



# Mental health of young professionals in remote work

Needs analysis report about Latvia, 2025



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# 1. About this report

This report explores the mental health experiences and challenges faced by young professionals working remotely and examines the factors contributing to burnout in digital workspaces in Latvia. By combining survey responses with facilitated discussions, the report provides a comprehensive understanding on patterns regarding mental wellbeing and daily practices in remote work.

It is a key component of the needs analysis phase in the EQ CULTIVATE project, and the findings will guide the development of educational modules.

## About EQ CULTIVATE

It is an Erasmus+ funded KA210 project dedicated to boosting the well-being and efficiency of young professionals working in hybrid and smart environments. Our mission is to tackle and reduce burnout by strategically applying emotional intelligence and promoting inclusive work practices.

Our objectives include improving emotional intelligence skills, enhancing peer social interaction, identifying and reducing youth-specific burnout factors, fostering social and work inclusion, and promoting healthy technology management.

By focusing on these areas, EQ CULTIVATE aims to create a supportive environment where young professionals feel valued, connected, and equipped to thrive in the evolving landscape of remote and hybrid work. Read more about our activities on the website [eqcultivate.eu](https://eqcultivate.eu).

## 2. Remote work in Latvia

Unfortunately, not enough data is available regarding youth in remote work in particular, or the mental health trends in this context. Nonetheless, some of the conclusions can be drawn from the overall statistics.

As of the third quarter of 2024, Latvia's overall employment rate stood at 64.2%, with 880,100 individuals aged 15–74 employed. Young people aged 15–34, formed 32.3% of all people in the workforce<sup>1</sup>. Of all the employees 27% of employees engaged in hybrid work models, combining on-site and remote elements, while 5% worked exclusively remotely<sup>2</sup>.

In terms of age, about a third of all remote workers (33.8 %) were people aged 15–34 (30.9 % of all men and 35.6 % of all women working remotely). Out of all employees, young people working remotely constituted for 10% of total workforce<sup>3</sup>. Those aged 18–24 and 35–44 with higher education, shorter work experience, mid-level managers and with higher salaries (over 1501 EUR/month) in specific industries are more likely to choose hybrid work model<sup>4</sup>.

The overall tendency shows that more and more people are returning back to work in the traditional work model, but specific reasons for this are not yet clear. This trend may be influenced by broader job market dynamics, as highlighted by ongoing public debates about limiting remote work—particularly following government institutions' announcements on work model changes<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://stat.gov.lv/en/statistics-themes/labour-market/employment/tables/nbl010m-employed-aged-15-74-sex-thousand>

<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/ekonomika/09.08.2024-aptauja-klatiene-strada-68-darbinieku-darba-devejus-mudina-but-elastigiem.a564404/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://stat.gov.lv/en/statistics-themes/labour-market/employment/tables/nbl270c-employees-working-remotely-age-groups-and>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.kantar.lv/ceturtajai-dalai-darbinieku-latvija-ir-iespeja-stradat-hibriddarba-rezima/>

<sup>5</sup>

<https://www.lsm.lv/raksts/zinas/latvija/07.02.2025-iniciativa-valsts-parvalde-saglabat-ari-attalinata-darba-iespejas-strauji-tuvojas-saei.mai.a586881/>

## 3. Needs analysis

### 3.1. Methodology

Needs analysis consisted of two parts. First, an online questionnaire was distributed and filled by 16 respondents during January and February 2025. It reflected insights from 9 young people aged 18-35, as well as 7 stakeholders - 2 employers, 1 educator in the formal and 1 from non-formal field, and 1 representative of NGO/ community organization. The second part was an online discussion that took place in the first week of February, and gathered 13 of the above respondents. Participants were recruited through public announcements in Facebook pages targeted at youth and educational practices, through networks of NGOs and through channels of youth centres across Latvia.

The answers in the questionnaire provided a useful insight in some of the patterns, but the online meeting was a strategic step to gather some depth in their views, opinions and subsequently - needs for training content. Discussion was built around the results of their grouped answers, which provided a good common ground to start a conversation among people who didn't know each other before the event.

### 3.2. Results

Questionnaire presented two different sets of questions - one for the young people, and the other for the stakeholders.

#### 3.2.1. Young professionals in remote work - background information

Of the young people who participated in the needs analysis, five work in a hybrid model and four fully remotely—some employed and some self-employed. When asked about mental health struggles related to remote work, several key patterns emerged.

