

**CONFERENCE**

**mentality**  
MENTAL HEALTH QUALITY PRACTICES

# PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH AT THE HEART OF EUROPE: Strengthening Preparedness for EU Polycrises.

30 January 2025

9:30 - 13:30 CET

Hybrid event



Co-funded by the  
European Union



European Economic  
and Social Committee



**PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH  
AT THE HEART OF EUROPE:  
Strengthening Preparedness for EU Polycrises.**



**Welcome and Introduction**

**Pietro Barbieri**, Member of Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship (SOC)  
European Economic and Social Committee

**Claudia Marinetti**, Director  
Mental Health Europe

**PUTTING MENTAL HEALTH  
AT THE HEART OF EUROPE:  
Strengthening Preparedness for EU Polycrises.**



**Setting the Scene**

**Anna Iwona Bulzacka-Bogucka**, Project Adviser - Mental Health  
European Health and Digital Executive Agency (HaDEA)

**Emanuela Del Savio**, Mentality Project Coordinator  
Mental Health Europe

# SESSION 1

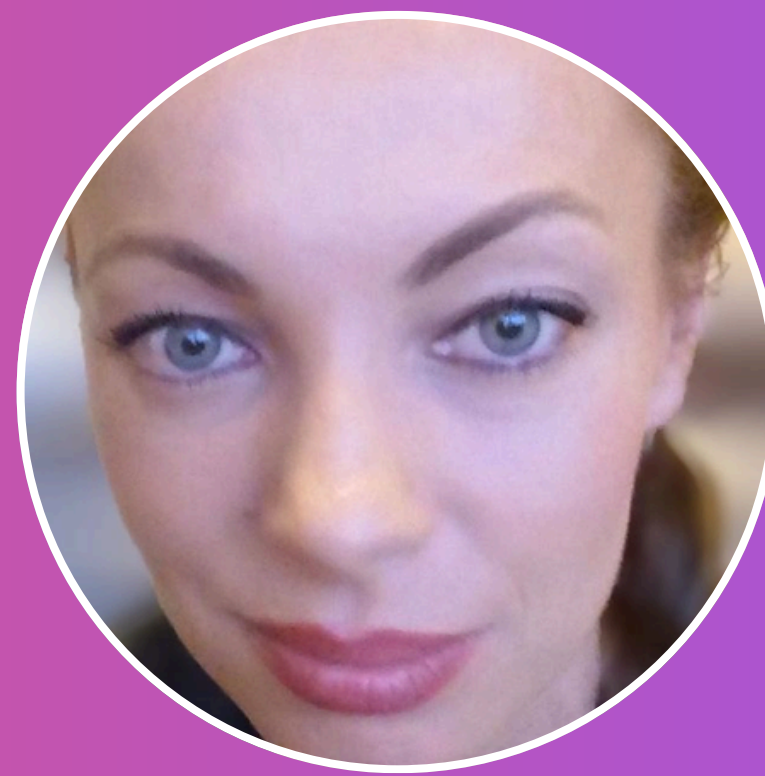
## Impact of Effective Mental Health Practices During Polycrises: Personal Testimonies



**Arz Stephan**  
**(moderator)**  
RCRC Movement  
MHPSS Hub



**Tetiana Kulish**  
League for Mental Health  
(Slovakia)



**PaedDr.**  
**Tímea Donová**  
(Slovakia)



**Vicky Bempi**  
Prolepsis Institute  
(Greece)

# Mental Health Support for Children Testimonies from *Slovakia and Greece*

**Tetiana Kulish**, Project Manager, *League for Mental Health in Slovakia*

**Vicky Bempi**, Project Manager, *Prolepsis Institute*

*January 2025*



**Mental  
Health  
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**PROLEPSIS**  
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COUNCIL**

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# Setting the stage

Children, face great challenges in the post-COVID era, with a critical shortage of mental health support across Europe

## Slovakia

- Reintegrating into society after the disruption of healthy social connections
- Only 49 child psychiatrists: available nationwide.
- Fewer than 20% of schools have a dedicated school psychologist.

