

[*FemCities*]

Mental Health or Mental Load?

Conference Documentation

[*FemCities*] Conference 2024

Vienna, Austria



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1. Photographic Impressions from the Conference

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Photo 1: Fish Bowl Discussion with experts

Impressions from the first day of the conference



Photo 2



Photo 5



Photo 3



Photo 6



Photo 4



Photo 7

Impressions from the second day of the conference



Photo 8



Photo 10



Photo 9



Photo 11

Coordination Team



Photo 12: Erzsébet Fanni Tóth, Ricarda Goetz-Preisner, Gina Hargitay



Photo 13: Moderator Sophie Rendl

2. Program

FemCities Conference 2024 Mental Health or Mental Load?

Freudplatz 3, A-1020 Vienna
Top Floor (6th Floor)

**25th Opening of the art
exhibition
26th and 27th of September
2024 Vienna, Austria**

hosted by
FemCities associate partner
Sigmund Freud Private University,
Faculty of Psychotherapy Science

*The FemCities conference 2024
"Mental Health or Mental Load?
Mental health care as a city
responsibility" will delve into the
multifaceted intersection of mental
health, women and support systems
by cities, fostering crucial
conversations on pressing issues
faced by today's urban
environments.*

Location:
Sigmund Freud Private
University, Campus Prater

25th of September, Wednesday

18:30 Exhibition opening *Femina creativa : female perspectives on art*
Curators: Marie-Theres Haas & Melanie Heckl
Venue, Room 603, 6th Floor, no registration required

26th of September, Thursday

Moderation by Sophie Rendl

08:30 Arrival, registration, welcome coffee

09:15 Welcome Words

- Iris Lagler, Deputy Head City of Vienna Department for Women 's Affairs
- Alfred Pritz, Rector of Sigmund Freud Private University
- Ricarda Goetz-Preisner, Coordinator of FemCities network
- Erzsébet Fanni Tóth, Vice Dean International Affairs Sigmund Freud Private University

10:30 Keynotes

- Keynote 1
Educating mental health professionals with a gender perspective
Agnes Stephenson and Elisabeth Schafer
Sigmund Freud Private University
- Keynote 2
Study presentation: Mental Health in Vienna
Eleonore Miller-Reiter
Psychosocial Services Vienna

12:30 Lunch break

13:30 Fishbowl discussion with keynote speakers, facilitator: Ricarda Goetz-Preisner

14:45 Coffee break

15:00 Supervision groups

- ROOM 104 / *Mental load of mothers "Mom can do it all"*
Facilitator: Ivana Dragic
- ROOM 105 / *Women in positions of power "Queen bee or motherhood"*
Facilitator: Erzsébet Fanni Tóth
- ROOM 106 / *Mental health in migrant / BIPOC communities "Arriving with a backpack"*
Facilitator: Gina Hargitay
- MAIN ROOM / *Burnout in the workplace "Just one more email"*
Facilitator: Katharina Scherfler

16:30 Wrap up of 1st day and dinner invitation

19:00 Networking Dinner at own costs at Luftburg Prater, Waldsteingartenstraße 128, Vienna 1020 Austria

27th of September, Friday

Moderation by Sophie Rendl

- 9:00 Arrival, registration, welcome coffee and registration for the cultural event
- 9:30 Wrap up of the first day, facilitators: Ricarda Goetz-Preisner and Erzsébet Fanni Tóth
- 10:00 World Café Participants inputs
- *MAIN ROOM / Sigmund Freud Outreach Client Clinic*
Facilitator: Yannik Neuhaus
 - *ROOM 104 / Peregrina*
Facilitators: Andrea Kaiser-Horvath, Marianna Mkrtchian, Marija Mitic
 - *ROOM 105 / Association's Vilnius Women's House*
Facilitators: Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė and Zuzana Vasiliauskaitė
 - *ROOM 106 / Femspace*
Facilitator: Eva Pogacsas
 - *ROOM tba / Vienna Women 's Health Program*
Facilitator: Alexandra Muench-Beurle
- 10:30 World café breakout sessions – Participants can visit two sessions
- 12:00 Wrap up of World café, FemCities partner outreach, reminder cultural event and evening talk
- 12:30 Networking Lunch, FemCities info desk with Ricarda Goetz-Preisner
- 14:30 Cultural event, meeting point 14:00 at the venue
- I. Guided tour Wien Museum, 20 spots
 - II. Walking tour about famous women, Start University of Vienna, 20 spots
- 18:30 Talk and Discussion: The future of women's mental health in global perspective
Ledia Lazeri, Regional Adviser for Mental Health at the WHO Regional Office
Facilitator: Erzsébet Fanni Tóth

3. Review of the Conference

The FemCities Conference 2024, held on 26th and 27th September at Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU) Vienna, brought together experts, activists, and city officials to address the critical issue of mental health and its connection to women's roles in society. Co-organised by the FemCities Network and the City of Vienna, the event focused on how urban environments can better support mental health care, particularly for women.

Mental Load: A Hidden Burden on Women

The two-day conference, titled “Mental Health or Mental Load? Mental Health Care as a City Responsibility” explored the dual pressures that many women face in balancing professional careers and personal caregiving duties. Discussions centred around the concept of “mental load,” the often invisible mental effort required to manage households and caregiving responsibilities—tasks which frequently fall to women.

Experts from across Europe participated in panels and workshops, examining how cities can create more inclusive support systems for mental health. The conference emphasised the need to break down stereotypes surrounding caregiving and explored strategies to create a more balanced approach to managing mental health within urban settings.

Artistic Highlight: “Femina Creativa” Exhibition

One of the highlights of the event was the exhibition “Femina Creativa: Female Perspectives on Art”, adding a visual depth to the discussions that took place. This exhibition provided a unique artistic lens on the themes of the conference, showcasing how female artists interpret and engage with issues of mental health and gender roles.



Photo 14: © Art by Ludovica Fabian, Ferl, 2018

Closing Session: The Future of Women's Mental Health

The closing session of the conference featured an insightful talk on "The Future of Women's Mental Health in a Global Perspective" led by Ledia Lazeri, Regional Adviser for Mental Health at the WHO Regional Office. The session offered expert insights into the global challenges and opportunities shaping women's mental health, with SFU's Erzsébet Fanni Tóth facilitating the discussion.

[Review: FemCities Conference 2024 | Sigmund Freud Private University](#)

3.1. Official Welcome and Opening of the Conference

**Sophie Rendl, moderator of the conference and employee in the City of Vienna
Department for Women**

Welcome to the 16th FemCities conference with a pressing issue combined with the gender issue. Women take most of paid and unpaid care work. One reason leading to overstimulation, mental load. This is even more affected by poverty.

The connection between mental health and gender is very important. We will try to look at it in a more intersectional way. The more intersections, the more mental health issues. Also the more likely if you seek help, you will be discriminated against. Even in stable situation women take up most emotional labour in our daily lives. Trying to break stereotypes and stigmatisation around mental health that is still present in our society, is one of the goals of this conference.

Take this conference as a moment of self-reflection. You as city employees and students have the power to inform change. We try to offer various forms for the beginning of this discussion and program to make change. It is not a coincidence that we chose the topic of mental health and mental load for Vienna as it is the hometown of psychotherapy. Highlighting the remarkable work of women in the field that has often been overshadowed by male colleagues.

Our code of conduct is: Please only share what you want to share. There is no pressure to share if you don't feel comfortable. If someone shares something personal, please see the shared thoughts in a non-judgmental way. We'd like to create an inclusive environment. Reflect on a broader and structural level.

FemCities is about exchanging practices, ideas, strategies. We invite our attendees from 5 different countries and 10 different cities to do this in the following two days.

Alfred Pritz, Rector of Sigmund Freud Private University

Gave a special welcome to the European participants. He mentioned Sigmund Freud as a “man who decided to understand the human soul” and this will guide the conference.

He then told the story about the history of naming the place where the University and conference takes place, that when the University was being built in late 2010s, he had asked the political representative of the second district to name this place “Sigmund Freud Place”. Following the Green party wanted the place to be named after Anna Freud. Therefore they agreed on calling it Freudplatz to honour both Sigmund and Anna Freud.

There is always the question of empowerment. The Sigmund Freud University tried to have an equilibrium in the power of guidance of the university. There are three power bodies. Rectorate (consisting of two men and two women), the Senate (leader is female) and the University council (four women and one man). This might be one reason that the conference is here. Dr. Tóth was very active in this context and I’m happy that the City of Vienna is a partner today.

3.2. Welcome Words by the City of Vienna

Iris Lagler, Deputy Head City of Vienna Department for Women’s Affairs



Photo 15

Gave her warmest regards and greetings from Vice Mayor and City Councillor for Women’s issues Kathrin Gaál and head of the Department for Women, Laura Wimmer.

