



Horizon Europe Programme
Research and Innovation Action

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The SMILE Project: Supporting Mental Health in Young People

The SMILE project, one of the most comprehensive studies to date into how digital technologies impact on young people's mental health has officially launched today.

The project represents groundbreaking efforts to transform mental health support for young people. Scheduled to conclude on October 31, 2026, SMILE aims to enhance the quality of mental healthcare by providing an integrated methodology that guides clinical decisions, promotes evidence-based interventions, and involves the social network of young peoples, who are parents, teachers and health care professionals.

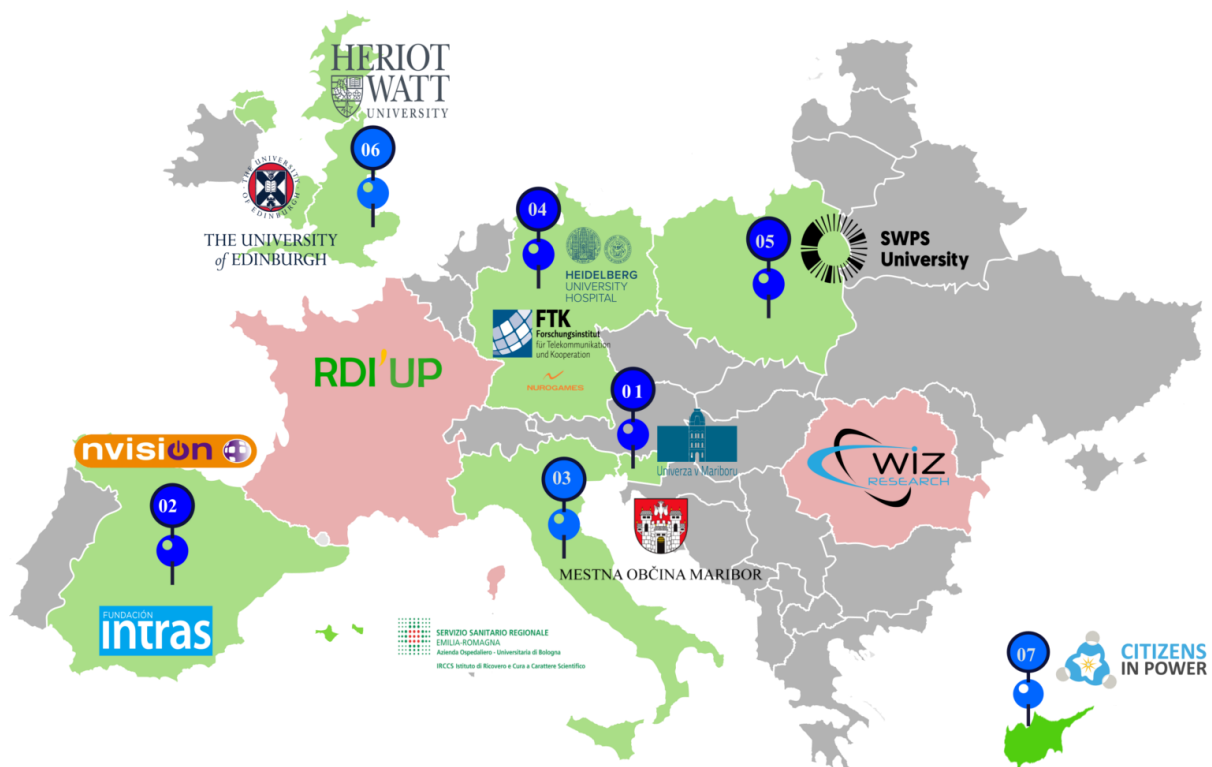
In today's rapidly evolving world, mental disorders pose significant challenges, as stressors impact individuals in diverse ways, making diagnosis and treatment processes uncertain and inconsistent. SMILE sets out to address these challenges by improving the management of psychological distress and defined it as symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, and ensuring the availability of affordable services. Through the sharing of information, development of scalable digital tools, and promotion of effective decision-making and evidence-based interventions, SMILE strives to make a lasting impact.

At the heart of SMILE is the development of an Open Knowledge Platform (OKP) and interactive gamification tools. The OKP will serve as a collaborative space, bringing together healthcare professionals, scientists, policymakers, businesses, and citizens. This platform will facilitate the co-design of effective decision strategies and unlock access to meaningful knowledge, ensuring that clinical decisions are based on the latest evidence and tailored to the unique needs of young people.ⁱ

To engage and empower young individuals in their mental health journeys, SMILE's interactive gamification tools will offer self-assessment, learning, and self-care services, helping young people develop essential thinking, coping, and problem-solving skills. By leveraging gamification, SMILE aims to create engaging and effective resources that foster personal growth and resilience.

One of the key strengths of SMILE lies in its ability to integrate and analyse diverse diagnostic data, encompassing at least seven different types of data ranging from clinical information to daily living parameters. This comprehensive approach allows for a deeper understanding of anxiety disorders and their associated risk factors, enabling healthcare practitioners to recommend personalized interventions with greater precision.

During the course of the project, SMILE will implement and validate its digital tools and services through real-life case studies in seven European countries: the United Kingdom, Germany, Cyprus, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, and Italy. This extensive validation process, scheduled to reach Technology Readiness Level 7, will ensure the effectiveness and practicality of the innovations in various healthcare settings.



SMILE is committed to long-term sustainability and scalability beyond the project's duration. A systematic upscaling method will be deployed to ensure the continuous availability of the program and its widespread adoption post-project. By delivering legal, socio-economic, and environmental value, SMILE aims to benefit healthcare professionals, patients, European SMEs, and citizens while considering age and gender aspects.

The SMILE project brings together a consortium of leading research centers, innovative SMEs, pilot centers, public universities, and policymakers from nine European countries. With their collective expertise and multidisciplinary approach, the project is poised to make a transformative impact in the field of resilience building for adolescents.

Contact

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