

Raising voices for change

EPW core priorities and flagships

Promoting health and well-being
The Mental Health Coalition 🇹🇷

WHO collaboration

Facilitating dialogue
National/subregional/regional network

Mental health issues and gaps in sexual and reproductive health knowledge are among the most pressing public health concerns for Albania's youth. The COVID-19 pandemic added new layers of complexity, disrupting education and amplifying mental health struggles while also highlighting the need for more resilient health systems.

To foster youth engagement, the WHO Regional Office for Europe and Albania hosted the Tirana 2022 Health and Well-being Forum for Youth. The event gathered 500 participants and 200 decision-makers from across the WHO European Region to discuss critical health issues and promote dialogue between young people and policy-makers. The Forum resulted in the Tirana Youth4Health Statement, calling for greater youth involvement and intergenerational collaboration in health decisions, and marking a new era of youth-driven health initiatives in Albania and beyond.

The impact

After the Forum, the Regional Office and youth continued supporting the Tirana commitments, launching the Youth4Health network in September 2023 at the 73rd session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe. The WHO Country Office in Albania hosted a satellite event where Albanian Youth4Health members discussed issues such as mental health, climate change, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and sexual and reproductive health. Ten Albanian representatives are now part of the network. In 2023 Albanian youth co-created the "Force of the Future" event on immunization, aiming to strengthen ties between students and professionals.

Lessons learned

- Safe and inclusive spaces can help to empower young people to share their ideas and perspectives.
- When given the platform and support, youth can contribute meaningfully to public health discussions and policy formulation.
- It is important to create ownership by soliciting content from youth and letting them lead and present.

Donors and partners

Ministry of Health and Social Protection; Municipality of Tirana; Office of the Minister of State for Youth; United Nations Population Fund



Participants at the Tirana 2022 Health and Well-being Forum for Youth.
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“Young people’s presence in health discussions is growing, and it’s crucial because they often don’t realize they can be key stakeholders.”

Ms Ania Genti Sauku, Youth Advocate, Albania

What’s next?

Albania aims to continue strengthening youth engagement in health initiatives. Young advocates are expected to play a larger role in future mental health awareness campaigns and in addressing other key issues such as sexual and reproductive health. The Regional Office will continue to support these efforts, ensuring that youth remain central to Albania’s evolving public health strategies.