The City of Vienna department for Women has one mission, one goal: To enhance the lives of all girls and women here in Vienna. We believe that every woman and girl has the right to live a life of equality, self-determination and safety.

The focus of today’s conference “mental health from a gender perspective”, is crucial in the fight for equality. Balancing work and personal life is a major aspect in every women’s life. The mental load, the unpaid care load is something that we need to address.

I want to thank Ricarda Goetz-Preisner and the team of the Sigmund Freud University for making this conference possible and I wish you all a successful conference.

3.3. Welcome Words by FemCities Coordinator

Ricarda Goetz-Preisner, City of Vienna, Department for Women's Affairs



Photo 16

The welcome words started with the sad news, that our long-standing FemCities partner Priska Pschaid, who was our contact person for the City of Graz Women's Department, has passed away in March. Doris Kirschner will be following in her stead. A big applause followed to honor her contribution to women's empowerment.

Then the new FemCities website was introduced and guests were invited to show case a project there.

The FemCities network brings together Cities as partners and other organisations as associate partners in networking for gender equality. Around 30 City administrations are FemCities network partners – some of our newest members we can welcome today to their first FemCities experience such as representatives. The two **newest members** are:

The **Municipality of Athens** with Georgia Bouri, we are happy to have you! This year, also the **Gender Equality Department of the City of Dudelange** from Luxemburg joined our network, welcome Annabelle Laborier-Saffran. And following I want to greet Jitka Sklenářová from **the City of Esslingen** for being to new contact person of Esslingen.

The objectives of FemCities include the exchange of best practices, expert networking on the local level, mutual support and cooperation. As FemCities coordinator I would like to thank all our speakers and contributors to the conference and everyone from my department and the colleagues from our FemCities Associate Partner, the Sigmund Freud Private University, Faculty of Psychotherapy Science for making this conference happen.

3.4. Welcome Words and Introduction by Host

Erzsébet Fanni Tóth, Vice Dean International Affairs Sigmund Freud Private University



Photo 17

The host, represented by Erzsébet Fanni Tóth warmly welcomed the participants of the conference.

I have been working really hard trying to put the best of the mental health perspective in this conference to describe what mental health and mental load is from a city administration and university level.

Regarding the mentioned Freudplatz, I keep asking myself, "Where is Anna?" "Where is she in your daily practices? Imagine a daily practice where "Anna" (representing women in general) is present.

In Vienna we don't have much reminding us about her name and heritage. Together we can change this.

I encourage my students to count the items in their reference list and say how many men and how many women are authors in their list.

I call them out to take a look at how often we include women in our research because this is important.

I invite you to put up some posters with your ideas on the wall following the questions:

"What does mental load mean to you?" Think about what these mean to you.

"What do you plan to do to ease your own mental load?"

"What do you imagine to do to help other women around you ease it?"

4. Keynote Speech: Educating mental health professionals with a gender perspective

Agnes Stephenson and Elisabeth Schafer, Sigmund Freud University



EDUCATING MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS WITH A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Mag.a Agnes Stephenson MA, SFU LINZ
Mag.*a Dr.*in Elisabeth Schäfer MAS, SFU LINZ

Photo 18: Agnes Stephenson and Elisabeth Schafer

Presentation:

TRAINING OF PSYCHOTHERAPISTS

- ... focuses on diagnoses and treatments
- ... spends less time learning about the social, cultural, and political conditions that can cause or worsen mental health problems
- Possibilities and limits how psychotherapists should react on public, media, and political discussions



When and on what topics should psychotherapists speak out?

What responsibilities do psychotherapists have in social processes?

Should psychotherapists share their opinions on social issues during therapy?

When might talking about social issues interfere with therapy?

What information about social conditions is part of the psychoeducational role of psychotherapists?

When is it useful or necessary for psychotherapists to discuss in therapy how power and domination affect individuals?



UNLEARNING

... question dominant knowledge, how it is produced and passed on

... recognizing that privileges limit experiences and narrow perspectives

... reflection as educational necessity

... epistemic violence shapes the language, content, and behaviour

... education can both support domination structures AND challenge them

... constantly reflect on and question yourself and your position

... analyzing what kinds of exclusion practices have helped to establish knowledge



PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PATRIARCHY

... reveal and deconstruct still-active mechanisms of patriarchal oppression

... gender and health/illness

... labeling of gender-specific illnesses

... "valid" illnesses



Moving Uterus



Evil possession

HISTORY OF HYSTERIA



dramatic symptoms Charcot



sensitivity of female nervous system

PATRIARCHAL NARRATIVE

... to be in a relationship and to become a mother

... women are defined by their relationship with a man

... women's participation in their own oppression is a result of being socialized into these patterns

... unlearning these hidden patriarchal structures in psychotherapy



GENDER BINARY

... expectations linked to the expected gender are already placed on the unborn child

... two-gender system is the basis for constructing one gender as superior to the other

... children, who do not fit into this binary system are seen as "not normal", as "the other"



HETERONORMATIVITY

... heterosexual family as standard relationship model

... women continue unpaid care work within the family

... fulfill society's expectations in ways that support patriarchy

... reinforces the power imbalance between men and women

... what feels like personal failure or inadequacy can be exposed as the result of hegemonic societal structures



WHAT DOES THIS
MEAN FOR THE
TRAINING OF FUTURE
PSYCHOTHERAPISTS?

- ... psychotherapy training as unlearning space
- ... psychotherapy as an unequal relationship that is embedded within existing power structures
- ... critically examining the profession's role in maintaining societal power structures
- ... deconstructing power and patriarchal norms

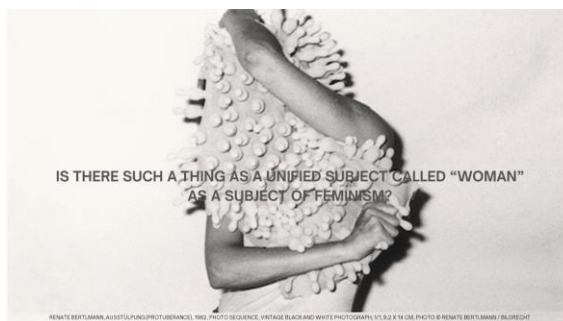
BEFORE PSYCHOTHERAPISTS CAN CREATE AN
UNLEARNING SPACE FOR THEIR CLIENTS, THEY
MUST LEARN TO UNLEARN THEMSELVES.

UNLEARNING AS TRANSFORMATIVE GESTURE
OF DECONSTRUCTION



THE POLITICAL GOAL OF
FEMINISM

Joan Scott describes **gender** as “a primary field within which or by means of which power is articulated” (Scott 1986: 1065)

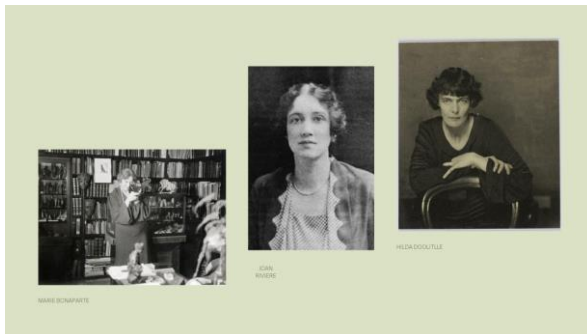


DECONSTRUCTION
AS UNLEARNING

The **ongoing process of questioning at the core of Deconstruction** is about negotiating the impossible and the undecidable and, in so doing, **remaining open to the possibility of justice**.



THE IMPACT OF WOMEN
ON THE DEVELOPMENT
OF PSYCHOANALYSIS
AND PSYCHOTHERAPY



Women also played an important role in the further development and dissemination of psychoanalysis. Freud's daughter Anna followed in her father's footsteps, and Joan Riviere was one of the first translators of his works, alongside Marie Bonaparte.

Women have also made very important contributions to the further development of psychoanalytic theory and they have questioned the classical psychoanalytic concepts of femininity, just as gay and lesbian analysts later questioned pathological concepts of homosexuality.

Today, the aim is to build on this criticism from a queer and trans perspective, to question stereotypical gender concepts and pathologizations.

While Freud was very open to homosexuals and had no objections to homosexuals as analysts, the period after Freud was characterized by a hostile, pathologizing and exclusionary attitude towards homosexuals due to National Socialism, but also for many decades afterwards until the 1990s.



Psychotherapy in all its different schools, techniques and settings has the task of listening to the subject's speech, of developing an awareness of the subject's speech that perceives both what is said and what is unsaid.

