



SYMPOSIUM 8: mental health and COVID-19 pandemics in the Baltic countries and Finland

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To cite this article: CHAIR: Elmars Rancans (Professor) (2021) SYMPOSIUM 8: mental health and COVID-19 pandemics in the Baltic countries and Finland, Nordic Journal of Psychiatry, 75:sup1, S4-S4, DOI: [10.1080/08039488.2021.2019906](https://doi.org/10.1080/08039488.2021.2019906)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08039488.2021.2019906>



Published online: 21 Mar 2022.



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SYMPOSIUM 8: Mental health and COVID-19 pandemics in the Baltic countries and Finland

CHAIR: Elmars Rancans, Professor

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Talks

1. Mental health of the general population and vulnerable groups in Latvia during COVID-19 pandemics
Elmars Rancans; Professor; Department of Psychiatry and Narcology, Riga Stradins University; Latvia
2. Mental health and wellbeing in Estonia during COVID-19 pandemics
Kristjan Kask; Dr; Tallinn University; Estonia
3. Problematic Internet use during COVID-19 pandemic in Lithuania
Vesta Steibliene; Professor; Lithuanian University of Health Sciences; Lithuania
4. COVID-19, psychiatric services and mental health in Finland
Jaana Suvisaari; Professor; Mental Health Team, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare; Finland

Synopsis

COVID-19 pandemic is a global phenomenon, but it affected even neighbouring countries in a different ways. During the first wave the Baltic countries presented with relatively low number of cases of infection and milder restriction measures. During the second wave Finland managed to achieve much better control of epidemiological situation. During symposia we will highlight recent findings and discuss similarities and differences between countries. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic were assessed in two consecutive face-to-face surveys of mental disorders of the general population of Latvia, alongside with specific assessment of behavioural and psychological factors as a response to the crisis. Online survey of the representative sample of Latvian general population assessed mental health, socio-psychological and behavioural aspects of responses during pandemic. In three different data collection waves (in April, June and November 2020) an online survey among adults in Estonia mapped different state aspects of mental health and wellbeing, focused also on some trait characteristics to illustrate resilience as well as features regarding changes in the sample's lives concerning changes in income and workload. Problematic Internet use could cause significant impairment of everyday functioning and lead to mental health deterioration. It has been assessed during the COVID-19 quarantine period among medical students and doctor residents in Lithuania. Researchers from Finland will outline how stress, worry and psychological distress developed over time in the general population during the pandemic. Challenges in psychiatric services during the pandemic will be discussed, and psychological distress and posttraumatic stress symptoms of health care workers.