

## **1 in 2 in the World Feels Affected by Russia's War Against Ukraine, Study Found**

On September 6 in Kyiv, the Third Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen presented a special research survey on mental health. It unveiled that every second person in different parts of the world experiences the effects of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on their mental health.

The comprehensive sociological survey aimed to explore how people perceive the mental health challenge in different regions of the world. The study focused on mental health and attitudes towards it in 11 countries worldwide, collectively representing diverse cultures, languages, and traditions. Moreover, among these countries are both those that are living through the war now or have experienced recent conflicts and those that have gone through significant conflicts many decades ago.

The key findings of the study indicate that:

- Mental health ranks among the top five biggest challenges for the future;
- Younger generations prioritise mental health as a more significant challenge than older generations. At the same time, young people aged 18-24 report the lowest mental health ratings compared to older generations: 6,7 out of 10 against 7,5 as a global average;
- 24% of all respondents feel uncomfortable discussing mental health with medical professionals;
- Nearly half of the respondents across all surveyed nations feel affected by Russia's war on Ukraine.

The survey specifically focused on factors that can strengthen people's resilience — especially in countries currently undergoing challenges, such as war. Research insights reveal that:

- During the wartime, the role of people and connections becomes more critical. Among those unaffected by world conflicts, 33% rely on family for emotional support. 66% of people recently affected by world conflicts rely on relatives for emotional support. This highlights the central role of family and support networks during periods of heightened global uncertainty and stress;
- Nations with a history of conflict exhibit greater mental health resilience, with 62% of those heavily affected expecting improved mental health in the next 3 years, 52% for those unaffected by world conflict;
- Young people can change the narrative on mental health. Adolescents are more likely to perceive individuals with mental health issues as strong, brave, and inspiring. They agree

that education on mental health should be enhanced. Raising awareness of mental health discussions on social media with the engagement of public figures is higher for 18-24 than older people but isn't that high overall.

The study took place online in the local language between August 1 to August 24, 2023, covering 11 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, Germany, Israel, Japan, Poland, the United Kingdom, the United States, Turkey, and Ukraine. It involved 11,000 interviews with people aged 13 y.o. and above, with 1,000 interviews in each country. The survey was conducted by Alligator Digital, an award-winning UK-based full-service research agency.

The study was implemented as part of the All-Ukrainian Mental Health Program "How are you?" initiated by the First Lady of Ukraine, Olena Zelenska, and with the support of the World Health Organisation. The research was expertly supported by Coordination Centre for Mental Health under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, BRAND UKRAINE, and "Barrier-Free" NGO.

#### *About the Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen*

The Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen is an initiative of the First Lady of Ukraine Olena Zelenska that aims to open an international dialogue about the most significant humanitarian challenges around the world. It was first held in Kyiv on August 23, 2021, and has since become a global platform that brings together first ladies and gentlemen, experts in various fields, celebrities, and thought leaders, eager to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of millions worldwide. The Third Summit of First Ladies and Gentlemen took place in Kyiv on September 6, 2023, and was dedicated to the topic of mental health.