



WEBINAR ON CULTURE AND HEALTH

“THE ROLE OF CREATIVE ARTS IN PROMOTING MENTAL WELLNESS”

Wednesday 13 May 2026 | 11.00 - 13.00 EEST

CONCEPT NOTE

The International Centre for Black Sea Studies ([ICBSS](#)), in cooperation with the Permanent International Secretariat of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation ([BSEC PERMIS](#)), organise the Webinar on Culture and Health “**The role of creative arts in promoting mental wellness**”, to be held online, on **Wednesday 13 May 2026**, at 11.00 – 13.00 EEST.

The event will provide a dialogue platform for health professionals, culture experts, academia, representatives of policy and civil society, with the aim to raise awareness on mental health, promoting cultural engagement as a means to reduce stigma and foster inclusivity.

Context

Mental health is an essential element of people’s overall wellbeing, yet it is still often misunderstood and affected by societal stigma.

The UN has recognized mental health as equally important as physical health and urges its Member States to provide “*equitable and universal access to health care and assurance of mental and social well-being, as well as promotion of mental health and well-being*”.

Mental health challenges among adults are rooted in multifaceted and often interlinked factors, reflecting the complexity of modern life. Fast lifestyles, excessive social media exposure, societal pressures, economic instability, global political or environmental challenges, contribute to increased stress, anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges. These are further exacerbated by limited awareness on mental health issues that feeds societal stigma, discrimination, and isolation. People facing a mental disorder are often discouraged from seeking treatment or professional support due to stigma, lack of knowledge about available services, or concerns about costs.

Innovative approaches to treatment and mitigation

With more people affected by mental health challenges, there is a growing need for effective support services and interventions tailored to the diverse needs of adults in modern society.

The creative arts can play a significant role in fostering mental wellness by providing people with the means to express emotions, process experiences, and connect with others. Cultural activities such as painting, music, theatre, dance, creative writing, could support a therapeutic process to mitigate mental health challenges and empower people.

Acknowledging the need, many countries have launched initiatives to support the art and health correlation, such as the "Art on Prescription" Programme, under the NextGenerationEU framework. The "Art on Prescription" is a collaboration among medicine, cultural institutions, and local communities aimed to connect and engage people to with a variety of cultural activities in their communities.

Participatory art programmes provide frameworks for understanding mental health, foster community support, and offer coping mechanisms that strengthen social, emotional, and psychological resilience. Enhancing participation in the arts may contribute to enhancing overall wellbeing.

About the Webinar

The ICBSS – BSEC Webinar on Culture and Health “**The role of creative arts in promoting mental wellness**” will bring together health professionals, culture experts, representatives of policy and civil society, to share insights and perspectives on the effect of creative arts to mental wellbeing. Through expert talks and interaction with the audience, the webinar will aim to raise awareness on mental health, promoting cultural engagement as a means to reduce stigma and foster inclusivity.

Objectives

- To increase understanding of how creative arts can support mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- To share evidence-based insights showcasing the positive impact of creative arts on people and communities.
- To raise awareness and initiate an open dialogue on mental health, in order to support inclusivity and mitigate societal stigma and discrimination.

Draft Agenda

11.00 – 11.20	Welcome and opening remarks
11.20 – 12.00	In Focus Session Experts' Panel

	<p>Understanding Mental Health: Common Challenges and Misconceptions.</p> <p>Experts' insights about current mental health issues, myths and misunderstandings that often surround mental health, and the role of community involvement in promoting mental wellbeing.</p>
12.00 – 12.40	<p>Round-table discussion Results from the field</p> <p>Experiencing Art for Wellbeing.</p> <p>Culture-led session highlighting creative strategies for promoting positive mental health. Case studies to inspire synergies for cultural engagement for wellbeing.</p>
12.40 – 13.00	<p>Q&A and input from the audience</p>

ORGANIZATION	
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