It is a permanent work of deconstruction when we ask, **where do our assumptions about others come from?** When are we certain about our assumptions, when are we uncertain, how much space do we give to uncertainty? Are we aware that our view of others is shaped by racist, anti-Semitic, gender-specific, classist, etc. attributions? How do we deal with the fact that – contrary to our self-perception – we also sometimes repeat such stereotypes and use them in our dealings with others?

What kind of approach opens up a space for the other(s) and does not kill – not even in the literal sense. What kind of solidarity with women in patriarchal societies all over the globe is possible and not an encroachment, asks french-algerian feminist Hélène Cixous in 1979, understanding the work of writing, creative work, as an unconditional relationship of love. In her early essays poetics and politics and psychoanalysis are necessarily intertwined. The path to become creative and to work on new styles of cooperation and communication is at the same time an existential practice against forgetting, against the forgetting of oppression.



Patriarchy, for Cixous, exists in a cultural and historical context with active power relations.

Cixous encourages women to "think differently" about their histories, to invent another history or more precise: *her-story* with their own language that is free from any bias and and which is capable of producing new perspectives and concepts on the social, cultural, political etc. situation of women.

Exactly a concept developed in the context of creative, artistic work will be the main topic of this conference: **Mental Load**. A term that has evolved from a feminist comic by french Comic Artist EMMA into a term for feminist psychotherapy.

So when we ask women to take on this task of organisation, and at the same time to execute a large portion, in the end it represents 75% of the work.



Feminists call this work *the mental load*.

EMMA CREATING THE MENTAL LOAD: A FEMINIST COMIC. NEW YORK: SEVEN STORES PRESS.

Psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and psychotherapy science and studies, which work from a queer-feminist and gender and diversity sensible perspective, must **keep alive** the possibility of their own deconstruction and unlearning processes and the concern for a permanent critical theory in relation to and within themselves.

Elisabet Schaefer - synopsis

The role of psychotherapists is to support people in overcoming personal challenges. As physicians focus on the physical PTs focus on the mental. There is too little time invested in learning about social, cultural and political conditions. They shape people's lives, influenced by systems of power.

"Psychotherapy training is not only about learning, but also about unlearning" challenging norms that affect mental health.

PT is shaped by these structures. Shaping the language, content of behaviour that create a collective reality that serves violent power structures. By not reflecting on educational institutions which act politically we create marginalisation and discrimination. Education plays important role. It can both support and challenge domination structures.

Education, learning knowledge are tied to structures of power. From a feminist perspective: it is important to unlearn heteronormative ideas and the gender binary. Feminist perspective in psychotherapy can deconstruct active mechanisms of patriarchal structures.

The connection between gender and health/illness was traditionally attributed to hysteria. Historically caused by the uterus moving for childless or nonsexually active women. The history of hysteria is a story of how female illness has been seen by society, ignored or at best barely considered the possibility that symptoms were caused by the conditions women experienced in a patriarchal society. This furthers a narrative that still exists today.

"Patriarchy works because women take part in their own oppression". PT can offer a space where these patterns can be challenged. Gender binary: From before birth gender is a big topic. Expectations linked to expected gender are placed on the unborn child. Sexuality and gender identity should be seen as a continuum, not a constant.

Working women still take on pressure for most of the family care which creates risks for mental overload. Can PT help to contribute by deconstructing patriarchal societal views allowing women to develop new social structures that help to emancipate them from their oppressive load. Patriarchal beliefs can either be reinforced or challenged by PT.

PTs can show clients how societal mechanisms can lead to their suffering. They can offer new interpretations to their clients. Develop new ways of understanding behaviour emotions and patterns. Can integrate new insight in therapeutic process.

"Understanding individual suffering without pathologizing it".

"Before Psychotherapists can create an unlearning space for their clients they must learn to unlearn themselves."

Agnes Stephenson – synopsis

Unlearning as a transformative gesture of deconstruction.

The goal of political feminism: elimination of oppression, exploitation and women based on their gender.

“The private is political”: subordination of women is not an individual problem. It is firmly established in structural and political spheres. Identifying mechanisms of reproduction of gender domination in patriarchal societies in order to identify and transform them.

The category “women” is in itself a diverse one. Is there a unified subject “the woman” as the subject of feminism? Queer feminism fights against compulsion to divide ourselves into only two genders.

Deconstruction: only through endless deconstruction can we prevent existing domination patterns from reproducing themselves. The ongoing process of questioning at the core of deconstruction is about negotiating the impossible and the undecidable and, in so doing, remaining open to the possibility of justice.

As long as women throughout the world are deprived of their voice and autonomy we need feminism and queer movements as a stance of resistance.

The impact of women on the development of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy:

Psychoanalysis gave women the opportunity to participate in scientific discourse without any former requirements. This made it possible to pursue a path to higher education which played an important role in the development of PA. PT continues to change with new insights in a changing society and continues to welcome contributions from queer and trans participants.

“Women have shaped the field of PA and PT from the beginning.”

“Invent another history or, more precisely, HER-story”

Psychoanalysis, psychotherapy and psychotherapy science and studies, which work from a queer-feminist and gender and diversity sensible perspective, **must** keep alive **the possibility** of their own deconstruction and unlearning processes **and the concern** for a permanent critical theory and relation to and within themselves.

5. Keynote Speech: Psychosocial health in Vienna. Studies by Psychosocial Services of Vienna

Eleonore Miller-Reiter

Psychosocial health in Vienna

Studies by Psychosocial Services of Vienna : From 2020 to today

Prim^a Drⁱⁿ Eleonore Miller-Reiter,

Deputy Medical Director Psychosocial Services of Vienna

FEMCITIES CONFERENCE 2024

Vienna, 26 September 2024



Psychosocial health in Vienna

Who we are

- The Psychosocial Services of Vienna form an extensive network of treatment and counselling facilities to ensure comprehensive and targeted basic social psychiatric care.
- We primarily treat people with severe mental illnesses. This includes: Depression, anxiety disorders, stress disorders, personality disorders, and especially schizophrenic disorders.
- Due to the severity of their illness and the considerable impairments it often causes in their everyday lives, the people who make use of our services have a very high need for multi-professional support, often over a long period of time.



Psychosocial health in Vienna

Overview

- Who we are
- How it all began
- The psychosocial status quo
- The role of gender
- Needed support for severely affected groups
- Psychosocial health over the course of four years
- The study embedded in the public health strategy
- Further expansion of Psychosocial Services of Vienna



Psychosocial health in Vienna

Who we are

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Psychosocial Services of Vienna



In all Psychosocial Services of Vienna facilities, a total of

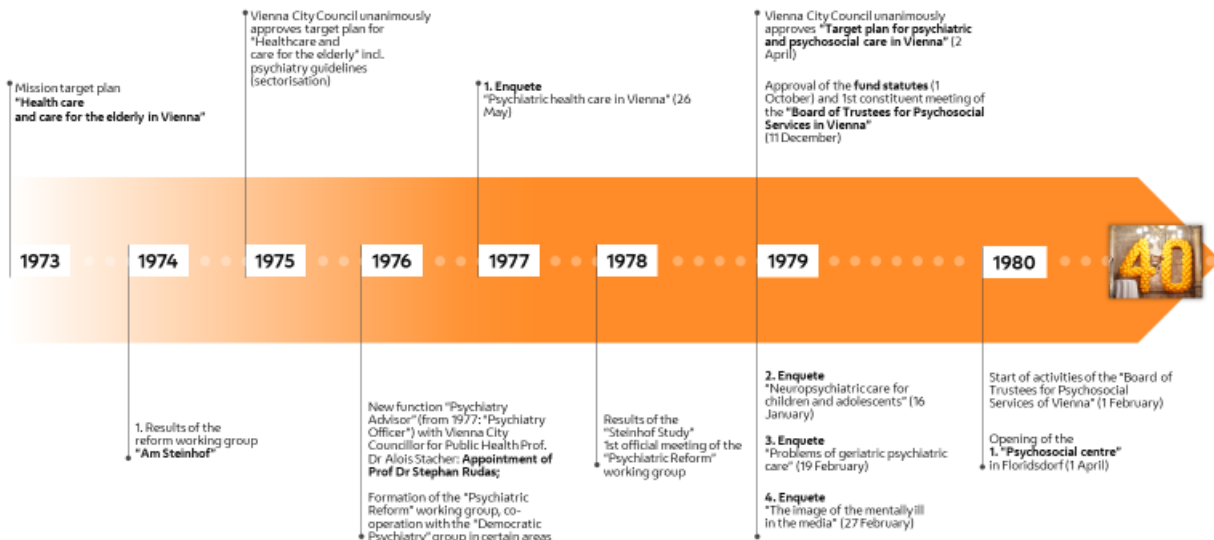
13921
people

Are treated, cared for,
counselled, and
accompanied
With over **355,000**
services