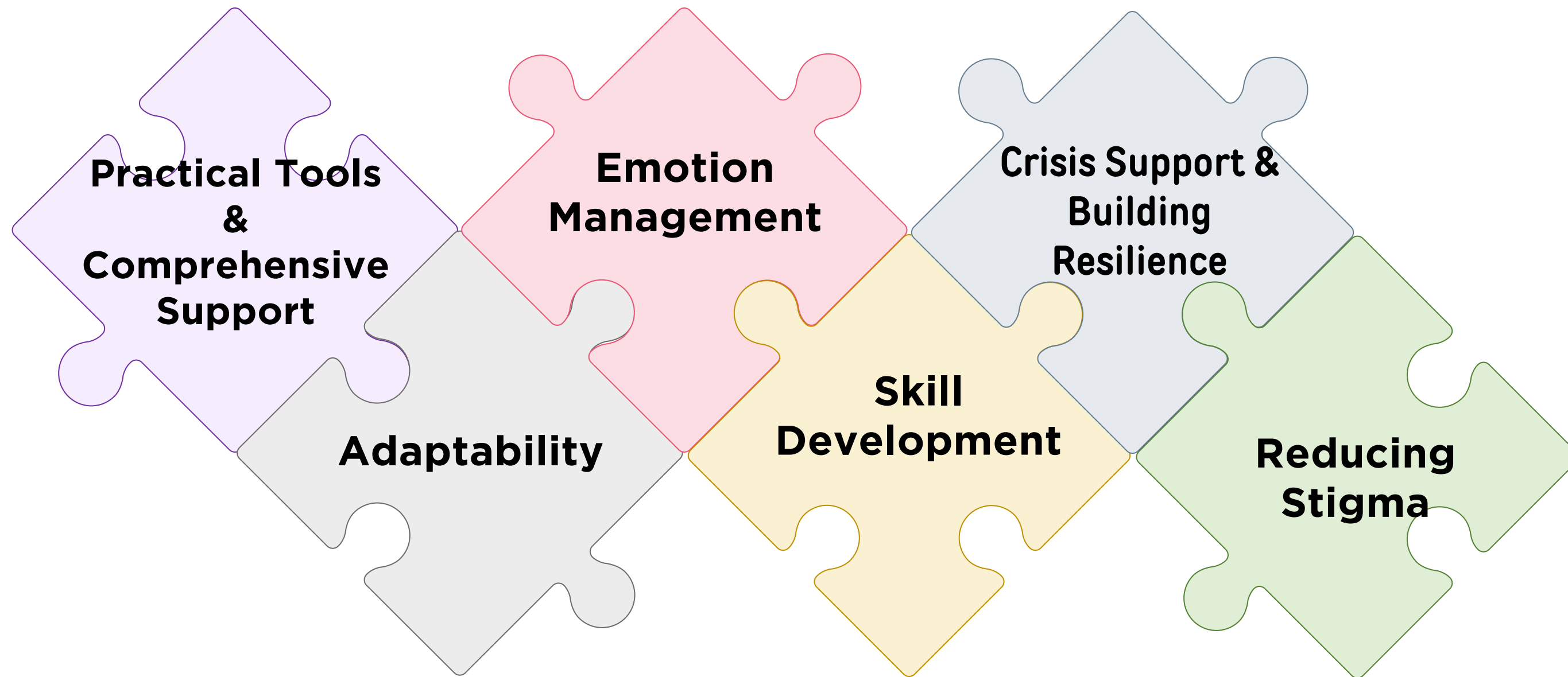
## Greece

COVID-19 and natural disasters led to:

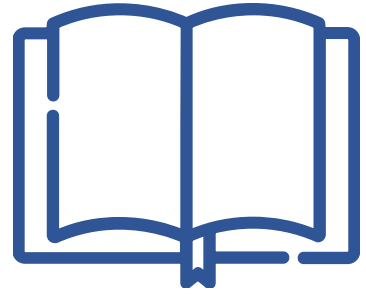
- Young children express feelings of isolation, loneliness, depression, uncertainty, fear, anxiety, stress
- School teachers witnessing the mental health deterioration of children struggling to provide adequate support, without having the proper resources

# Solution & Value Proposition

The toolkit “**A Happy, Healthy and A Hopeful, Healthy, and Happy Living and Learning Toolkit / Teachers’ Guide**” combines:



# Validation & Credibility in Slovakia and Greece



The implementation lasted for 6 months (January – June 2024)



32 schools participated in the implementation



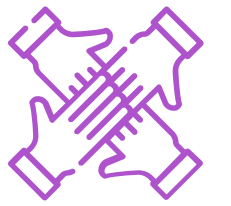
A total of 144 teachers implemented the toolkit in their classrooms

## In both countries of implementation, the Toolkit:

- Demonstrated potential to improve mental health and well-being for children, educators, and parents.
- Adaptable, easy-to-use, and comprehensive approach, showing meaningful results in managing stress, building resilience, and fostering positive relationships.
- Teachers report it as a practical, time-efficient resource that integrates seamlessly into the curriculum.
- Parents reported improvements in children's mental health and ability to cope with challenges at home.



