



## Abstract

# The U24 Future Council adopts 18 Recommendations for action on mental health.

**Future Council U24: A citizens' council for young people in Switzerland.**  
*September - November 2023*

## What are the focal points of the U24 Future Council's recommendations for action?

### **More education, prevention and national priority required**

The U24 Future Council is calling on politicians and administrators to do more for the mental health of the young population at a national level. In Switzerland, the federal government has little basis for actually taking action in the current crisis situation. Moreover, the healthcare system is not geared towards prevention. With the recommendations for action "2.2 Nationwide data collection" and

"2.3 Prevention Act" calls not only for the introduction of national monitoring, but also for the creation of a legal basis for a preventive and coordinated approach. The Future Council U24 calls on health policy, which is currently largely regulated at cantonal level, to cooperate more closely at intercantonal and national level in order to take more effective measures ("2.1 Intercantonal cooperation"). In addition, a number of individual recommendations call for uniform efforts to educate the young population in particular about the problem of mental illness ("5.8 Awareness campaigns").

### **2 Measures in the worlds of school, family and work**

The U24 Future Council is calling for new services to identify and prevent mental health problems in schools, at work and in families. The Council recognizes the phase of early childhood development as a particularly important cause of mental health problems and therefore wants first-time parents to be better educated ("6.1 Courses for first-time parents") so that more knowledge about the psychological development of children is available to the most important caregivers. In the context of elementary school and secondary schools, the Council recommends the national introduction of the subject "Psychology and Personal Development" (recommendation no. 5.6). In addition, better support services for the transition to adulthood should be available within schools and also as a service offered by the municipalities, for example for tax returns, housing, financial knowledge or political rights ("1.2 Transition to adulthood").

### **3 Measures for mental health in the workplace**

The Future Council U24 wants to see progress in the regulation of the world of work in order to strengthen the long-term resilience of employees. To this end, the Council recommends extending the SUVA guidelines (recommendation no. 4.2) and revising the collective employment contracts (CECs) in relation to the occupation, which are particularly geared towards entry into working life.

take this into account. Various innovations for (young) employees are called for here: Better regulation of availability outside of working hours, the possibility of reduced working hours and stronger protection against discrimination for those affected by mental illness ("4.1 Mandatory CLA"). The proposal to introduce a 4-day week (recommendation no. 4.4) was discussed intensively in the Future Council, but was ultimately not adopted with the required majority.

### **4 Social media regulation and strengthening health services**

The U24 Future Council also recognizes advancing digitalization as a possible cause of mental health problems. It is calling for a national legal basis for the regulation of social media platforms. This should

Among other things, digital offerings should be held more accountable for complying with age controls and creating youth-friendly versions ("2.4 Regulation and education about social media"). The Council has adopted a series of recommendations for action aimed at strengthening the effectiveness and equal opportunities of health services. For example, periodic assessments of mental health in the area of education should ensure that skills in self-efficacy are built up and problems are better recognized early on for all young people ("5.2 Psychological assessments"). The preparation of information for the population on the subject of mental health should also be improved with a standardized online service that is equally accessible to all ("3.1 Mental Health Website"). Several measures to improve services for adolescents and young adults were only narrowly rejected, such as the establishment of a special program to improve the social reintegration of mentally ill people ("3.6 Adapted reintegration") or an information day in training centers and with employers ("3.4 Mandatory implementation of an information day").

## What is the U24 Future Council?

Since the start of the session at the beginning of September 2023, the U24 Future Council, with around 80 members, has been intensively discussing possible solutions to the issue of mental health among adolescents and young adults. It is the first national citizens' council that is roughly representative of the Swiss population of 16 to 24-year-olds. The new council was launched on 9 and 10 September in Zurich with numerous inputs from experts on the topic of mental health as well as representatives of Swiss health policy from administration, politics and civil society organizations. During the session weekend

in Lausanne on September 30 and October 1, the Council developed initial proposals for solutions. Finally, on November 4 and 5, 2023 in Locarno, the U24 Future Council dealt with a total of 33 proposals in the final vote. All of these proposals received a simple majority with at least 50% approval from Council members. 18 proposals received the majorities required for this Citizens' Assembly (see box "How did the U24 Future Council vote?"). The proposals will now be submitted to politicians, the administration and civil society organizations as recommendations for action for implementation.

## What areas of mental health were covered?

The joint negotiations on proposed solutions are based on a vision of the future jointly developed by the U24 Future Council (see box). This has served as a guide for the Citizens' Assembly. At the start of the session on September 9 and 10, 2023, the U24 Council for the Future defined the specific areas in which the recommendations for action should be developed.

- A total of four proposals were drawn up in the "Society & Culture" area. The U24 Future Council has adopted one of these recommendations for action.
- In the area of "Central regulation and networking", the Council drew up four recommendations. All four of these have been adopted.

- Eight solutions were proposed in the area of "accessibility/offering". One of these recommendations was adopted.
- Six recommendations were drawn up in the area of "Work", three of which were adopted.
- The "School/Education" area contains nine proposals for improving mental health. The Future Council U24 adopted six of these.
- In the area of "Parents and young adults", the U24 Future Council drew up two proposals, both of which were adopted.

## How did the U24 Future Council vote?

Votes in citizens' councils such as the Future Council U24 are often more strictly regulated by the members of the Future Council U24 than in elected parliaments, as the voting rules referred to them were definitively adopted. Five further recommendations were narrowly rejected as broadly supported directional decisions. Each recommendation for action, the level of support is just below the necessary value of 2, although the approval rates are clearly above 75% in each case. A further 10 voting results: recommendations were not adopted.