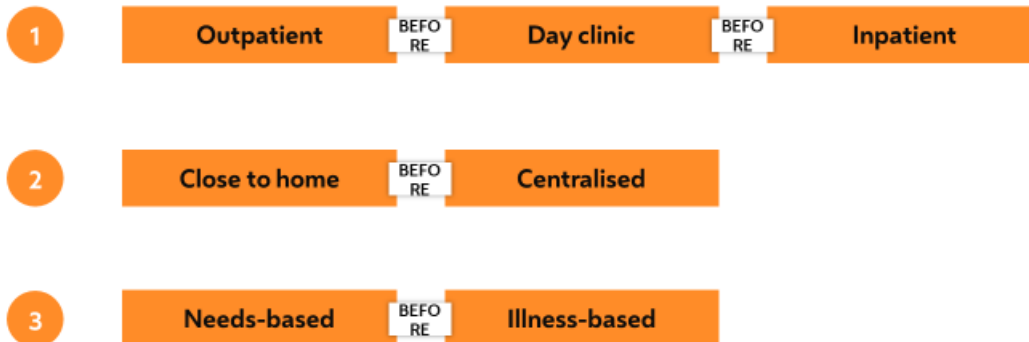
The Viennese Psychiatry Reform

How it all began



Principles of mental health care in Vienna

Social psychiatric paradigm according to Heinz Katschnig, 1974



Psychosocial health in Vienna

How it all began

- In April/May 2020, the first representative survey on the psychosocial consequences of the coronavirus pandemic was conducted on behalf of Psychosocial Services of Vienna, MA 23 (Economy, Labour, Statistics), Fonds Soziales Wien and MA 57 (Vienna Women's Service)
- 1000 participants (including 500 from the previous year's survey)
- The survey covers topics such as physical and mental health before and during the pandemic, psychosocial symptoms (such as depression, disorientation, substance use, suicidal thoughts, etc.), current sorrows and concerns, need for support services and assessment of the social and political situation.
- Objective: To assess crisis reactions of different population groups, identify risk groups, recognise the sociological and psychosocial status quo and act accordingly



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Subjective changes in mental health

Self-evaluation of one's mental health:

- The subjective assessment improved as the pandemic situation eased.
- 19% of all participants have reported a subjective improvement of their mental health (+10% compared to 2022).
- 28% report a subjective decline of their mental health (-6% compared to 2022).

Financial situation:

- 45% are experiencing a decline of their financial situation due to the rising cost of living (housing, energy, food, loan interest rates; +11% compared to 2022).

Strong relation between social situation and mental health:

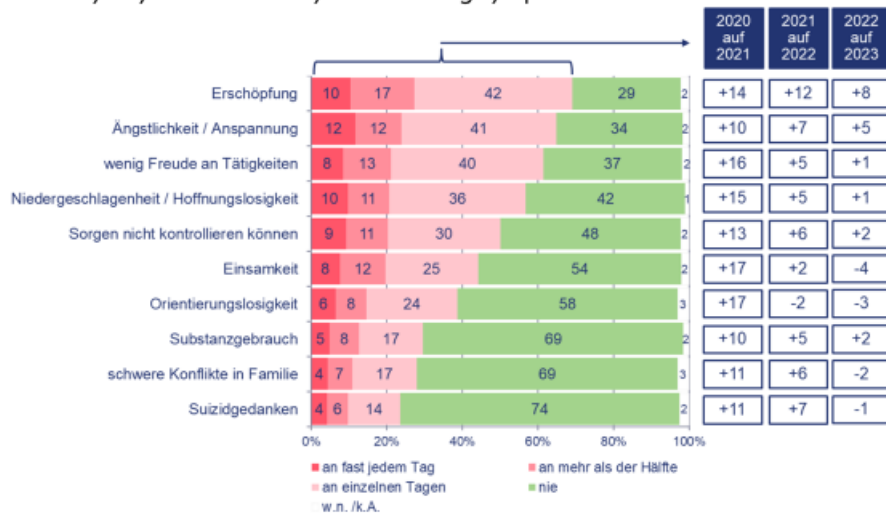
- Ø 4,1 Symptoms in case of reliable support
- Ø 6,6 Symptoms in case of no reliable support



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Psychosocial symptoms

Question: Thinking about the past few weeks: Did you never, on individual days, on more than half of the days or on almost every day feel affected by the following symptoms?



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Psychosocial symptoms

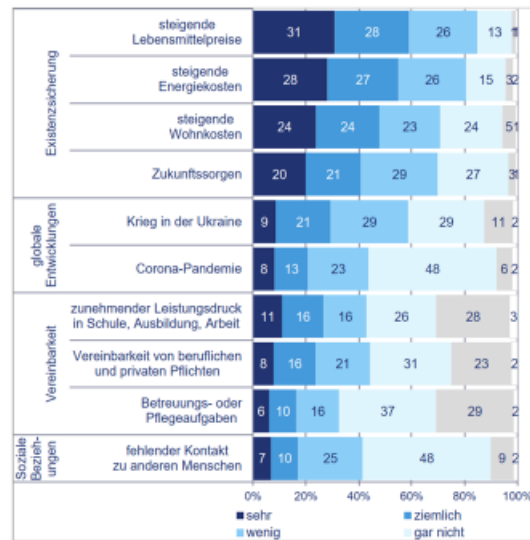
- For the past three years, around half of all people in Vienna have been suffering from uncontrollable anxiety.
- 69% of the participants have been affected by exhaustion in their everyday lives in recent weeks, which is 8% more than in 2022.
- 65% are affected by anxiety in their everyday routines, which is 5% more than in 2022.
- A quarter of the people report recurring thoughts of no longer wanting to live. ⇒ Reports of suicidal thoughts almost quadrupled between 2020 and 2022 (increase from 7 % to 25 %)
- One in five people report a continuous deterioration in their mental health over the past two years.
- For 59%, inflation is a heavy burden.



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Specific burdens

Question: In the last four weeks, have you been very, fairly, slightly or not at all stressed by ...?



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

The role of gender

Gender Gap in mental stress

- Number of reported symptoms in men has fallen slightly since 2022 to Ø 4.1 symptoms (-0.2 % compared to 2022)
- For women, it stabilised at a high level with Ø 5.2 symptoms (+0.1% compared to 2022)

9 out of 10 young women (up to the age of 29) suffer from exhaustion and anxiety to such an extent that coping with everyday life is significantly more difficult, at least on some days

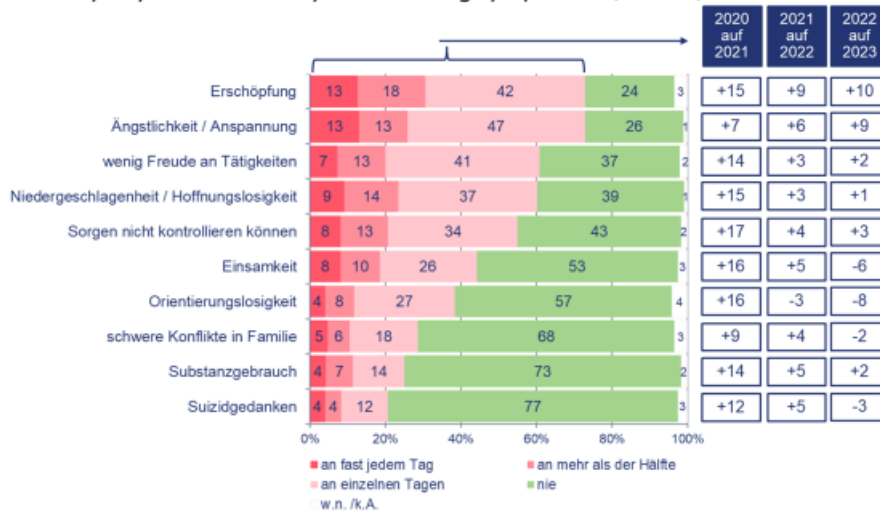
Symptoms	Women	Men
Exhaustion	73%	65%
Fears	73%	57%
Insomnia	72%	60%
Feeling subdued	60%	53%
Uncontrolled anxiety	55%	45%



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

The role of gender

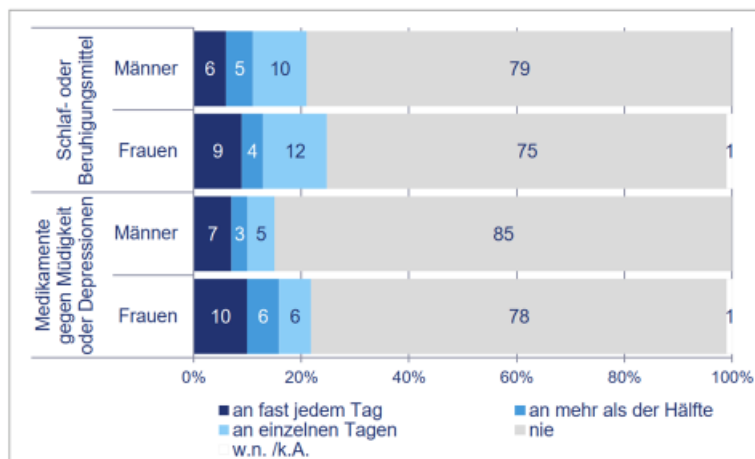
Question: Thinking about the past few weeks: Did you never, on individual days, on more than half of the days or on almost every day feel affected by the following symptoms? (Female)



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

The role of gender

Question: In the last four weeks, have you never, on individual days, on more than half of the days or on almost every day taken ...?



