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Answer given by Ms Kyriakides
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission adopted a Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health¹ in June 2023. It identifies 20 flagship initiatives and EUR 1.23 billion in opportunities for EU financial support.

One flagship will set-up a ‘European depression and suicide prevention initiative’, under which the Commission will support with EUR 6 million the development and implementation of policies in the Member States, based on the exchange of best practices. The Joint Action ImpleMENTAL² transfers a best practice on suicide prevention and develops additional actions. The EEAD-BEST project³ helps to implement a model to improve depression care and prevent suicidal behaviour in Europe.

Another flagship develops a joint ecosystem for brain research, which also covers mental health research, together with Member States, to better coordinate activities and maximise the EU’s and Member States’ research investments. The EU already provides longstanding support to brain research and innovation, and more than EUR 765 million are currently allocated to ongoing projects pertaining to mental health research under Horizon 2020⁴ and Horizon Europe⁵. Of this, more than EUR 167 million is dedicated to research aimed at developing treatments for mental health disorders. Horizon Europe will continue to offer such opportunities in the future.

The pharmaceutical package adopted on 26 April 2023⁶ also proposes to adapt the regulatory framework applicable to medicines to better serve public health objectives. One is to deliver equitable access to medicines for all patients across the EU. The other is to steer Research and Development investments and reward more developments for diseases with unmet medical needs, including in the field of mental health.

¹ https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-06/com_2023_298_1_act_en.pdf

² <https://ja-imental.eu/>

³ <https://eaad-best.eu/>

⁴ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-2020_en

⁵ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en

⁶ https://health.ec.europa.eu/medicinal-products/pharmaceutical-strategy-europe/reform-eu-pharmaceutical-legislation_en