

# UNFULFILLED POTENTIAL

A report about growing mental health challenges  
among emerging adults in the Nordic region

## *Next in Mind*

Scaling Wellbeing for emerging adults in the Nordics

Founded by



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# Time for a Nordic-wide revolution in mental wellbeing for emerging adults

With rising mental health challenges, a great number of emerging adults are struggling to reach their full potential. In the Nordics, we have some of the highest rates of mental suffering among emerging adults compared to other industrialized countries. Too many struggle to access affordable and appropriate help and support. Many emerging adults have not been equipped with the skills to handle the transitions and critical life events that we all go through in the journey to full adulthood. This is one of the greatest challenges facing our Nordic societies today. If we continue down this path, we risk leaving a whole generation behind.

In the Nordic countries, historically, we've relied on robust welfare states for mental health support. Research underscores the link between mental health and social trust, making investments in the mental wellbeing of emerging adults crucial to safeguarding this trust. However, it's now clear that our public health systems don't have enough capacity, flexibility, and innovative approaches needed to address the mental health challenges among emerging adults.

Reach for Change, The Inner Foundation and the Tim Bergling Foundation are committed to making a sustainable and lasting impact to ensure that emerging adults in the Nordics are able to thrive and be well. That is why we have founded Next in Mind.

With Next in Mind, our mission is to empower social entrepreneurs with the innovative solutions we need in order to make mental health resources for emerging adults more accessible and effective. Social entrepreneurs are key to challenging and complementing the traditional systems and approaches. They are grounded in inclusive design practices, they test and pilot fresh approaches, and build much-needed solutions based on direct target group involvement. With this approach, social entrepreneurs have a remarkable ability to revolutionize mental health support, but they can't do it alone. To thrive and expand their impact, they require a nurturing ecosystem and the unwavering support of cross-sector partners.

They also need patient capital to enable piloting and testing, and smart investment to support them in scaling what works.

Driven by this common belief our initiative is based on a collective impact approach bringing together several Nordic stakeholders. This initiative brings together partners from the public and private sectors, with experts from academia and mental health practices, underpinned by the continuous involvement of emerging adults. Although mental health trends and support systems differ across the Nordic region, emerging adults in the region face many similar challenges. We are convinced that there are many solutions out there that can be scaled in the larger Nordic market, and there are many learnings that can be made across the region. Moreover, if a viable model of unearthing and scaling these solutions is tested in the Nordic market, we believe there is great potential to scale this model to other regions.

This paper will put some important facts and insights on the table. In particular, it will highlight how the period between age 18 to 29, "emerging adulthood", is such a pivotal time. This period is a distinct life phase, where major life occurrences come with both challenges and opportunities. We are convinced that the investments made into this period of life can create more resilient and productive generations for years to come. We cannot miss this opportunity to invest in our future.

Now, we are seeking more supporters and partners to be part of this mission. Let's create a Nordic-wide revolution in mental wellbeing for emerging adults.

**Next in Mind Steering Committee**  
*Annika Sten Pärson, Caroline Stiernstedt Sahlborn, Sofia Breitholtz, Andréa Råsberg, Gayatri Rathinavelu, Klas Bergling, Charlotta Kamstedt.*

October 6, 2023

**IF WE CONTINUE  
DOWN THIS PATH WE  
RISK LEAVING A WHOLE  
GENERATION BEHIND.**

# INVESTING IN THE MENTAL WELLBEING OF EMERGING ADULTS IS ONE OF THE GREATEST OPPORTUNITIES OF OUR TIME.

## THE COST OF MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS IS HIGHER IN THE NORDIC REGION THAN IN OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

## Executive summary

This is how members of our Emerging Adult Advisory Board expressed their perspective on the value of mental health in their own lives.

This report is about the growing mental health challenges faced by emerging adults in the Nordic countries as well as the opportunities that come with investing in the unfulfilled potential among emerging adults. The report will look deeper into several aspects of a life of an emerging adult; what is it, how are emerging adults feeling, what challenges are they facing today and what are their needs. The report also covers insights about the costs for the society and the risks of mental health such as social exclusion. An important aspect that is being highlighted is the inequality within mental health. Emerging adults living in socio-economic disadvantage areas are more likely to experience mental health challenges than rich areas.

### Emerging adulthood - A new life phase

This report highlights and defines a new life phase called emerging adulthood, which is the period of life that represents the extended transition phase from childhood to adulthood. A time in our life where many of us are struggling. Especially with the current social trends and in an age of increasing inequality. There is a more competitive and uncertain job market, workplace complexity in terms of high rates of change, limited resources and high demand on productivity. We are also in a time of facing climate change, pandemics and polarization and the constant presence of social media. A lot of big changes happen within a relatively short time frame which is challenging to our mental wellbeing. The report includes some key data of how emerging adults in the Nordic are feeling:

- The share of emerging adults with depression is more than double the population average
- 4 out of 10 Nordic emerging adults have symptoms of depression
- 8 out of 10 say they are lonely

### Delayed adulthood stands out in the Nordic countries compared to other countries

The trend toward delayed adulthood is particularly pronounced in the Nordic countries. The age when we graduate from formal education and when we establish ourselves on the labor market is higher than in other industrialized countries.