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023
The role of gender

- Economic conditions
 - Since 2020, the number of symptoms experienced by people in Vienna in the lower economic third has steadily increased (2020: Ø 3,6 Symptoms; 2023: Ø 6,7 Symptoms)
⇒2023 stronger increase in the lower third than in the middle (roughly unchanged) and upper third (decline compared to 2022)
 - In the lower third, women's mental health has deteriorated for the third time in a row to an average of Ø 7.1 symptoms!
- Rising food prices and energy costs are a burden for around two thirds of women.
- Rising housing costs are a major burden one in two women (53%).
- 49% of women suffer from a fear of the future.



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023
The role of gender

- The greatest burdens are carried by women who perform care work and among young women under the age of 29, especially those who are in the lower economic third
- Care work: For men with children, the number of symptoms is decreasing, for women with children they have increased further (Ø 6.1 for women and Ø 4.3 for men)
- Ø 7.5 symptoms in young women compared to Ø 6.3 symptoms in young men

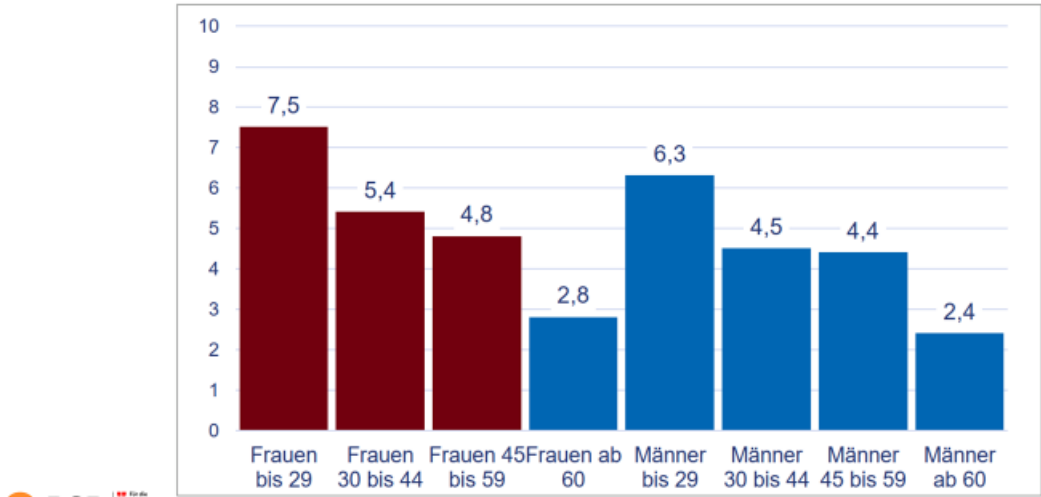
Symptoms	Women up to 29 years of age	Men up to 29 years of age
Exhaustion	94%	70%
Fears	94%	79%
Uncontrolled anxiety	83%	70%



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

The role of gender

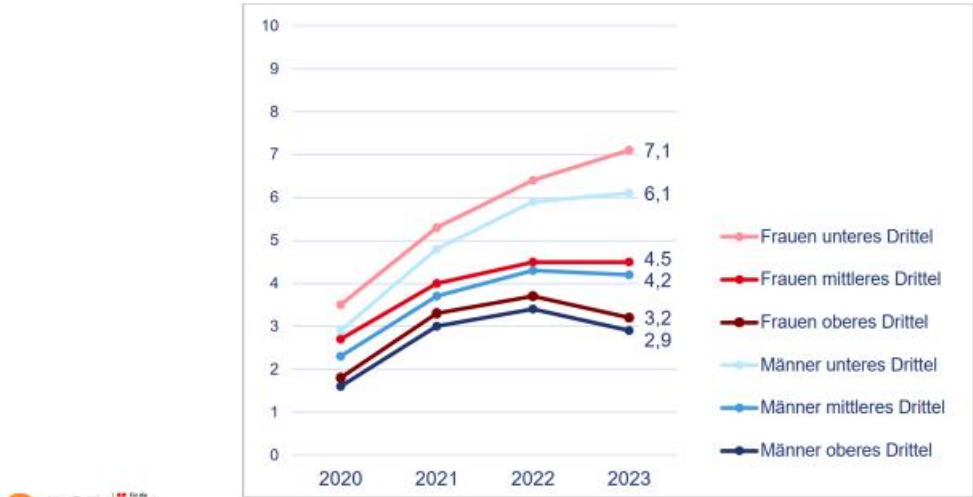
Number of reported symptoms (Gender and age)



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

The role of gender

Number of reported symptoms over time (Gender and class)



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Needed support for severely affected groups

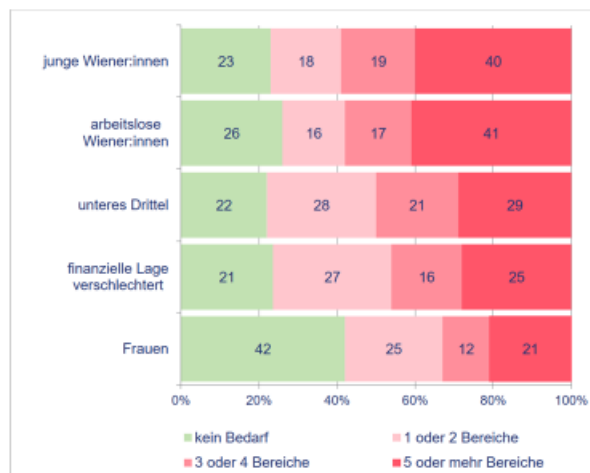
- 55% of people in Vienna report a need for support in at least one area of life (+10% compared to 2022).
- Just under a fifth (around 330,000 people) need support in five or more areas of life
⇒ Very or fairly high need in the areas of finance (30%), physical health (23%), mental health (22%) and housing (21%)
- 21% have sought help, but 34% would like to seek help but have not done so.
⇒ Of the 34%, 28% were ashamed to seek professional help, 22% did not know where help was available and 17% were unable to find any information despite searching.



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Needed support for severely affected groups

Question: Do you currently have a very great, rather great, rather small or no need for help in the following areas?



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Needed support for severely affected groups

Needed support in the area of mental health for severely affected groups:

Group	Need
Young people from Vienna	41%
unemployed persons from Vienna	55%
Lower economic third	35%
Economic instability (financial situation has aggravated over the past 12 months)	30%

⇒ The groups most affected are the least likely to know where to turn when they are feeling mentally unwell.



Results of the study on psychosocial health of the people of Vienna 2023

Needed support for severely affected groups

- 58% of women report a need for support in at least one area of their lives, compared to 49% of men.
- 21% of the people of Vienna aged 16 and over (around 182,000 women) have needs in five or more areas.

