# Mental health literacy in Austria - results of a representative population survey

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**Aim:** First comprehensive data collection on mental health literacy

**Based on a NEW MHL-definition:** "Mental health literacy (MHL) refers to the extent to which people are able to access, understand, appraise, and use information and services

- to maintain and promote mental well-being and resilience,
- cope with psychosocial challenges and stress, and
- deal with mental health problems and illnesses.

It results from the interaction of individual competencies with the information and service environment and associated motivation, and is shaped by the social, organizational, and cultural contexts in which people grow up, learn, work, and live." (Griebler et al. 2024)

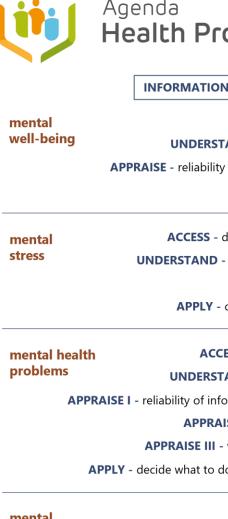
**NEW measure:** Developed as part of the M-POHL Health Literacy Survey 2024-2026. The instrument comprises tasks distributed over four domains (see Figure). Respondents were asked to rate the tasks according to their perceived ease and difficulty.

### Health Promotion Panel - a representative survey

aged 16+ years 1.126 respondents

Online survey +  $\bigoplus$ postal survey

December 2023



mental illnesses

> APPRAISE - reliabilit APPLY - use information to

#### **Results:**

- Difficulties:
  - 25-30% in accessing/
    - understanding

  - 40-45% in applying

## **Conclusion:**

- A large proportion of the Austrian population has difficulties in dealing with mental health information and services.
- These difficulties also affect prevention and health promotion, which are crucial for coping with mental stress and improving mental well-being.
- Targeted interventions are urgently needed to strengthen MHL in Austria, targeting the most vulnerable population groups.

## Health Promotion

N	very di	fficult 📕 difficult	easy very easy	🛛 don't know 🔳 refusal
ACCESS - taking care of well-being	<mark>4 %</mark>	23 %	43 %	17 % 8 % 5 %
AND - improving mental well-being	<mark>4 %</mark>	21 %	44 %	20 % 7 % 5 %
/ of information on mental wellbeing	8 %	33 %	33 %	11 % 10 % 5 %
APPLY - promoting well-being	7 %	32 %	36 %	10 % 10 % 6 %
		1		
dealing with psychosocial challenges	5 <mark>5 %</mark>	26 %	42 %	15 % 7 % 5 %
<ul> <li>preventing psychosocial challenges</li> </ul>	5 <mark>4 %</mark>	24 %	43 %	17 % 7 % 5 %
APPRAISE - what to do if stressed	<mark>4 %</mark>	31 %	38 %	13 % 8 % 5 %
coping with psychosocial challenges	8 %	35 %	32 %	11 % 8 % 6 %
		1		
ESS - where to get professional help	5 %	23 %	40 %	17 % 8 % 7 %
AND - why you feel mentally unwel	<mark>4 %</mark>	26 %	40 %	13 % 9 % 7 %
ormation on mental health problems	s 9 %	34 %	30 %	9% 10% 8%
ISE II - what to do if mentally unwel	l <mark>5 %</mark>	29 %	39 %	11 % 9 % 7 %
when professional help is necessary	7 %	34 %	32 %	11 % 9 % 8 %
lo if someone else is mentally unwel	8 %	32 %	32 %	10 % 10 % 8 %
ACCESS - mental illnesses	6 %	22 %	39 %	18 % 7 % 8 %
<b>UNDERSTAND</b> - mental illnesses	8 %	24 %	39 %	16 % 7 % 8 %
ty of information on mental illnesses	9 %	36 %	27 %	11 % 10 % 8 %
o deal with mental illnesses of others	5 7 %	31 %	32 %	11 % 11 % 9 %
	0 %	20 %	40 % 60 %	80 % 100

 Accessing/understanding easier than appraising and applying

30-45% in appraising



Griebler et al. 2024 Factsheet DE

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