### A big cost for the society, and it's higher in the Nordic

In the Nordic countries, the direct and indirect cost of mental health problems is between 5 and 5.4 percent of GDP, which is higher than in other European countries. This means a total cost of around 60-70 billion EUR for the Nordic region as a whole.

### Mental health challenges can lead to social exclusion

Mental health challenges during emerging adulthood are associated with a significantly higher risk of social exclusion and, becoming a so-called NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). In the Nordic countries the share of NEET's is between 5 and 10 percent of 15-29 year olds.

### A call to action from the authors

At the same time as there are challenges there are also great opportunities that lie within investing in the potential of emerging adults. Ensuring that emerging adults themselves are a part of defining the problem and developing the solutions needed to ensure their own wellbeing. By investing in innovators that have proven solutions that create real impact and have potential for scale, we can support emerging adults to reach their full potential and thrive as individuals and contribute to the development of our societies.

“Tools to handle anxiety and panic attacks, I wish this would have been taught in school.”

“I wish that more people had talked about life and its challenges.”

“Somebody who was a bit older, telling me I don't have to stress to be productive. That it's all right to take your time.”

“School should have given more attention to mental health. They focus on producing workers. Not on giving you life skills.”

“All through school you have a sense of coherence, but when you finish high school, it disappears. I wish I knew how important it was, I would have been better at keeping in touch with everyone.”

“I wish that I had more knowledge about the effects of sleep deprivation and mental health.”

“I was in such a bad place at the time. I didn't see it at the time, but therapy literally saved my life.”

*Mental health is about much more than the absence of mental disorders. It is not just about surviving, it is about thriving and living to our full potential.*



## Our starting point: How do we define mental health?

Our initiative is based on the belief that mental health is much more than the absence of mental disorders. Mental health is not just about surviving, it is about thriving and living to our full potential.

We support the WHO definition of mental health:

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

This is how members of our Emerging Adult Advisory Board expressed their perspective on what mental health is, why it is important and the importance of self-awareness:

“Mental health means being alive.”

“Earlier I did not understand what I was feeling. Having this knowledge means everything to me.”

“Mental health is the most important thing in life. It is about how you are feeling.”

**“EVERY EMERGING ADULT HAS THE RIGHT TO A JOYFUL AND MEANINGFUL LIFE. MANY DO NOT HAVE THAT RIGHT. THEY DO NOT FEEL SAFE OR SEEN.”**

“Social well-being and emotions define how I act and handle different situations in life such as stress and change.”

“Focusing on mental health is such a great opportunity for a better society for young people.”

*In today's society, the transition to adulthood takes longer than it has in the past. This has created a new life phase: emerging adulthood, a time in our life where many of us are struggling.*





# What is emerging adulthood?

Emerging adulthood is a life stage between 18 and 29 years old<sup>1</sup>. In the Nordic region there are about 3.8 million people in this age group, making up around 14 percent of the population.

This life stage is important and comes with a lot of opportunities, but also challenges. When we turn 18 we have the legal rights and responsibilities of adults. We have the freedom to make choices about our life and take advantage of the opportunities that come with being adults. But many of us find ourselves struggling to handle the big changes and uncertainties that we face during the transition to adulthood. In this section we cover some primary areas impacting the mental wellbeing for emerging adults.

## Brain-development during emerging adulthood

Modern neuroscience has shown that during emerging adulthood our brains are not fully mature and continue to develop until at least our mid-20's. In fact, our brains continue to develop during our whole life. The fact that our brain is not fully developed in our 20's has a substantial effect on our life skills and abilities, especially in terms of:

- Planning and thinking ahead
- Calculating risk and reward
- Prioritizing
- Regulating emotions

Our brains develop at different speeds. Some of us have brains that mature more quickly and therefore have better control over our emotions and decision-making. If our brain is slower to develop, we have a harder time managing our feelings and making decisions. These differences in brain development are an important

determinant of our ability to deal with critical life events during emerging adulthood.

## Delayed transition to full adulthood

The conceptualization of emerging adulthood stems from a number of trends in modern society that have created an extended period of transition to full adulthood in comparison with earlier generations.