Need for support	Women	Men
Financial issues	36%	24%
Mental health	23%	20%
Physical health	23%	23%
Everyday life	22%	10%



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

Overview

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Overall	People from Vienna 16 years and over	People from Vienna 16 years and over	People from Vienna 16 years and over	People from Vienna 16 years and over
Random sampling	Random selection	Random selection	Random selection	Random selection
Total number of people surveyed	1004	1003	1008	1033
Number of people surveyed Panel	0	500	413/233	502
Survey type	Phone and Online interviews	Phone and Online interviews	Phone and Online interviews	Phone and Online interviews
Survey period	27 April to 17 May 2020	17 March to 20 April 2022	27 April to 25 May 2022	15 May to 19 June 2023



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

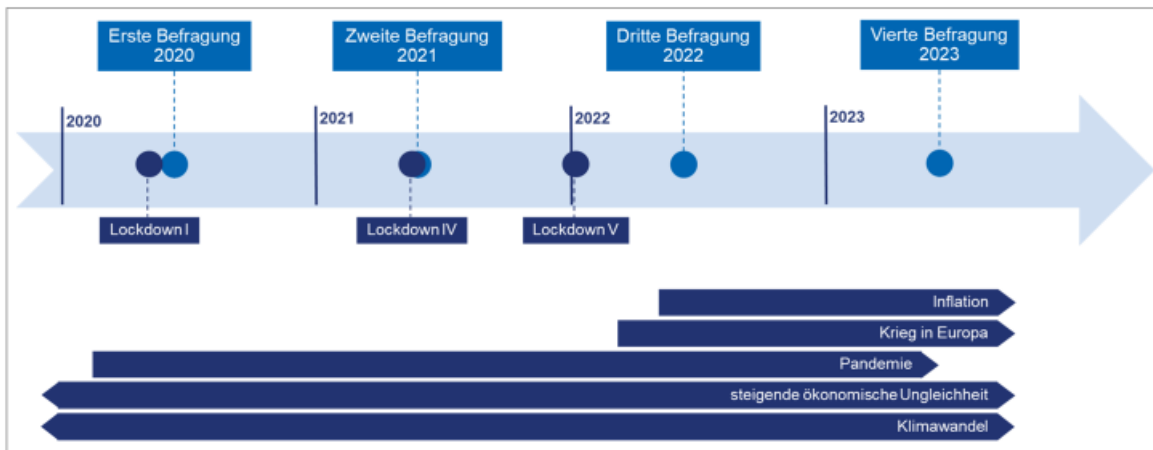
Survey timeline

- The survey in spring 2020 was conducted directly after the first lockdown and therefore in a time of great uncertainty.
- The second survey in spring 2021 coincided with the fourth lockdown, which came at the end of twelve challenging months with restricted social contacts, closed schools and childcare facilities and massive upheavals in the world of work.
- In spring 2022, at the time of the third survey, the pandemic situation had eased significantly and most of the measures to contain it had already been lifted. However, the war against Ukraine had just begun and inflation was also on the rise.



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

Survey timeline



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

Results 2020 - 2023

- In 2023, one in five people reported a continuous deterioration in their mental health over the past two years.
- In 2023, 69% of the people of Vienna stated that they had been affected by exhaustion in their everyday routines on at least some days in the past four weeks. In spring 2020 - directly after the first lockdown - 'only' 35% were affected.
- In 2021, one in two persons was still affected by depressive symptoms, in 2022 and 2023 it was around 60%.



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

Results 2020 - 2023

- For the past three years, around half of all people in Vienna have been suffering from uncontrollable anxiety.
- Only loneliness among Viennese people has decreased after the pandemic and stands at 45% in 2023.
- Suicidal thoughts almost quadrupled from 2020 to 2022 (from 7% to 25%), and a quarter of the people of Vienna still reported recurring thoughts of no longer wanting to live in 2023.
- Young people are particularly affected: Over time, symptoms among young people (aged 16 to 29) rose particularly sharply in the second year of the pandemic and have currently levelled off at the high level of 2022.



Psychosocial health over the course of four years

Conclusion

- The past few years have been characterised by the pandemic, the return of war to Europe, high inflation and - as a result - the shattering of individual and social self-images.
- These stresses are clearly reflected in the studies.
- People's mental health has deteriorated continuously and sustainably.
- The symptoms reported by the people of Vienna indicate that the situation remains tense, and the current poor psychosocial state has stabilised at a high level following the pandemic.



Importance of the studies in the public health strategy

- Amid the current multiple crises and the stresses related to them, information on the mental health of the population is becoming increasingly important.
- Ongoing and systematic monitoring of mental health is increasingly being integrated into existing public health strategies.
- Although population surveys do not capture the complexity of mental health, they create an overall picture of the current state of health of the population and depict relevant dynamics in this respect.
- They provide up-to-date assessments, information on short-term changes and reveal long-term developments.



Further expansion of psychosocial services

Adult and geriatric psychiatry

- Existing Psychosocial Services of Vienna services are constantly being developed and expanded - also based on the results of the study.
- New facilities are also being opened, always in accordance with the following principles: close to home, needs-based and needs-orientated, and outpatient before day-care before inpatient.
- Equally important: The inter-connection of treatment structures and co-operation partners as well as ensuring continuous treatment and care.
- In 2023, almost 14,000 people received treatment, support, and counselling at our facilities, more than ever before.
- The Geriatric Psychiatry Centre doubled in size and staffing in 2023.



Further expansion of psychosocial services

Child and adolescent psychiatry

- The so-called "Home-Treatment" for children and adolescents (treatment and support at home), which has been in place since 2021, was expanded again in 2023.
- In 2023, PSD Vienna opened its third outpatient centre for child and adolescent psychiatry for up to 600 children and adolescents.
- A total of six child and adolescent psychiatric outpatient centres are to be available in Vienna by 2030.





Photo 19: Expert Agnes Stephenson, SFU and participants

6. Fish Bowl Discussion with Experts

A lively discussion was started with questions being raised about whether or not both the education as well as the availability of mental health care such as therapy is somewhat a luxury and if there is a class bias.

7. Supervision Groups

Supervision was offered for groups in the following areas:

- *Mental load of mothers "Mom can do it all"*
Facilitator: Ivana Dragic
- *Women in positions of power "Queen bee or mothership"*
Facilitator: Erzsébet Fanni Tóth
- *Mental health in migrant / BIPOC communities "Arriving with a backpack"*
Facilitator: Gina Hargitay
- *Burnout in the workplace "Just one more email"*
Facilitator: Katharina Scherfler

8. 27th of September, Friday

Some impressions of the post-its from the conference were:

Question 1 "What does mental load mean to you?":

Plan everything for everyone. Multiple responsibilities. Feeling stuck. Thinking of too much. Never having enough time.

Question 2 "What do you plan to do to ease your mental load?":

Plan to share, plan to delegate. Sharing it with my partner. Yoga, meditation. Hire a reliable babysitter. Take one day a month for yourself.

"Things I learned at the conference"

The need for stronger legislation in favour of feminist policies.

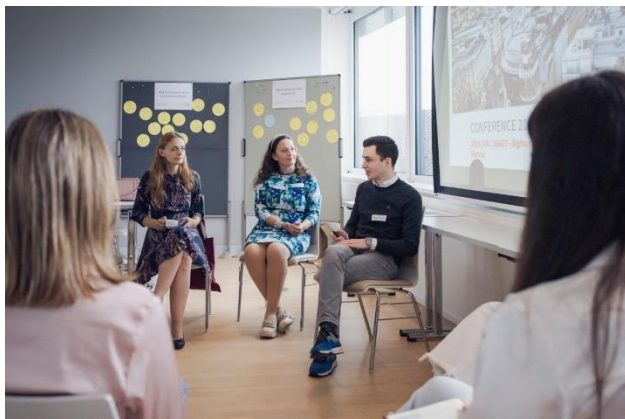
The power of sharing and being vulnerable and the sense of feeling supported

A safe space for women-centred discussion creates so much momentum.

9. Parallel Workshops

9.1. Workshop 1: *Sigmund Freud Outreach Client Clinic*

Facilitator: Yannik Neuhaus



Yannik Neuhaus is a former SFU student and vice Head of the Outpatient Clinic of the SFU.

The Psychotherapeutic University Outpatient Clinic offers patients the opportunity to receive psychotherapy and counselling from psychotherapists and those under supervision. The Psychological University Outpatient Clinic offers treatment, counselling, training, diagnostics, health promotion and prevention. There is a child psychology centre and other special outpatient clinics. The clinic is run mainly by women and they see that women's mental Health is worsening.

9.2. Workshop 2: *Association's Vilnius Women's House*

Facilitators: Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė and Zuzana Vasiliauskaitė



Photo 20: Zuzana and Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė

Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė is the director of the Association's Vilnius Women's House. The house offers help for women who are victims of domestic violence and supports during the post traumatic progress.

9.3. Workshop 3: *Peregrina*

Facilitators: Andrea Kaiser-Horvath, Marianna Mkrtchian



Photo 21: Andrea Kaiser-Horvath, Marianna Mkrtchian

Peregrina's focus on mental health lies on migrant women. What are the special challenges in Mental Health care for migrant women? What are the needs? What is missing? What is being avoided in mainstream mental health care of migrant women. Questions of finances. How do you achieve financial independence? Local education? Many women can't afford that education, resulting in disadvantages for the future. Mindset of accepting a lower quality of life but idealising it due to new surroundings.

Western tools are used universally across all cultural landscapes. Cultural competence. Peregrina has a women-specific treatment approach treating psychological disorders by keeping in mind the background of migration or racism.

