proposed Standards

Our work: advocacy

Main advocacy activities in 2022 at the national and local level:

Collaboration with **8 local government units (LGUs)** on the provision of psychosocial services in the community; Organization of a working meeting with the representatives of local government and social protection system on **availability and sustainability of MHPSS services.**

2 LGUs ensured the psychosocial services are continuously available in their community; **Key recommendations by LGUs** as a meeting result to be used as a tool for advocacy at the national level.

PIN MH Days - Presentation of research on mental health in Serbia, in people experiencing homelessness, refugee population and elderly, following with the **recommendation for decision-makers, policy and practice.**

The 2nd social dialogue on mental health and the 1st social dialogue on the homelessness held between CSOs and the government in Dec. 2022, followed by an actionable agreement.

PIN and MH Movement prepared **the analysis report on the implementation of the Action plan (2019-2022) for the implementation of the Program of mental health protection in Serbia (2019-2026)** and presented it to the Ministry of Health.

The Ministry of Health took into the consideration the Analysis report and announced the Action plan (2023-2026) to be issued in the first half of 2023.

Our work: capacity building

PIN has conducted numerous trainings and provided comprehensive support to staff and service providers. With the trainings we aim to raise awareness on the importance of mental health care in the workplace, as well as to supply participants with practical skills for overcoming different psychological difficulties.

IKEA SEE project: staff training program

PIN provided an integrated group training program on Cultural orientation for two groups of IKEA's employees before starting working with refugee interns.

The aim of the training was to:

- increase cultural awareness in the workplace
- facilitate the process of adaptation of the interns from the refugee population in IKEA's working environment.

Nielsen: staff training

The aim of the "Stress and burnout at work during the pandemic" training was to:

- increase mental health awareness among staff,
- present potential mental health risks in the workplace,
- introduce ways of recognizing and preventing stress-related mental health difficulties,
- present coping mechanisms to be used when facing stress at work
- assess needs of staff members regarding mental health protection in the workplace to purposefully plan further activities.

Training for CSO staff members

"Peace at work - preventing staff burnout and secondary traumatization and presentation of the staff care approach"

The aim of the training was to:

- empower participants to recognize burnout and secondary traumatization symptoms
- exchange experience on work-related stress
- learn skills needed to cope with work-related stress
- present the staff care approach developed with GIZ

We are especially proud of...



BAŠ BI BIO PROBLEM CAMPAIGN

With the social media campaign "It would really be a problem" ("Baš bi bio problem"), we presented the lack of availability of mental health services in Serbia and what are the most common barriers to seeking help, in order to raise awareness on this issues and to decrease stigma in the general population. The campaign lasted for two months and reached over 103.000 social media users.

PIN DAYS OF MENTAL HEALTH

As part of the [2nd Belgrade Mental Health Festival](#), in September and October, we organized PIN Days of Mental Health, five events on different topics, bringing together research and practice - Mental Health in Serbia, Mental Health of People Experiencing Homelessness, Mental Health of Refugees, Mental Health of Human Trafficking Victims, and Mental Health of Elderly. We shared the research results as well as implications for policy and practice with the decision makers, academia, professionals and general public and discussed necessary further steps for the improvement of mental health promotion and protection as well as availability and accessibility of services in Serbia.



NIKOLA ROT AWARD

PIN received the award for the special contribution of institutions and organizations for the promotion of psychological science and the profession "Dr. Nikola Rot", from the Serbia Psychological Society. We are very proud that our work is recognized and valued by colleagues from psychological science and practice in Serbia who nominated us for this award. As a team, we are gathered around the idea that mental health care can and must be available and accessible to all, as well as the conviction that psychological research and practice combined can positively influence changes in society.



BOŠ CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

PIN received the certificate of appreciation from Belgrade Open School for contributing to the systemic strengthening of mental health care in the community. We are grateful that the improvement of the mental health care is recognized as one of the priorities as well as our engagement in this field.



Partners and Associates: 2022

Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia
Institute of Public Health of Serbia "Dr Milan Jovanović BATUT"



Ministry of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of the Republic of Serbia
Republic Institute for Social Protection
Provincial Institute for Social Protection
Serbian Social Protection Chamber
City Center for Social Work Belgrade
Center for Protection of Trafficking Victims
Center for the Protection of Infants, Children and Youth, Belgrade



The Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue of the
Republic of Serbia

Commissariat for Refugees and Migrations of the Republic of Serbia

Protector of Citizens of the Republic of Serbia



Municipality of Zvezdara, Municipality of Šid, City of Užice, Municipality of Ruma,
City of Loznica, City of Sremska Mitrovica, Municipality of Kosjerić,
Municipality of Prijepolje, Municipality of Sjenica

Partners and Associates: 2022

APPRECIATION NOTE

In the past year, we've cooperated and partnered with many public institutions, national and international organizations, and associations, and we would like to thank them all for their support. We are looking forward to further collaboration in the upcoming years.



PIN Psychosocial Innovation Network

Gospodar Jevremova 48/4,
11000 Belgrade
Serbia

+381 (0) 62 8880927
office@pin.org.rs
<https://psychosocialinnovation.net>