- **More time in school.** Many of us go to university or continue with other forms of education, and we also graduate later. This means that we also start working later.
- **Career exploration and experimentation.** We often switch jobs a few times and test out different careers to see what we like.
- **Diverse relationship experience.** We have different types of relationships, from casual dating to living together and long-term partnerships. Many of us focus on our personal growth before settling into a serious relationship.
- **Financial dependency.** We take longer to start earning a salary that means we can fully support ourselves.
- **Geographic mobility.** We are more likely to move to different locations for school or work and this may in some cases include moving to another country.

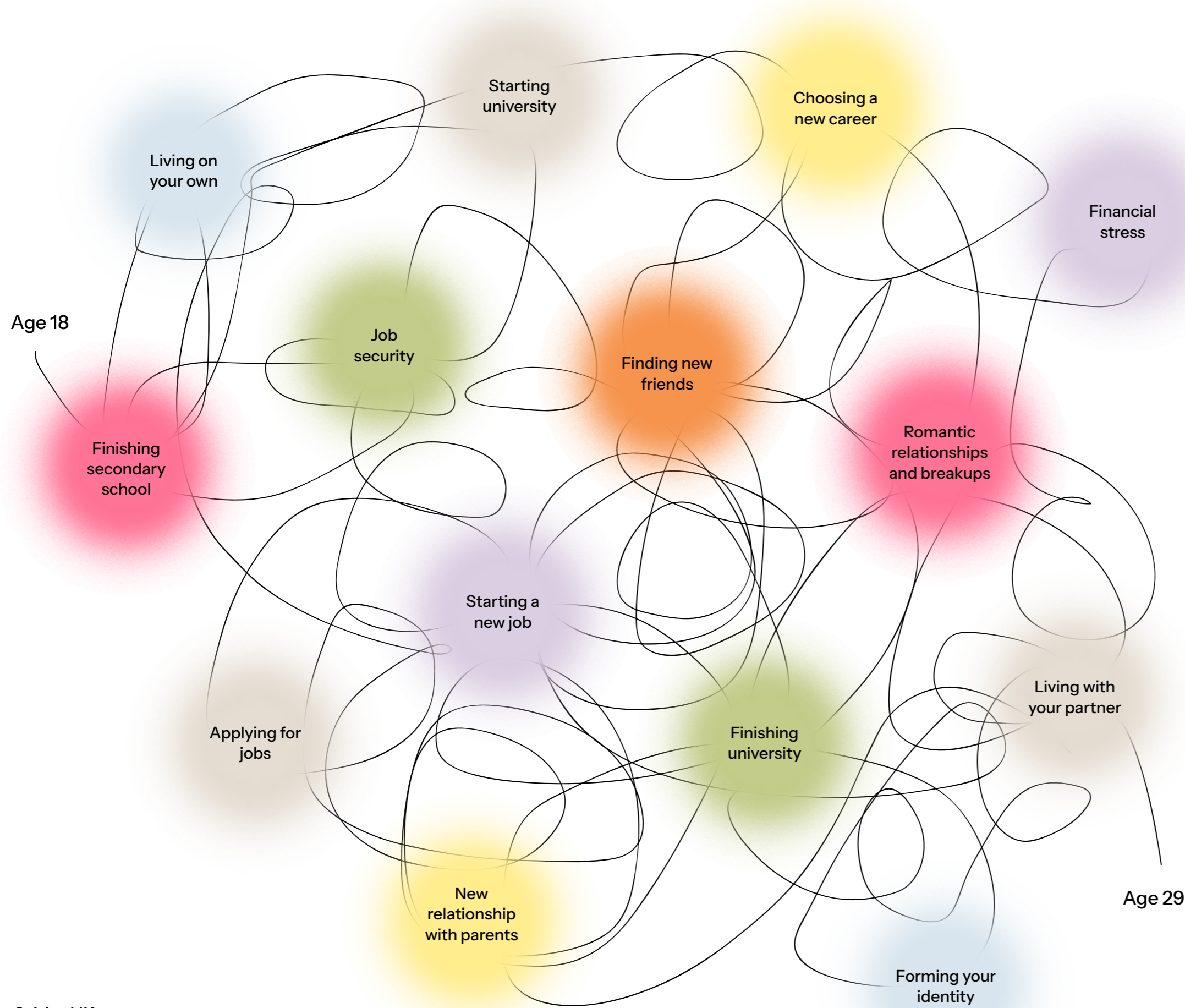
The delay in the transition to full adulthood is particularly pronounced in the Nordic region. The age of graduating from an undergraduate degree is higher than the OECD average and we therefore tend to establish ourselves later on the labor market.

In Sweden the average age where 75 percent of all individuals have a job has increased from 21 years old to 29 years old during the last 30 years.

Age when 75% of us are employed:

**1990: 21 YEARS OLD**  
**2020: 29 YEARS OLD**

<sup>1</sup> Arnett, Zukavskiené & Sugimura (2014).