9.4. Workshop 4: *Vienna Women's Health Program*

Facilitator: Alexandra Muench-Beurle

The Vienna Women's Health Program works with a bio-psychosocial model. There is no health without mental health. The pressure to conform to beauty standards is working against all of us. Sexual Health and health during pregnancy is as important as enabling all women to make healthy decisions for themselves. What's preventing women from making these decisions? During the lifespan of a woman, at what phases is she particularly vulnerable?

Adolescents/puberty → How our bodies should look or not look. Self-objectification. Risk period for the development of eating disorders and body dysmorphia.

Wishing for a child → changing behaviours to prepare for children. Pressure to prepare the body before pregnancy. Pressure to have children. Decision as to whether or not we want them.

Pregnancy and Postpartum → the right care for pregnant women before and after birth is of great importance.

Workplace → Does it honour the different health needs of the woman?

Menopause → Loss of strength, risk of chronic illness. Incontinence. Societal view of older women as unattractive.

Health worker needs to understand the multidimensional nature of a woman's problems. You can't solve them all, but you should know the various support systems that exist so that you can refer women.



Photo 22: Alexandra Muench-Beurle

9.5. Workshop 4: *Femspace*

Facilitator: Eva Pogacsas



Photo 23: Eva Pogacsas

Femspace is an active community for Hungarian and Hungarian speaking women living in Austria, offering pathways and meeting points to enable women living in a foreign language environment to combine family and work to reach their full potential. It is a professional, non-profit association which is also a space for women to exchange news.

10. FemCities Networking Dinner

With great food at Luftburg Vienna, FemCities partners from the SFU, Luxembourg, Esslingen, and Athens, the next steps of the FemCities network were discussed.



Photo 24: (c) Dimitra Tsiomlexi

11. Cultural Events

On the second day, September 27th, conference guests had the opportunity to enjoy two different cultural events.

The first option was a **guided tour** through the newly renovated **Wien Museum** (Vienna Museum).

<https://www.wienmuseum.at/en>

The second option was a **guided walking tour** around Vienna's famous **Ringstraße**. The tour will focus on renowned Viennese women and how they shaped Vienna today.

12. Talk & Discussion / The Future of Women's Mental Health in a Global Perspective



Photo 26



Photo 25: Ledia Lazeri

Ledia Lazeri, Regional Adviser for Mental Health at the WHO Regional Office, shared her expert insights into the challenges and opportunities shaping women's mental health worldwide.

The event was facilitated by **Erzsébet Fanni Tóth**.

For **Psychotherapy Science students**, participation could be credited as part of the "**Window of Opportunity**".

13. Short Biographies – Speakers and Facilitators

Ivana Dragic

Ivana Dragic holds a doctorate in psychotherapy science and works as a lecturer and researcher at the International Psychotherapy Program at Sigmund Freud Private University in Vienna, Austria, as well as a psychotherapist in private practice. In her research she is focused on emotional literacy and international aspects of psychotherapy.

Ricarda Goetz-Preisner

Ricarda Goetz-Preisner is a political scientist, she works in the basic research section of the City of Vienna, Department for Women's Affairs. She is also the coordinator of the FemCities network. Additionally she is conducting her PhD in game studies with a special focus on diversity in digital games.

Gina S. K. Hargitay

Gina Hargitay is an academic, holding degrees in History and Politics, as well as Psychotherapy Science. Being from a mixed background, Hargitay was inspired to pursue research in the area of race relations, racial identity and systemic racism.

Andrea Kaiser-Horvath

Andrea Kaiser-Horvat is a clinical and health psychologist. She has been working with migrant women and refugees for more than 20 years. Her focus lies on migration, trauma and multilingualism. The consultation languages are Bosnian, Croatian, English, German and Serbian.

Ledia Lazëri

Dr. Ledia Lazëri has been the Regional Adviser for Mental Health at the WHO Regional Office for Europe since May 2021. A native of Albania, she trained and worked as a psychiatrist in her home country, contributing to the education of medical students and later to the national reform of mental health policy and services. Having joined WHO in 2000, Dr Lazëri expanded her scope of work beyond the Balkans region through her work in the Mental Health Project of

the Stability Pact in South Eastern Europe and later in Turkey, where she led a large EU-funded WHO project on Improving Services for People with Disabilities.

She took up duties as Regional Adviser in May 2021, after serving as the WHO Representative to various European countries, where she led the WHO technical cooperation. In her function as Regional Adviser, Dr Lazëri leads a team that brings together expertise in various areas: policy and services, rights and advocacy, communication and promotion in mental health, tasked, among others, with implementing the WHO European Framework for Action in Mental Health 2021-2025 and with supporting the pan-European Mental Health Coalition.

Marianna Mkrtchian

Marianna Mkrtchian is a legal counselor and psychotherapist in training. She has been working in advising refugees and migrants since 2016. Her consultation languages are Armenian, German, English, French and Russian.

Eleonore Miller-Reiter

Prim. Dr.in Miller-Reiter graduated from Medical University of Vienna.

She completed her specialist training in psychiatry, neurology and psychotherapeutic medicine at the University Clinic for Psychiatry in Vienna.

After staying in the US for some time, she returned to the Psychosocial Services of Vienna as a resident medical specialist. After completing hospital management training and further training in change management, she took over the management of the largest socio-psychiatric centre in the city and established the liaison services with Vienna's homelessness service. She focussed specifically on the needs of women both with this project and in all other services.

In July 2024, she was appointed Deputy Medical Director of Psychosocial Services of Vienna and has been an active member of the management team ever since.

Marija Mitić

Marija Mitić is an interdisciplinary researcher and dance movement therapist. She works at the intersections of mental health, socio-cultural relationships, ecological and life transitions, embodiment, and creativity. She is a dance movement therapist at Peregrina.

Alexandra Münch-Beurle

The psychologist Alexandra Münch-Beurle has been a long-standing employee at the Vienna Program for Women's Health. She has focused on topics such as women's health in the workplace, health of single parents, sexual health, body image, mental health around childbirth, cesarean section, and health goals of the city of Vienna.

Yannik Neuhaus

Yannik Neuhaus is a CBT-based psychotherapist in training under supervision. He is a graduate of Sigmund Freud University's Masterprogramm of Psychotherapiescience. He was appointed as the deputy head of SFU's psychotherapeutic outpatient clinics in 2024 and has been working in this position since then.

Sophie Rendl

Sophie Rendl (she/her) studied law and is an expert in violence prevention, codes of conduct, and anti-discrimination. She is also the co-founder of "Frauendomäne," a database for female experts. Three years ago she led the establishment of *vera**, a trusted center against harassment and violence in the fields of arts, culture, and sports. She also served as an external expert in the development of a departmental strategy against sexual harassment in the workplace within the justice sector and represents Austria as a board member of the European Women's Lobby. Since 2021, she has worked in the basic research department of the City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs, where she is responsible for topics like climate and gender, sexual harassment in nightlife, and sexist advertising.

Elisabeth Schäfer

Elisabeth Schäfer is a philosopher* in Vienna. She* teaches and researches in the fields of Deconstruction, Queer-Feminist Philosophy, Psychoanalytic Theory, Body, Violence, Trauma, Écriture feminine, Writing as Artistic Research and Resistant Practice, and on artistic positions on Climate Change.

Katharina Scherfler

Katharina Scherfler earned her Bakkalaureat and Magister degree in psychotherapy science at the Sigmund Freud University in Vienna, Austria. She completed her psychoanalytic training at the Psychoanalytisches Seminar Innsbruck (PSI). Mag.^a Scherfler was licensed in Austria as a psychotherapist (psychoanalysis/psychoanalytic psychotherapy) in 2019. Since then she has completed further education in infant, children and adolescent psychotherapy and several seminars on attachment. Previously, she has worked in institutions dealing with the rehabilitation of mental health, as well as child and adolescent psychotherapy. She works as a psychoanalyst in private practice in Vienna, Austria and is currently working towards earning her doctorate degree, as well as an academic staff member at SFU since 2022.

Agnes Stephenson

Agnes Stephenson is a distinguished psychoanalytic and special and curative pedagogue, currently serving as a University Assistant at the Department of Psychotherapy Science at Sigmund Freud Private University Linz. She is also pursuing her doctoral studies at the Institute for Educational Science and Educational Research at AAU Klagenfurt. Her primary research interests encompass the psychodynamic aspects of social phenomena, the interplay between psychotherapy and pedagogy, global citizenship, identity, and concepts of homeland. With a robust academic and research background, Ms. Stephenson brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the field of psychotherapy and educational sciences.

