



**MindGuard**

# MindGuard Project

**Start date: 01/12/2024**

**End date: 31/05/2027**



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# Project overview

- Mental health **prevention**
- Focused on **higher education settings**
- Promotes a **culture of care** and wellbeing
- Combines research, training, and digital tools



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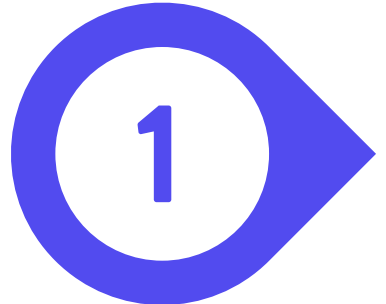
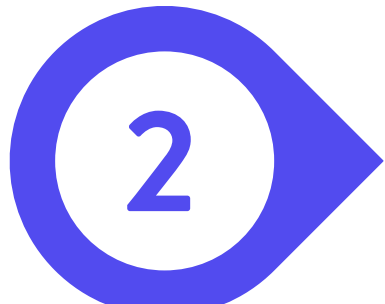

# Target groups

- University students
- Academic and teaching staff
- Administrative and support staff
- Mental Health and wellbeing officers



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# Project Objectives

-  1 Strengthen mental health first aid capacities
-  2 Reduce stigma and promote early intervention
-  3 Foster inclusive academic environments



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# Project main results



Guide for Staff and Educators



Interactive training programme



Virtual reality platform for training delivery



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# What have we done so far?



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# Transnational Report: research from 5 countries



Ireland



Greece



Netherlands



Cyprus



Belgium

# Transnational Report: methodology

- **Desk research:** national policies, challenges, and best practices in HE mental health
- **Field research:**
  - Focus groups (30 individuals) & online surveys (259 participants)
  - Students, academic staff, professional staff & mental health experts
- Focus on **needs, barriers, Mental Health First Aid,** and **digital tools** (e.g., Virtual Reality, VR)



# Transnational Report: results

- None of the partner countries reported the existence of a **unified mental health first aid policy** covering both students and staff.
- Mental health first aid remains **fragmented** and **unevenly implemented**.



# Key challenges identified



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# 3 types of Gaps in Mental Health First Aid

01

## Among students

- Limited availability of formal MHFA training
- No integration of mental health education within curricula
- Low accessibility of internal support mechanisms
- Lack of clear protocols and policies related to mental health support

02

## Among staff

- Lack of knowledge related to mental health issues
- Insufficient mental health literacy among academic and administrative staff
- Lack of formal MHFA training for staff and limited time availability
- Existing MHFA trainings and policies mainly focus on students mental health, not staff wellbeing

03

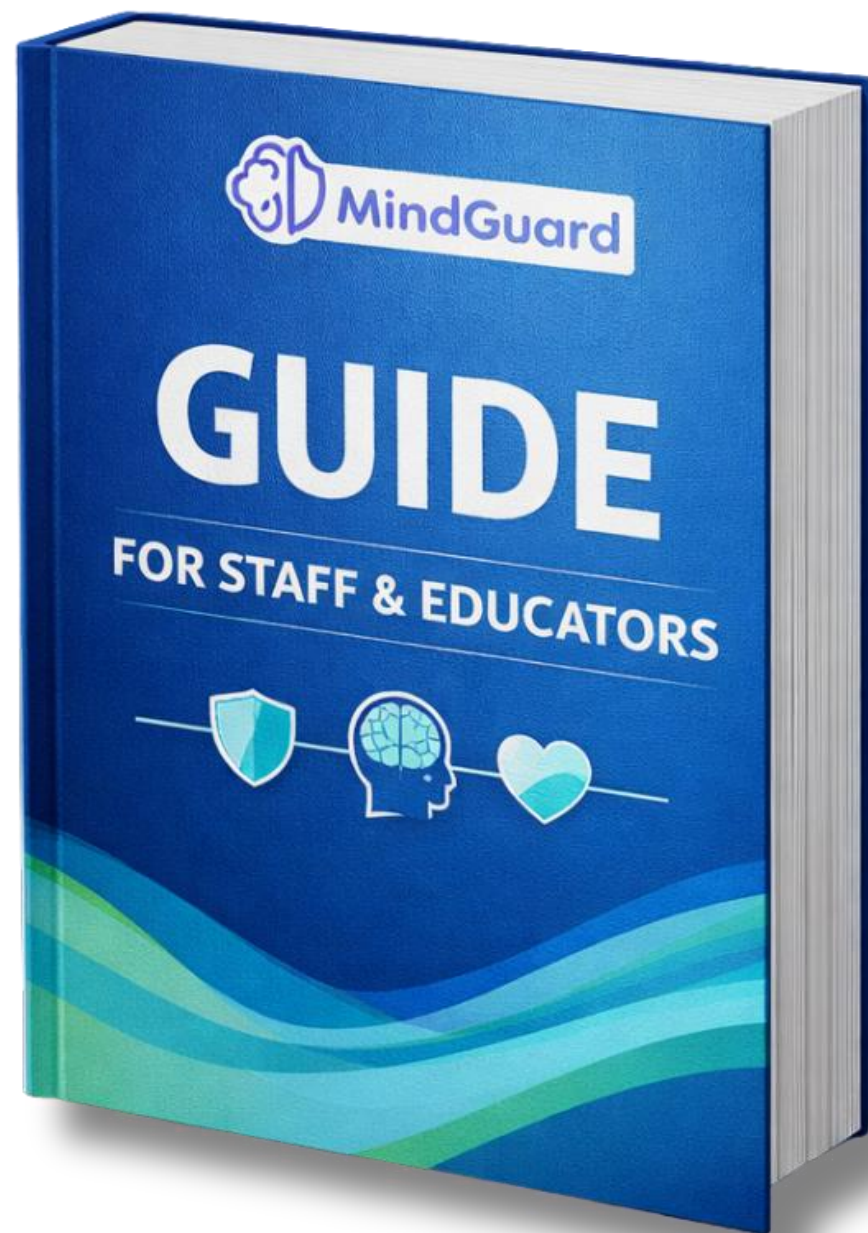
## Digital skills

- Limited use of digital technologies and tools for mental health support
- Low digital literacy among both students and staff



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# Guide for Staff and Educators



A set of **guidelines & tips** for:

- Implementing **preventative mental health measures**
- Delivering **VR based training**
- Promoting **mental health** and wellbeing **through** the development of **digital skills**



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# Ongoing activities and next steps



## Interactive training programme

- Staff & Educators
- Students



## Virtual reality platform for training delivery, allowing users to

- simulate real life situations with realistic scenarios
- practice supportive responses in a safe environment



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# Stay updated!



<https://mindguard-project.eu/>



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# Thank you



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