1. A **Yes share of** at least **75%** of future councillors;
2. The future councillors can indicate the **degree of support** between 0 and 3. The arithmetic mean of all values submitted must be at least **2**.
3. In addition, the Council members indicated which 5 recommendations have the highest **priority for** implementation.

## The vision of the future adopted by the Future Council

We envision a society in which our physical and mental health, our personal development and our serenity with regard to the future are no longer just wishes, but an everyday reality.

Mental health, once stigmatized, is now met with openness and inclusivity. Thanks to the accessibility of support services and an open mindset, we talk freely about psychological issues.

take measures to improve them. We value our social contacts, which are essential for our well-being, and have more time for our families and hobbies.

We reject work overload and are committed to productivity that respects the individual. We are professionally guided and supported.

Last but not least, young people are continuing to get involved and develop this vision further so that it is appropriate for future generations.

Because we know about the causes and consequences of psychological problems are clarified, we can take targeted measures.

**Locarno, November 5, 2023, Future Council U24**

## Constructive debates on the proposals

The proposals for action were discussed extensively over the six session days of the Future Council U24. While the first two days on September 9 and 10, 2023 focused primarily on learning and getting to know the topic of mental health, the recommendations were worked out in detail, adapted and refined several times over the following four days in October and November 2023.

Major reform proposals such as the introduction of a so-called "butterfly allowance" (recommendation no. 1.1a and 1.1b) - financial support from the state during the training period - or the introduction of a "4-day week" (recommendation no. 4.4) have not been successful.

received the approval of a simple majority of the Council. In the end, however, there were not enough clear majorities for the U24 Future Council to pass it.

Proposals in the area of education and health policy, such as the introduction of an information system on mental health at places of education and in companies (recommendation no. 3.4) or the elimination of the shortage of skilled workers with attractive training programs in psychology and care (recommendation no. 3.7) were only just not formally adopted.

## What are the recommendations for action with the strongest support?

### Top 10: Proposals for action with the highest proportion of "yes" votes

**Yes percentage:** Percentage of yes votes by council members of the Future Council U24 for the respective recommendation for action.

Rank	Number and name of the recommendation for action	Yes share	Acceptance?
1	2.2 Nationwide data collection on the mental health of young people	98,2	Yes
2	3.1 Mental Health Website	98,2	Yes
3	5.2 Psychological assessment	95	Yes
4	4.6 Measures to identify and solve mental health problems in companies	93	Yes
5	2.1 Intercantonal cooperation	92,9	Yes
6	4.2 Expand SUVA guidelines	91,1	Yes
7	2.3 Prevention Act for the prevention of mental illnesses	89,3	Yes
8	5.4 Openness and promoting dialog	89	Yes
9	5.8 Awareness campaigns	89	Yes
10	5.9 Teacher - Continuing education courses	89	Yes

### Top 10: Recommendations for action with the highest level of approval

**Degree of support:** The arithmetic mean of all points awarded on the following scale:

1. That's exactly what I want (3 points)
2. This is what I want (2 points)
3. That's more or less what I want (1 point)
4. I have many doubts (0 points)

Rank	Number and name of the recommendation for action	Degree of support	Acceptance?
1	2.2 Nationwide data collection on the mental health of young people	2,5	Yes
2	4.2 Expand SUVA guidelines	2,4	Yes
3	2.1 Intercantonal cooperation	2,3	Yes
4	3.1 Mental Health Website	2,3	Yes
5	1.2 Transition to adulthood	2,2	Yes
6	2.3 Prevention Act for the prevention of mental illnesses	2,1	Yes
7	2.4 Regulation and education about social media	2,1	Yes
8	4.1 Mandatory CLA and strengthening of labor rights	2,1	Yes
9	4.6 Measures to identify and solve mental health problems Health in companies	2	Yes
10	5.1 Activities at school to cope with everyday stress	2	Yes

### Top 10: Recommendations for action with the highest priority

**Priority share:** Future Council members have submitted their 5 priority recommendations for action. The priority percentage expresses how often the corresponding recommendation was mentioned.

Rank	Number and name of the recommendation for action	Priority	Acceptance?
1	2.2 Nationwide data collection on the mental health of young people	39,3	Yes
2	2.1 Intercantonal cooperation	33,9	Yes
3	1.2 Transition to adulthood	32,1	Yes
4	2.4 Regulation and education about social media	32,1	Yes
5	5.6 School subject: "Personal development & psychology"	25	Yes
6	2.3 Prevention Act for the prevention of mental illnesses	21,4	Yes
7	4.4 4-day week	21,4	No
8	4.1 Mandatory CLA and strengthening of labor rights	19,6	Yes
9	6.1 Courses for first-time parents	19,6	Yes
10	1.1a Butterfly money	17,9	No

# Imprint

## PROJECT COORDINATION

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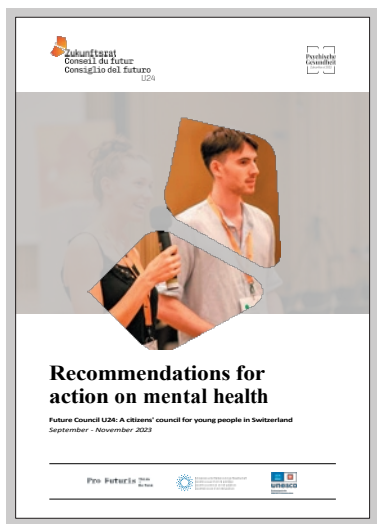
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## FURTHER INFORMATION

[www.zukunfts-rat.ch](http://www.zukunfts-rat.ch)



### Detailed report of the recommendations for action

- Votes of the Council members
- Project description Future Council U24
- 48 pages