## The age “in-between”

Emerging adults often describe this time of life as feeling “in between”. We are in search of who we are and what kind of life we want to live. Will we manage to complete our studies and get a job or will we face unemployment? Some of us move out of our childhood homes, go to university or vocational training. And some of us wonder if we’ll ever be able to move out on our own and find our first job. During this time we are also struggling to build friendships and relationships and navigate the ups and downs of endings and beginnings.

All these big changes happen within a relatively short timeframe and can challenge our mental wellbeing. How well we manage this transition can have major lasting effects on our lives, influencing our ability to establish ourselves in the job market, integrate ourselves in our local communities, and form long-term relationships. Factors that play a crucial role in determining our overall happiness and active participation in society during the course of the rest of our lives.

Psychologists have described emerging adulthood as a distinct life stage that has been created by societal and cultural changes in the modern world. It is also a time in our life where we are most likely to suffer from anxiety and depression. Emerging adults are more than twice as likely as the general population to suffer from symptoms of depression.<sup>2</sup>

## Critical life events

The illustration above shows examples of critical life events and transitions that we have to manage as emerging adults.

## Emerging adulthood in an age of distress

In the two decades since the concept of emerging adulthood was initially defined in research, several contextual developments have collectively added extra layers of challenges for many in this age group:

- **Increasing inequality.** Rising income inequality and segregation has enforced social inequalities in mental health.
- **A more competitive and uncertain job market.** More jobs are becoming part-time, temporary or gig-based.
- **A workplace characterized by increased complexity.** High rate of change, information overload, limited resources and high demands on productivity.
- **The rise of social media.** Screen addiction, intense social comparison, information overload and reduced face-to-face interaction.
- **An uncertain world.** Climate change, pandemics, war, social tension, and polarization.

Our Emerging Adult Advisory Board Nordic panel stressed that the competitive environment in universities and in the workplace is a major threat to mental health of young adults:

“We don’t have time to find ourselves because we need to be productive through work or go to university.”

**“IN FINLAND, THE WORK AND STUDYING ENVIRONMENT IS COMPETITIVE AND YOUNG PEOPLE ARE OVER WORKED. SOME ARE OVERWORKED ALREADY BEFORE STARTING UNIVERSITY.”**

“Many struggle with the same issues, and I think we need a space to talk about our problems where we don’t compete. For me it is not my friends but where I volunteer. I feel serving shifts your focus from yourself to working together to contribute to a common cause.”

*A significant share of emerging adults are not living to their full potential and the rates of mental distress are rising.*



## Emerging adults in the Nordic region – how are they feeling?

### Mental health challenges is on the rise among emerging adults

There are many different surveys that have looked at mental health developments of emerging adults in the Nordics. They have different methodologies and definitions, but all give the same picture. A significant share of emerging adults are not living to their full potential and the rates of mental health challenges are rising.