One major issue was the lack of social interaction. Some respondents (3) felt increasing feelings of isolation and loneliness, while others (2) missed socialization itself. However, the majority (4) highlighted that remote work hinders collaboration—brainstorming is more efficient in person, WhatsApp messages can



be misinterpreted, and problem-solving is slower compared to an office setting. Another theme was work performance and daily structure. Some (2) struggled with motivation and routine, others (2) faced work/life balance issues, and another (2) had difficulty managing multiple jobs. One respondent found the expectation of constant availability mentally draining.

Other mentioned separate challenges: blurred work/play boundaries on digital devices, the monotony of working from home lowering motivation, and feeling detached from job values due to poor work management by employer.

When asked to rate nine factors affecting mental health struggles (on a scale from 1-4), most results ranged from 2.2 to 2.4 and therefore give inconclusive results. Those that stood out were "blurred work/life boundaries" (2.9) and "constant availability and the related pressure" (2.7), while "technical difficulties / digital tools that don't suit my needs" had the lowest impact (1.2).

Regarding digital tools, online calling platforms (Zoom, Teams, Google Meet) were used by almost all (8), followed by team communication tools like Slack, Teams or other (6). Five used shared calendars and the same amount used AI tools for content creation, but no one used time trackers.

When asked to describe their relationship with digital tools, respondents misinterpreted the question and mostly mentioned useful tools or practices they use. Two found MS Teams distracting due to constant interruptions in workflow, while three valued task trackers.

On mental well-being habits they already employ, 6 of 9 engaged in sports or outdoor walks. Other strategies fell into two categories: work-related (changing work environment (2), regular breaks (2), setting work boundaries (1), to-do lists (1), and Monday check-ins (1)) and personal (time with pets (3), music, slow mornings, socializing, and mindfulness—each mentioned once). Overall, respondents mentioned many practices for staying connected to their "real life" for mental well-being.

### 3.2.2. Stakeholders working with young people

According to surveyed stakeholders, **young professionals working remotely face several challenges**. A key issue is difficulty prioritizing tasks and managing deadlines, especially when working across multiple teams. Some struggle with

motivation and procrastination, leading to self-doubt and lower confidence. Others experience social isolation and miss spontaneous workplace interactions, which now require intentional effort.

Managers find it hard to track workload distribution, making burnout detection difficult, particularly in remote settings. Communication challenges arise, including misinterpretations and difficulties in discussing tasks in detail. Some young professionals also struggle with decision-making, planning group meetings, and time management.

**Support for the mental health of remotely working young professionals** varies across organizations. Some of the employers represented in discussion provide flexible work hours within set time frames, allowing young employees to adjust their schedules as needed. Communication tools like MS Teams are widely used to facilitate remote collaboration, ensuring technical support for daily tasks. However, many mentioned lacking structured mental health policies. In many cases, organizations encourage self-awareness about workload capacity but do not implement formal support systems.

## 4. Conclusions from discussion

Key conclusions emerged from the needs assessment. A major theme was responsibility—too much is placed on young professionals while systemic issues remain unaddressed. Expecting them to manage the mental health effects of remote work is unsustainable, especially as many already lack the necessary mental resources. Pandemic-related trauma persists and keeps unraveling continuously, and burnt-out youth workers cannot provide adequate support due to being limited in their resources personally and professionally.

Employers play a crucial role in shaping work structures, yet young professionals hesitate to voice challenges until issues escalate. This highlights the need for systemic improvements rather than placing the burden on individuals. Organizations must take responsibility for preventing burnout and ensuring effective communication.

The discussion also highlighted that remote work reduces team spirit, leading to a lower sense of responsibility and engagement. Young professionals often join calls out of obligation rather than active participation, and freelancers especially



struggle with feeling valued. These factors contribute to motivation issues and a disconnect from work.

The final basket of conclusions, and perhaps the most tangible, can be directly implemented in further steps of the EQCultivate project. The most important conclusion was the fact that young professionals do not need more training on structural things and digital tools. Instead they need awareness on how to recognize and learn about their own mental health, and how to stand up for their own needs in daily workflow with colleagues and the management.

### Proposed topics for training modules

1. How to get to know your own mental health needs? How to recognize signs of worsening mental health? How to recognize burnout?
2. How to define and speak up about your own boundaries with colleagues, management as well as clients? How to communicate and apply your boundaries efficiently? How to let the manager know the current system is not working?
3. How to communicate? How to communicate effectively and constructively?
4. Methods for planning and structuring your workflow and priorities, practical tips and tricks.
5. How to find your own most productive time for work and the most productive style for work?
6. How to not burn out even more? How to stop, take a break and evaluate the sustainability of your own working habits?



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