



# World Suicide Prevention Day 2023



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## Policy Brief: Promoting Mental Health in Workplace Settings to Prevent Anxiety, Depression, and Suicidal Behaviour

### Introduction

World Suicide Prevention Day, observed annually on September 10th, highlights the global imperative of preventing suicide. This policy brief presents pivotal insights from the research article titled "*Outcome assessment of a complex mental health intervention in the workplace. Results from the MENTUPP pilot study*", recently published by the MENTUPP Consortium, advocates for policy recommendations targeting governments to underscore the significance of fostering mental health in workplace environments, reducing anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviour.

### MENTUPP

The MENTUPP (Mental Health Promotion and Intervention in Occupational Settings) project is a 4-year EU-funded project aimed at advancing mental health and well-being within workplace environments, especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Via a comprehensive approach, the project seeks to address the growing concern of mental health challenges, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviour, that affect employees worldwide. MENTUPP is grounded in evidence-based research and interventions, emphasising the key role that workplaces play in shaping mental well-being. By offering a wide range of dedicated modules, the multilevel intervention, known as the MENTUPP Hub, aims to create an environment where employees can flourish both professionally and personally. With a commitment to research, evaluation, and collaboration, the MENTUPP project contributes to the broader effort of preventing mental health issues and fostering a culture of mental well-being in workplaces.

### Key Findings

During the MENTUPP Pilot Study, the MENTUPP Hub was available for six months to all Pilot participants from March 2021. The research article '*Outcome assessment of a complex mental health intervention in the workplace. Results from the MENTUPP pilot study*' illuminates the tangible impact of the comprehensive MENTUPP workplace mental health intervention:

## 1. Reduction in Anxiety:

The study reports a **statistically significant reduction in anxiety** levels among participants who underwent the mental health intervention, with a decrease of **36.2%** (1).

## 2. Improved Personal Stigma:

The findings indicate an **improvement of 8.4%** in respondents' personal attitudes towards depression and anxiety (1). This underscores the critical role of workplace interventions in stigma prevention efforts.

## 3. Enhanced Psychological Well-being:

The intervention resulted in improved overall psychological well-being among employees, reflected by an **increase of 10.5% in well-being scores** (1). This highlights the potential of workplace mental health programmes to create a supportive and thriving work environment.

## Policy Recommendations

In light of these compelling findings, governments are urged to take proactive steps to prioritise mental health in workplaces. The following policy recommendations stem from the research's concrete data:

### 1. *Establish Comprehensive Workplace Mental Health Standards:*

Governments should collaborate with stakeholders to establish rigorous national standards for workplace mental health. These should include provisions for evidence-based interventions, regular mental health assessments, and integration of mental health support into organizational frameworks.

### 2. *Incentivise Investment in Workplace Mental Health Programmes:*

Governments can offer financial incentives or tax benefits to organisations that implement effective mental health initiatives. This incentive would stimulate employers' investment in employee well-being.

### 3. *Integrate Mandatory Mental Health Education in Employee Training:*

Governments should push for the integration of modules on mental health awareness, stigma reduction, and stress management into mandatory employee training with the aim of equipping employees with the tools to identify and address mental health issues.

### 4. *Ensure Accessible and Confidential Support Systems:*

Governments should collaborate with mental health experts to establish easily accessible and confidential support systems within workplaces. They should also ensure that employees have avenues to seek counseling, access helplines, and utilise online resources.

## 5. *Continuously Evaluate and Improve Workplace Mental Health Initiatives:*

Governments should mandate periodic evaluation of workplace mental health programmes. Collaborating with research institutes will enable the assessment of intervention effectiveness and policy refinement.

## Conclusion

The recent MENTUPP publication "*Outcome assessment of a complex mental health intervention in the workplace. Results from the MENTUPP pilot study*" underscores the transformative potential of workplace mental health interventions. With concrete data demonstrating reduced anxiety, improved stigma, and enhanced well-being, the importance of the recommended policy measures cannot be overstated.

Governments' commitment to these recommendations will accelerate the creation of supportive work environments that actively address anxiety, depression, and suicidal behaviour, fostering a culture of mental well-being on a global scale.

For more information about MENTUPP, please visit [mentupproject.eu](https://mentupproject.eu).

1) Tsantila, F, Coppens, E, De Witte, H, Arensman, E., Amann B., Cerga-Pashoja, A., Corcoran, P., Creswell-Smith, J., Cully, G., Toth, M.T., Greiner, B., Griffin, E., Hegerl, U., Holland, C., Leduc, C., Leduc, M., Ni Dhalaigh, D., O'Brien, C., Paterson, C., Purebl, G., Reich, H., Ross, V., Rugulies, R., Sanches, S., Thompson, K., Van Audenhove, C., & MENTUPP consortium members. Outcome assessment of a complex mental health intervention in the workplace. Results from the MENTUPP pilot study. *International Archives of Occupational and Environmental Health* (2023).



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