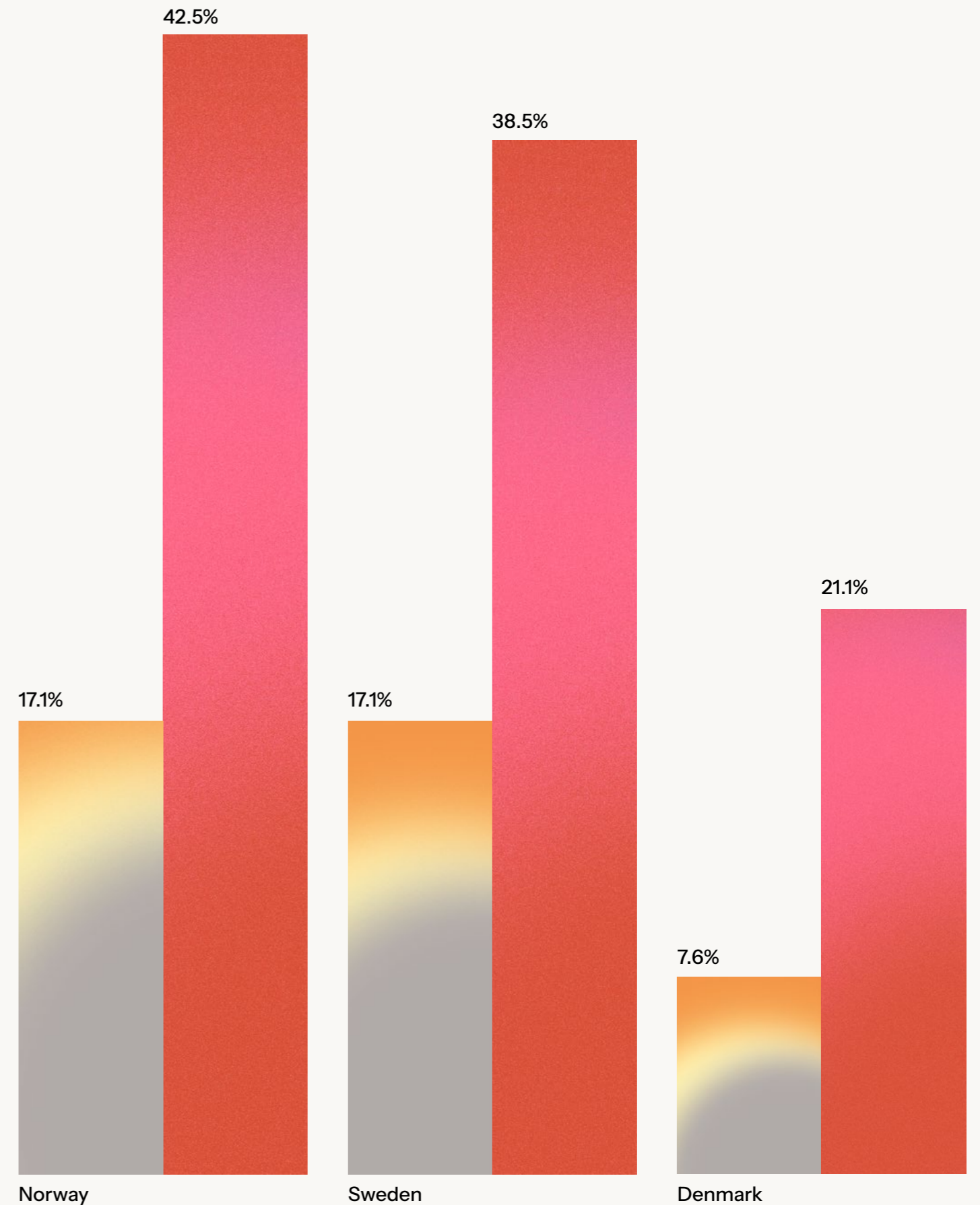
In 2020–21 emerging adults were twice as likely as the rest of the population to suffer from depression.<sup>3</sup>



**THE SHARE OF EMERGING ADULTS WITH DEPRESSION IS MORE THAN DOUBLE THE POPULATION AVERAGE.**

Share of young people with depression more than double population average 2020-21

All adults  
18-29



**40 PERCENT HAVE SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION.**

According to data compiled by the OECD<sup>4</sup> in 2022 (data from 2021) as many as 40 percent of 18–29-year-olds have symptoms of depression (data from Norway and Sweden).

**77 PERCENT SAY THEY ARE LONELY.**

According to a study by the Swedish Red Cross<sup>5</sup> in 2021, 77 percent of 18–29-year-olds are lonely, this was the highest rate among all population groups.

**70 PERCENT OF SWEDISH WOMEN AGED 16-29 SAY THEY EXPERIENCE LIGHT OR SEVERE SYMPTOMS OF DISTRESS AND ANXIETY.**

The mental wellbeing of emerging adults in the Nordic region has been steadily getting worse during the last 20 years. In Sweden the share of women aged 16–29 that say they experience light or severe symptoms of distress and anxiety has increased from 50 percent in 2006 to over 70 percent in 2022.<sup>6</sup>

