



Good practice

Psykosociale gruppeforløb MindSpring: A digital platform for mental health support and training

Working Group: Digital

Member State: Denmark

Thematic areas: Jobs and Skills, Quality of Life and Equal Access to Services

Basic project details

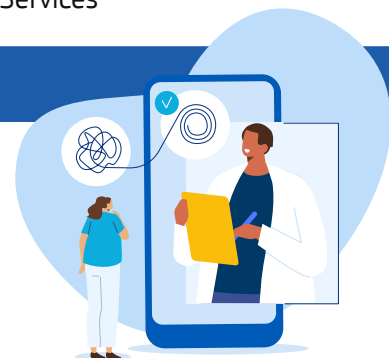
Lead organisation:

Danish Refugees Council - Denmark

Partner organisations:

Local municipalities (about two-thirds of the country's municipalities are members of the network), educational institutions, social housing projects.

Initiative duration: 2016 – ongoing



Overview and objectives

MindSpring is a digital platform that offers mental health support and training to vulnerable populations, such as refugees and immigrants, using culturally tailored programmes. The initiative includes peer-to-peer workshops, online resources, and digital tools to empower users in managing their mental health and integrating into Danish society. The courses are held in all Danish regions depending on local demand. Typically, a course will take place in, for example, housing social areas, in schools, youth institutions, etc. A course is established in collaboration between a local host (e.g. a municipality or housing social master plan) and MindSpring Competence Center. The main goal of the initiative is to provide accessible, culturally sensitive mental health resources to vulnerable populations, promoting inclusion, empowerment, and well-being, thus improving their quality of life.

Context

The lack of culturally sensitive mental health resources and tools, which hinders vulnerable populations' ability to access care, integrate into society, and thrive. Refugees and immigrants often face significant barriers, including language challenges, cultural stigmas around mental health, and limited access to traditional healthcare. These factors exacerbate mental health issues and reduce opportunities for successful integration.

Target groups

MindSpring is for both newly arrived refugees and those who have lived in Denmark for several years as well as people with ethnic minority backgrounds. In the framework of MindSpring, manuals have been developed for children, young people, parents and seniors, in 4 languages: Danish, English, Arabic and Russian.

Actions

- Peer-to-peer mental health workshops;
- Digital tools for self-help and community building;
- Training for healthcare professionals in cultural competence.

Financial allocation

Total budget: EUR 112 000 (2023)

EU co-funding: No

Sources of funding:

- DRC Danish Refugee Council
- The Obel Family Foundation



Working Group Insights

“In agreement with the other members of the Digital WG, I selected the MindSpring programme as a good practice, because it supports digital inclusion by promoting digital access, skills, and participation among refugees and ethnic minorities, helping them better integrate into digital society. Participants are introduced to digital public services (e.g., NemID/MitID, Borger.dk) to help them navigate healthcare, job applications, and social services.

By supporting digital inclusion and social integration, the programme helps create a more inclusive labour market, enabling refugee and minority talents to contribute to the workforce. Participants gain communication, teamwork, and problem-solving skills, which are valuable in the job market”.

JAKOB LINDMARK FRIER

COO and Stakeholder Relations, Digital Hub Denmark

Results

- Strengthened collaboration between municipalities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), creating meaningful roles for mental health professionals and peer supporters;
- Empowered marginalised groups to better integrate into the workforce, improving their social and economic contributions;
- Many participants become volunteers, helping new arrivals and contributing to a more inclusive society;
- Participants not only integrate into society but also contribute to making it more inclusive, diverse, and vibrant. The program helps them transition from recipients of support to active contributors within their communities.



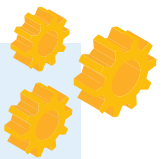
Success factors

The initiative's success lies in its ability to balance digital tools with human connection through peer support groups. Its culturally tailored approach ensures relevance and trust among target populations, leading to higher engagement and better outcomes. Additionally, it features:

- A strong focus on cultural competence and user-centred design;
- Partnerships between NGOs, municipalities, and healthcare providers;
- Integration of digital tools with community-based approaches.

Implementation challenges

The initiative initially faced difficulties in replicating its peer-support model across different municipalities. Standardised training materials and collaboration agreements with local authorities helped scale the initiative more effectively. The initiative also faced language barriers and cultural mistrust within migrant communities. To address this, the initiative developed peer-led workshops, ensuring cultural relevance and improving engagement levels.



The conclusion of our expert Jakob Lindmark Frier, COO and Stakeholder Relations, Digital Hub Denmark

“The unique characteristic of MindSpring is the fact that its courses are not centrally developed and then simply delivered. The courses are always established in collaboration between a local host (e.g. a municipality or housing social master plan) and the MindSpring Competence Center. This allows MindSpring to provide tailored, accessible, and culturally sensitive resources to vulnerable populations”.

Useful sources

Official website: <https://integration.drc.ngo/vores-arbejde/mindspring/>

<https://nordicwelfare.org/integration-norden/exempel/mindspring/>

https://drc.ngo/media/govozt1e/annual-report-2023_drc_final-08-05-2024.pdf

<https://vimeo.com/872488708>

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