Erzsébet Fanni Tóth

Ass.-Prof. Dr. Erzsébet Fanni Tóth, MA is Vice Dean International Affairs, Director of the Institute for Transgenerational Trauma Transfer Research, and Lecturer in research methods and university didactics in the International Programme at Sigmund Freud University Vienna. Tóth studied psychology and cultural anthropology at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, sociology and socio-cultural anthropology at the Central European University and holds a PhD in psychotherapy science from SFU. She is an expert in the interdisciplinary application of qualitative research methods with a focus on migration, trauma, identity and gender. Within the framework of international research projects, she is active in the field of cultural and minority research: She researches the memory of the Jewish and Hungarian minorities in Central Europe, the identity changes of transnational migrants.

Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė

Lilija Henrika Vasiliauskė, M.A., is the president of the Association Vilnius Women's House, psychologist-psychotherapist, activists and an international expert in the field of women's human rights and combating violence against women. She is an initiator and co-author of Lithuania Protection from domestic violence law (2011) and a co-author of national and international methodological recommendations on specialized complex help provision for survivors of violence against women. L.H. Vasiliauskė is also one of the initiators and co-founders and a member of Vilnius City Municipality Human Rights Commission (2022).

Zuzana Vasiliauskaitė

Zuzana Vasiliauskaitė, PhD, is an international expert on combating violence against women, a feminist scholar with a doctorate in legal psychology, and a co-creator of the Specialized Complex Help system for survivors of domestic violence in Lithuania.

She is a co-author of national methodological recommendations on specialized complex help provision for survivors of violence against women as well as methodical recommendations on gender equality and non-discrimination in teaching and education processes.

14. About the organizations

FemCities

FemCities is a European network of cities working to promote gender equality. It was previously called Milena and was originally cooperating with cities in Central Europe, especially in Austria, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Today the network has expanded its activities all over Europe and organizes annual conferences on different thematic related to gender equality in local life. There are more than 28 city administrations as partners and 15 associate partners. The coordination of the network lies within the City of Vienna Department for Women's Affairs.



Femina creativa : female perspectives on arts

The exhibition of the university course 'Art Therapy' shows works by a group of 15 international female artists from different generations, ranging from painting, sculpture and photography to installations and textile works. The group exhibition centres on the construct of women, whereby various meanings of the feminine are reflected artistically both from the perspective of women* and on women*.

Curators: Marie-Theres Haas & Melanie Heckl

Femspace

Femspace is a community, and even more than that. It is an association of Hungarian women living in Austria, offering pathways and meeting points to enable women living in a foreign language environment to combine family and work to reach their full potential. is a professional, non-profit association.

Through workshops, mentoring programmes and online activities, it helps women who have moved abroad and are starting over to work abroad to boost their career prospects, to develop professionally and to make new, valuable contacts in their new home country.

Since its foundation in 2017, Femspace has organised hundreds of events in Hungarian, German and English, and moved well beyond the borders of Austria.



Peregrina - Educational, counselling and therapy center for immigrant women

The NGO Peregrina was founded in 1984 by a group of migrant women in Vienna. Peregrina was one of the first self-organized groups in Vienna created to help improve the lives of women who have migrated to Austria. For nearly 40 years, Peregrina supports migrant and refugee women from more than 100 countries of all continents. With our multi professional and multilingual team of legal counselors, psychologists, movement therapist, German language trainers and social counselors we provide social and legal counselling, educational counselling regarding career planning and competences, basic education and German language courses, as well as psychological counselling and movement therapy.

Our psychological treatment has specialized in trauma and migration and is available in the native languages (Bosnian, Serbian, Croatian, German, English, Arabic -with translator) of our clients. Peregrina's counselling services are free of charge and anonymous. Peregrina has been applying low-threshold methods adapted to the target group for a long time. As an organization, Peregrina is funded both by national and regional governmental bodies and by the European Union.



Psychosocial Services in Vienna (PSD-Vienna)

With almost 600 employees and 14,000 treated and cared for people per year, the Psychosocial Services in Vienna (PSD-Vienna) are the largest provider of outpatient psychiatric services in Vienna and throughout Austria.

On behalf of the City of Vienna, we have been treating, looking after and advising people with mental illnesses as well as people in mental crises and emergencies for over 40 years.

There are eight social psychiatric outpatient departments, a social-psychiatric emergency service, specialized clinics, facilities for transitional care and social-psychiatric liaison services to the hospitals. In addition, we work in multi-professional teams. This means that psychiatrists, social workers, psychologists, psychotherapists, occupational therapists, etc. take care of our patients.

For us, "psycho-social" or social psychiatry means placing the social dimension of the emergence, consequences and treatment of mental illnesses at the center of psychiatric care. Mental illness takes place in the middle of society, and their treatment should therefore also take place in the middle of society - low-threshold and close to home - in all areas of life.



Sigmund Freud University

In 2003 the Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU) was founded. Aiming at transforming psychotherapy into psychotherapy science, based on an academic foundation. They were inspired by Sigmund Freud's "The Question of Lay Analysis" from 1926 which anticipated psychoanalysis as a separate discipline. In 2007, the Faculty of Psychology was founded. The approach to psychology taught at the SFU is explicitly embedded within the cultural and social sciences. In this respect, the SFU offers an alternative to so far prevalent approaches of psychology as belonging to the natural sciences.

The first branch abroad was established in 2006 in Paris, followed by Ljubljana, Berlin, Milan and Linz. All branches offer courses in psychotherapy and psychology in the local language and in line with local culture, but based on a common teaching approach. In 2015, a course of studies in medicine was accredited, followed by law in 2016.



Vienna Program for Women's Health

For 25 years, the Vienna Program for Women's Health has been pursuing the goal of adapting healthcare specifically to the needs of women. In all our activities, we consider the promotion of mental health and the reduction of psychological stress to be an essential factor in strengthening the health of women and girls. Great importance is attached to communicating health as a bio-PSYCHO-social dimension and establishing an awareness of equal opportunities and gender equality among the general public. The range of topics covered by the Vienna Program is extensive: sexual health, mental health around pregnancy and childbirth, the pressure to conform to beauty standards, workplace health promotion for women, healthy aging images for women, victim protection, women and migration, health of single parents and much more.

We strive to strengthen the health literacy of girls and women and increase the health competence of organizations. We act as a driving force for measures that strengthen the health of girls and women, such as the counseling center Fem MED this year or the Hotline for Eating Disorders in Vienna at the beginning of our history.

To achieve our goals, we implement projects, connect decision-makers and experts from various fields and disciplines, initiate round tables and platforms, organize specialist conferences, give lectures, develop training events, draw up guidelines and manuals, create guidelines and manuals, produce informational brochures, and much more. Collaboration with healthcare professionals, representatives of the Vienna healthcare system, and the Vienna city administration is essential for us. The women's health centers FEM, Fem Süd, and FEM MED

offer comprehensive services such as counseling, courses, workshops, outreach counseling, training, etc. for women and girls in Vienna.



Vilnius Women's House

Association Vilnius Women's House is a feminist grassroots women's non-governmental organization that was established in 1993 and in 1996 opened the first crisis centre in Lithuania and the three Baltic States for women survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence (DV/IPV). For almost 30 years VWH is providing specialized complex help to women survivors of DV/IPV, and acts as a methodical centre to other organizations in Lithuania. VWH is an international expert organization and is actively involved in the international efforts to combat violence against women. For 25 years VWH was a focal point of Women Against Violence Europe in Lithuania and now is a member of other international networks such as Global Women's Watch, and European Network on Gender and Violence as well as an expert at Lithuanian Equal Opportunities Researchers Network at Social Protection and Labour Ministry of Lithuania.



15. Herstory of FemCities

In 1997, Milena was established upon the initiative of the City of Vienna as a forerunner network to what is now FemCities. The network at the time extended across cities in Central and Eastern Europe, enabling the Department for Women's Affairs in Vienna to cooperate with institutions and organisations in neighbouring regions and cities in Hungary, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

The purpose was to promote communication between city administrations, experts from universities and NGOs, as well as businesses on women's and gender issues and good practice models. Meanwhile, in 2005 all of the above mentioned countries became EU members themselves. At that time the network's objectives and structures were revised and what was formerly Milena now became the city network FemCities.

The Department for Women's Affairs at the Vienna City Administration is still responsible for its coordination, but its range of operation and cooperation has been expanded to include the entire EU and associated countries in Europe. The network continues the exchange of best practice models in the field of local and regional women's policies while strengthening lobbying activities for women's concerns in Europe.

FemCities provides a forum for communicating good practice models, as well as strategies for the implementation of laws and the installation of administrative structures to promote women and gender equality. Relevant administrations (on gender equality/ equal opportunities/ women) in European cities and municipalities are invited to join the network. Organisations, other than administrative units of cities and municipalities such as NGOs and administrative units of provinces, federal states or cantons are welcome to join the network as associate partners.

More Information: www.femcities.at



