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HealthyMindEd: european universities committed to digital well-being



Digitalisation has transformed education with changes that lead to mental health risks. The European project HealthyMindEd, with the participation of the Department of Basic, Developmental and Educational Psychology, analyses and disseminates the impact of digitalisation on the mental and social health of the academic community in order to propose solutions that will be included in a guide to good practices.

Over the last decade, changes in digitalization have radically transformed higher education. Online classes, virtual platforms and digital resources are part of the daily lives of students and faculty. But this progress also has a downside: sedentary lifestyle, techno-stress, digital fatigue, and anxiety associated with the feeling of never being able to disconnect. Faced with this scenario, European institutions have decided to act and fund initiatives to analyze best practices and risks associated with digital education in universities.

The HealthyMindEd project (KA220-HED), funded by Erasmus+ and which started in January 2025, has brought together the Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg (Germany), the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, the University of Warwick (United Kingdom) and the Media & Learning association (Belgium) to analyze and disseminate the impact of digitalization on the mental and social health of the academic community (faculty

and students) and propose specific solutions that will be collected in a good practice guide.

The project set three main objectives: To understand the impact of digitalization on the well-being and mental health of students and faculty, to propose resources and practical recommendations so that universities and faculty can improve time management, reduce digital fatigue and promote inclusion. And to create a European community that continues to work in this area beyond the formal duration of the project. The project proposes the production of a European report that collects data on digital well-being in universities, institutional recommendations for universities to consider mental health in their virtual teaching and learning strategies, an interactive platform open to students and faculty, and multimedia materials with practical advice to manage the use of technology, reduce stress and improve well-being. To achieve these objectives, the Warwick and UAB teams have initiated research work that includes a systematic review on the effects of digital education in universities and an empirical study at a European level that will analyze the main protective and risk factors associated with digital environments for the well-being of the academic community. This study will use both quantitative and qualitative strategies, organizing Focus Groups of both students and faculty to learn in detail about various perspectives and experiences with digital learning environments.

The impact is intended to be systemic since the aim is to raise awareness among institutions, faculty and students to act as agents of change and become aware that well-being is part of academic quality, and that it is important to have the best tools and strategies to better adapt classes and facilitate the healthy development of the university community in the 21st century.

The message is clear: digitalization cannot be just a technological issue, it is also a matter of health and social cohesion. If universities want to be competitive and inclusive, they must place the well-being of their community at the center and adapt digital best practices for healthy learning and development.

HealthyMindEd is a first step towards this healthier technological future, a university capable of combining knowledge, technology, innovation and care for people. In this context, it is urgent to establish strategies that allow us to take advantage of the best of digitalization — innovation, flexibility, internationalization— without this entailing excessive costs for personal and collective well-being. And this is the starting point of the HealthyMindEd project: understanding how digital learning environments impact mental and social health, in order to design strategies that allow us to improve this experience for both students and teachers.

The first results of the project will be presented at the [VII International Congress of Teaching Innovation in Higher Education](#), on November 17-21 in Madrid and will be presented by the co-leaders of the project at the UAB, Dra. Anna Muro and Dr. Ramon Cladellas.

Links to participate in data collection:

[Questionnaire for teaching staff](#)

[Questionnaire for students](#)

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References

[HealthyMindEd – Promoting healthy digital teaching and learning in higher education](#)

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