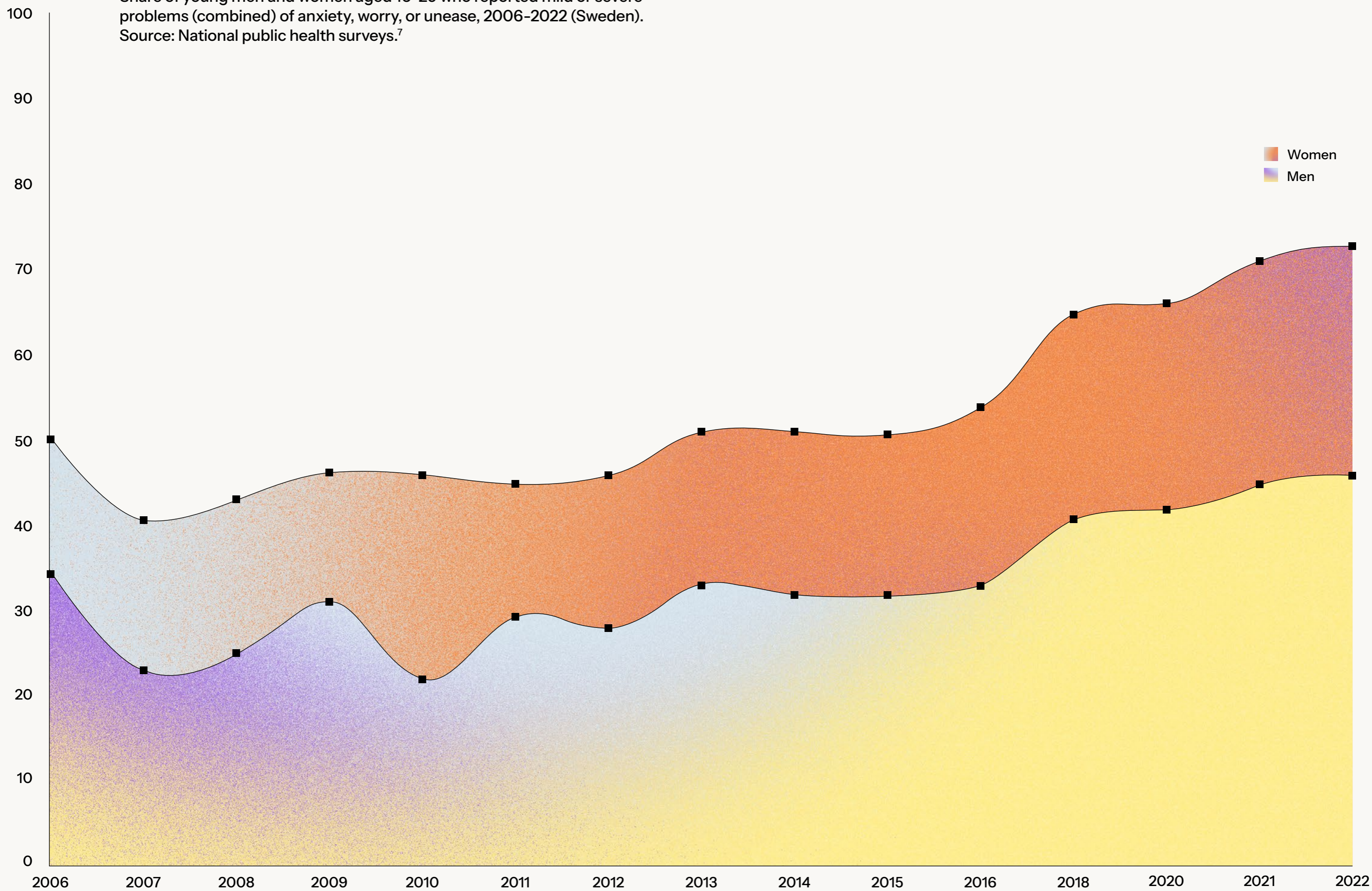
4 OECD Health at a Glance: Europe 2022

5 Novus 2021. A study by the Swedish Red Cross.

6 National Public Health Survey Sweden, 2006–2022

Percent (%)

Share of young men and women aged 16–29 who reported mild or severe problems (combined) of anxiety, worry, or unease, 2006–2022 (Sweden).  
Source: National public health surveys.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Folkhälsomyndigheten. Statistik psykisk hälsa: yngre vuxna 16–29 år.  
NEXT IN MIND REPORT 2023





## Inequalities in mental health

There are significant inequalities in mental health. Living in a socio-economic disadvantaged community increases the risk of mental distress. For example, in the Stockholm Region, the neighborhood of Rinkeby-Kista, which is economically disadvantaged, has a significantly higher rate of people experiencing psychosomatic symptoms (30.9 percent) compared to the wealthier area of Danderyd (17.8 percent). We also know that the population in socio-economic disadvantaged areas are less likely to seek mental health support, which indicates that there is a significant problem with communities being underserved.

The population in socio-economically disadvantaged areas tend to be young. In Sweden 36 percent of the 500 000 people living in these areas are under 26 years old, a total of 90 000 people. This means that there is a significant number of emerging adults that are underserved when it comes to mental health resources.<sup>8</sup>

Of the Swedish population aged 20-29, 33% percent have a foreign background. In other Nordic countries the share of the population with foreign background is significantly lower.

There is a big knowledge gap when it comes to statistics about mental health in this population segment.

Suzan Hourieh Lindberg, co-founder of Perspetivo, a panel and research platform with a focus on inclusivity explains why conventional surveys about mental health do not reach the immigrant communities:

*“Gaining insights from this particular cohort, specifically regarding mental well-being, proves to be quite difficult. A significant portion of these individuals are from regions where mental health remains taboo and is rarely addressed openly. Additionally, mistrust is reinforced when surveys are disseminated via automated systems or conventional research firms that fail to incorporate inclusive language. As a result, the combination of these circumstances serves as a deterrent, hindering the shareability of such delicate details with external surveyors or government authorities.”*

**OF THE 500 000 PEOPLE LIVING IN  
SOCIOECONOMIC DISADVANTAGED AREAS,  
36% ARE UNDER 26 YEARS OLD.**

**THERE IS A BIG KNOWLEDGE GAP  
WHEN IT COMES TO STATISTICS ABOUT  
MENTAL HEALTH AMONG SWEDES  
WITH FOREIGN BACKGROUND.**

*A lack of wellbeing among emerging adults impacts our societies, the public finances, the labour market and the risk of long-term social exclusion.*



## The cost of mental health challenges among emerging adults

The rising rates of mental distress among Nordic youth comes with significant emotional and human costs. It also places a burden on society, impacting public finances, the labor market and risk of long-term social exclusion.

