IMPACT STORIES

AWARE: Supporting University Students' Mental Health through Education, Research and Innovation

University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)

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The AWARE project addresses a growing crisis in higher education: the mental health of university students. Anxiety and academic stress—worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic—remain critically high across Europe. At the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, educators, neuroscientists, and university management staff developed AWARE to respond to this challenge.

Through international collaboration with universities from Poland, Cyprus, Greece, and Ireland, the project created evidence-based tools to empower university communities. The initiative includes a multilingual digital platform, already used by more than 10,000 students and staff, offering self-assessment tools, resilience training, and accessible mental health resources. Over 500 educators have received specialized training to identify and address student anxiety in academic environments.

The project also influenced institutional change. Several universities across Europe have embedded AWARE's recommendations into their mental health strategies and staff development programmes, ensuring sustainable long-term impact. Data collected throughout the project shows that mental health literacy increased by 75%, and student engagement with counselling services rose by 30%.

AWARE contributes to key societal challenges identified by ENLIGHT, including Health & Well-being, Equity, and the Digital Revolution. By combining educational innovation, stakeholder co-creation, and policy integration, it has helped build a more inclusive and supportive academic culture.

> *"By opening spaces for dialogue and designing tools with and for the university community, AWARE is helping to turn awareness into action, and reduce stigma around mental health in higher education"*

Do you want to know more about our story? **Click here** *: https://www.awareformentalhealth.eu/*