In this section we look at the societal costs associated with mental health distress. We also describe the connections between mental health, school drop-out rates and labor market participation and look at estimates of the long-term societal costs of social exclusion.

### Labor market exclusion due to mental health challenges

Securing employment is an important part of the transition to adulthood and an important element of overall wellbeing.

In the Nordic countries, a significant share of emerging adults fail to manage this transition. They drop out of school and do not establish themselves in the labor market. In statistics they show up as NEET; not in education, employment or training. Research has shown that poor mental health is a key determinant of becoming a NEET.

The share of emerging adults that are categorised as NEETs varies between the Nordic countries.<sup>9</sup> Finland has the highest NEET rate in the region, equating to 10.1 percent of 15–29-year-olds. In Sweden, the rate of NEET is almost half of that – 5.6 percent. However with a larger population, this corresponds to 65,000 people.<sup>10</sup>

A report from The Institute for Futures Studies has shown that mental health problems as a teenager increases the risk for becoming a NEET.<sup>11</sup>

A study by MUCF showed that the following risk factors affect the risk of becoming a long-term NEET<sup>12</sup>:

- Poor mental health
- Neuropsychiatric disorders
- Living in an area with socioeconomic challenges

In the Nordic region there has been a significant decline in the share of young men with lower levels of education who are active on the labor market. Among 25–29-year-old men, the employment rate has fallen from 70–80 percent to 60–65 percent in recent years. The decline has been especially steep in Denmark.<sup>13</sup>

When we look at mortality, there has been a sharp increase in contrasting trends between young men with high education and those with low education. The difference in mortality rate between these two groups has more than doubled during the last 20 years.<sup>14</sup>

We also know that those who are unemployed have a higher rate of mental distress than those who are in employment. Data from Sweden in 2021 showed that among those in unemployment, 6 out of 10 experienced distress or anxiety compared to 4 out of 10 that were in employment.<sup>15</sup>

**6 OUT OF 10  
OF THOSE WHO  
ARE UNEMPLOYED  
EXPERIENCE ANXIETY  
AND DISTRESS.**

9 Nordics Statistics Database. *Nordic NEET rates on EU target levels.*

10 Nordics Statistics Database. *Nordic NEET rates on EU target levels.*

11 MUCF. *Ett långvarigt utanförskap.*

12 MUCF. *Ett långvarigt utanförskap.*

13 Nordens välfärdscenter. *Unga mäns hälsa i de nordiska länderna. 2018.*

14 Nordens välfärdscenter. *Unga mäns hälsa i de nordiska länderna. 2018.*

15 Folkhälsomyndigheten. *Psykisk hälsa bland arbetslösa och sysselsatta under covid-19-pandemin.*

*There are significant gains to be made from interventions to prevent social exclusion. Both for the individual and for the economy.*



# THE ANNUAL COST OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IS 560,000 SEK, OF WHICH 285,000 SEK ARE PRODUCTION LOSSES.

## The economic and human gains from social investments

The economist Ingvar Nilsson has studied the costs to society of leaving people behind in social exclusion. He has also made calculations to show the significant economic gains that can be made through interventions to prevent exclusion.

Every year, 95 000 children are born in Sweden. Of these 12,160, or 3 in every class, end up in social exclusion. During their lifetime, these people cost society 210 billion SEK in expenses for care, social support, and other societal costs, and do not contribute to GDP by being excluded from the labor force.

Ingvar Nilsson has calculated the annual cost of social exclusion by taking the example of Urban<sup>16</sup>, a 21-year-old man living with his father with a problem of substance abuse. Urban finished secondary school, but has since then not been working or studying and sits in front of the computer all day. When he is contacted

by the social services and the employment agency, he does not show up for meetings. He has never been in touch with the care system or the employment agency. Not even the threat of withdrawing his social support has had any results. If nothing happens Urban is likely to live his whole life in social exclusion.

The total costs to society of Urban's social exclusion from age 21-65 amounts to 14 million SEK, which includes costs of social support and production losses. The annual cost of exclusion amounts to 560,000 SEK, of which 285,000 are production losses.

If we could find an intervention that limited Urban's time in marginalization from five to two years, the total gain to society would be 1.6 million SEK. This is in addition to all the positive effects that social inclusion will have on Urban's well-being.

***“School should have given more attention to mental health. They focus on producing workers. Not on giving you life skills.”***

Member of the Next in Mind Emerging Adult Advisory Board



# 70 PERCENT OF EMERGING ADULTS BELIEVE THAT DIGITAL CARE TOOLS IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY OF CARE.

## Emerging adults what are their mental health needs?

We asked our Emerging Adult Advisory Board what mental health resources they wished they had. They emphasized the need for increased knowledge and tools for self-insight, as well as more open conversations about mental health, thus breaking societal stigmas.

### Openness to digital solutions

While there is significant mental distress noted among emerging adults, there are also opportunities to reach this group with digital mental health solutions. Several studies show that accessibility of care is important for emerging adults.

A study of Swedes ages 18-30<sup>17</sup> has shown that this age group is more unsatisfied with the accessibility of healthcare when compared to the rest of the population.

The same study also shows that they are more positive towards digital solutions. 70 percent believe that digital tools improve the accessibility of care more generally, and 50 percent believe that it improves efficiency.

### Young adults' approach to mental healthcare needs

A report by Oliver Wyman Forum has analyzed how young adults approach their healthcare and mental healthcare needs. Some of these current approaches include:

- **A holistic approach to health.** They embrace a more holistic approach to health, which embraces mental wellbeing as well as physical wellbeing.
- **Concerned about inequalities.** They are concerned about the inequalities in access to healthcare and want these disparities to be addressed.
- **Digital health management.** They are proactive about health. They use wearables to track their health and follow influencers on social media platforms for medical advice.
- **Better communication and personalized care.** They want better communication with their healthcare provider and options that fit their perceptions of self-care. They expect their unique needs and experiences to be taken into account.

How do we address the increasing mental distress among emerging adults and meet their needs for mental health support?



*Historically the Nordic countries have relied on our strong welfare states to provide mental health support. It is now evident that our public health systems do not have enough capacity, flexibility, and innovative ability to address the mental health crisis among young people.*



## This is a call to action

We really can't emphasize enough the need for a transformation within Nordic mental health support systems. Mental health is a human right, and given the insights from this report, more needs to be done to secure this universal right. There is a huge need for workable solutions.

As cultivators of social entrepreneurship, we don't subscribe to a single cure-all solution to a systemic and multifaceted problem. We know that the mental health challenges experienced by emerging adults are complex. The challenges require a holistic approach, which takes onboard the needs and experiences of individuals as well as the requirements of the overarching support system and related national-level policymaking. From healing to thriving, from the individual to the community, this initiative will empower scalable solutions that each have the potential to secure emerging adults' right to be well.

This report highlights the acute challenges facing emerging adults today, and also lays out the case for why we need to take a systemic approach to the challenges facing emerging adults in the Nordics today. However, it also lays out the investment case for investing in the solutions that have the transformative power to improve the mental wellbeing of emerging adults today. This is a case for investing in hope and new innovations and approaches. For these innovations to be able to scale, we need to transform the ways we tackle the problems of emerging adults today. In short, we need to:

**1. Focus:** Focus on the critical and particular life phases that emerging adults, age 18.-29, face today in the Nordics. In highlighting this group that often falls through the cracks when it comes to traditional prevention and treatment solutions, we are investing in our future employees, tax payers and leaders. In gathering the particular data and statistics pertaining to this group, and highlighting their particular challenges and opportunities, we believe we can adopt more targeted and efficient solutions.

**2. Invest:** Invest in local social entrepreneurs, supporting the solutions that have been tested, and that have generated evidence and have the potential to scale their impact. We believe that the entrepreneurs who work most closely with emerging adults themselves, have the most transformative solutions. But they need access to support, network and capital to be able to scale their impact. Services and support need to extend beyond critical and traditional treatment. We need to take a holistic investment approach.

**3. Collaborate:** Collaborate between sectors. The worsening mental health amongst emerging adults is not a problem owned by one group. New approaches will require collaboration between the public and private sectors, but it will also mean bringing on board academics, researchers, innovators and emerging adults themselves. In order to change our siloed systems, we need to bring together emerging adults to share their views, entrepreneurs to develop new solutions, the public sector to implement policies that serve this group, and governments that can adopt these solutions. We need to involve the private sector and investors, so that the solutions that work, can be scaled and implemented.

We are calling social entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, practitioners and emerging adults in a united cross-sector effort to revolutionize mental health support in the Nordics. Together, we possess a unique ability to advance new and innovative solutions supporting improved mental health, as well as trigger more systems-level change.

The journey has begun, will you join us?

**WE WILL EMPOWER  
SCALABLE SOLUTIONS THAT  
EACH HAVE THE POTENTIAL  
TO SECURE EMERGING  
ADULTS' RIGHT TO BE WELL.**