# Key Ask



## Join Us in Creating a Future Where:

- Mental health is prioritized
- Resilience is nurtured
- Every child and educator can thrive

Support needed to expand its reach and impact

Partnerships, advocacy, and funding to scale the toolkit across Europe

Collaboration opportunities to integrate the toolkit into existing educational programs and initiatives

Engagement with stakeholders to promote widespread adoption and long-term sustainability

**For more information contact us:**

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# SESSION 1

## Impact of Effective Mental Health Practices During Polycrises: Personal Testimonies



**Aleksandra  
Kuśnierkiewicz**  
PMF (Poland)



**Jose Luis Guzman Torrez**  
PMF (Poland)

# SESSION 1

## Impact of Effective Mental Health Practices During Polycrises: Personal Testimonies



**Katerina Žiga**  
Riga City Council  
(Latvia)



**Inga Dreimane**  
(Latvia)

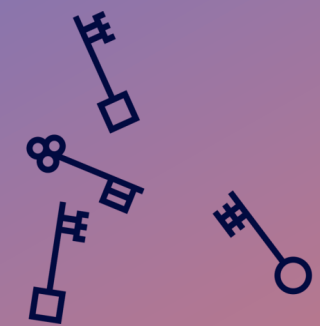


# MENTALITY PROJECT «TEAM REFLECTION» RIGA CITY

KATERINA ŽIGA ([katerina.ziga@riga.lv](mailto:katerina.ziga@riga.lv))

Riga City Council Welfare Department

30.01.2025.



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unpredictability + high work intensity

=

**factors affecting** mental and social health

temporarily or chronically

quality of work performance



# Team Reflection

- Developed by Dutch authors to support care professional teams to stay healthy
- resource could be used by employees to manage stress on an individual and collective level by helping each other in a healthy way

## Approach:

- **normalizing stress:** response to a stressful period is normal in certain circumstances and may vary from person to person
- **providing guidance** to make stress manageable: recognize and manage the signs of stress together
- **continuing to support** each other in the team in dealing with stress (the buddy approach)



# Municipal social care institutions

RSCC «Mežciems»

RSCC «Gaiļezers»

RSCC «Stella Maris»

Riga Shelter







**Duration - July 2023 - June 2024.**

**Translation of the program materials – May 2023 - July 2023**

**Preparation and printing materials for training - July 2023 – August 2023**

**Training of specialists - 4 trainings / 4 specialists totally - August 2023**

**4 focus groups - 8 meetings totally (2 meetings for each group)**

**50 participants totally**

**Survey's organized - focus group survey, stakeholder's survey**





EMPLOYEES,  
EXPERIENCING WERE  
MENTIONED SIGNS OF  
STRESS



CONCENTRATION AND  
MEMORY DISORDERS



DIFFICULTIES IN  
NAVIGATING IN SPACE AND  
TIME



ANXIETY



PANIC ATTACKS



ETC.

## BENEFITS

Better understanding about colleagues' feelings, experiences, stress level



Fostered a listening culture in organization



Brought the team and colleagues closer together



Promoted a sense of community with colleagues which is the basis for successful work



Self-perception of increased awareness and knowledge of stress symptoms and stress management methods/techniques



Better understanding of each individual's role in solving stressful situations



## IMPROVEMENTS

Hold regular group meetings



Implement such programs in other institutions, for example schools etc.



Organize classes outside of work premises thus work duties won't interfere fully focus on group work



Focus attention to innovative methods



Group size should not exceed 10-12 participants





# RISKS AND BARRIERS



**Convincing stakeholders** – deputies, administrations and managers of social care centers etc.



**Implementation** – all activities should be prepared according Public Procurement Law. It takes time (standard procedure ~ 2 weeks – 2 months)



**Assembling groups** - could be complex due to variations in schedules, premise options, vacation times, and workload among different institutions



**Potential costs** – could be situation when financial resources are not available



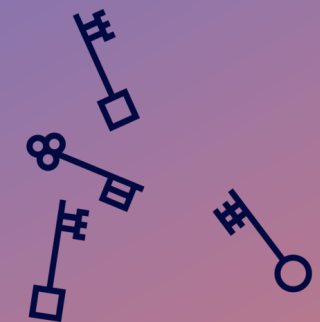
**Ensuring sustainability** - the offer does not always coincide with the needs and interests of the group, institution

# THANK YOU!

KATERINA ŽIGA ([katerina.ziga@riga.lv](mailto:katerina.ziga@riga.lv))

Riga City Council Welfare Department

30.01.2025.



VESELĪGA  
RĪGA



# SESSION 1

## Impact of Effective Mental Health Practices During Polycrises: Personal Testimonies



**Tetiana Kulish**  
League for Mental Health  
(Slovakia)



**Amedeea Enache**  
Estuar Foundation  
(Romania)



**Raluca Birtar**  
(Romania)

# Free Interactive Maps of Mental Health Support Centres Testimony from *Slovakia*

**Tetiana Kulish**, Project Manager, *League for Mental Health in Slovakia*

January 2025



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The Map of Support is a living process.

**The map is built around the community-based services provided by the League for Mental Health.**

Slovakia

- Limited Access to Vital Services
- Lack of Awareness
- Mental Health Care Challenges
- Stigma and Social Isolation
- Lack of Advocacy



## Solution

The Map of Support is a tool that brings together formal health and community support services

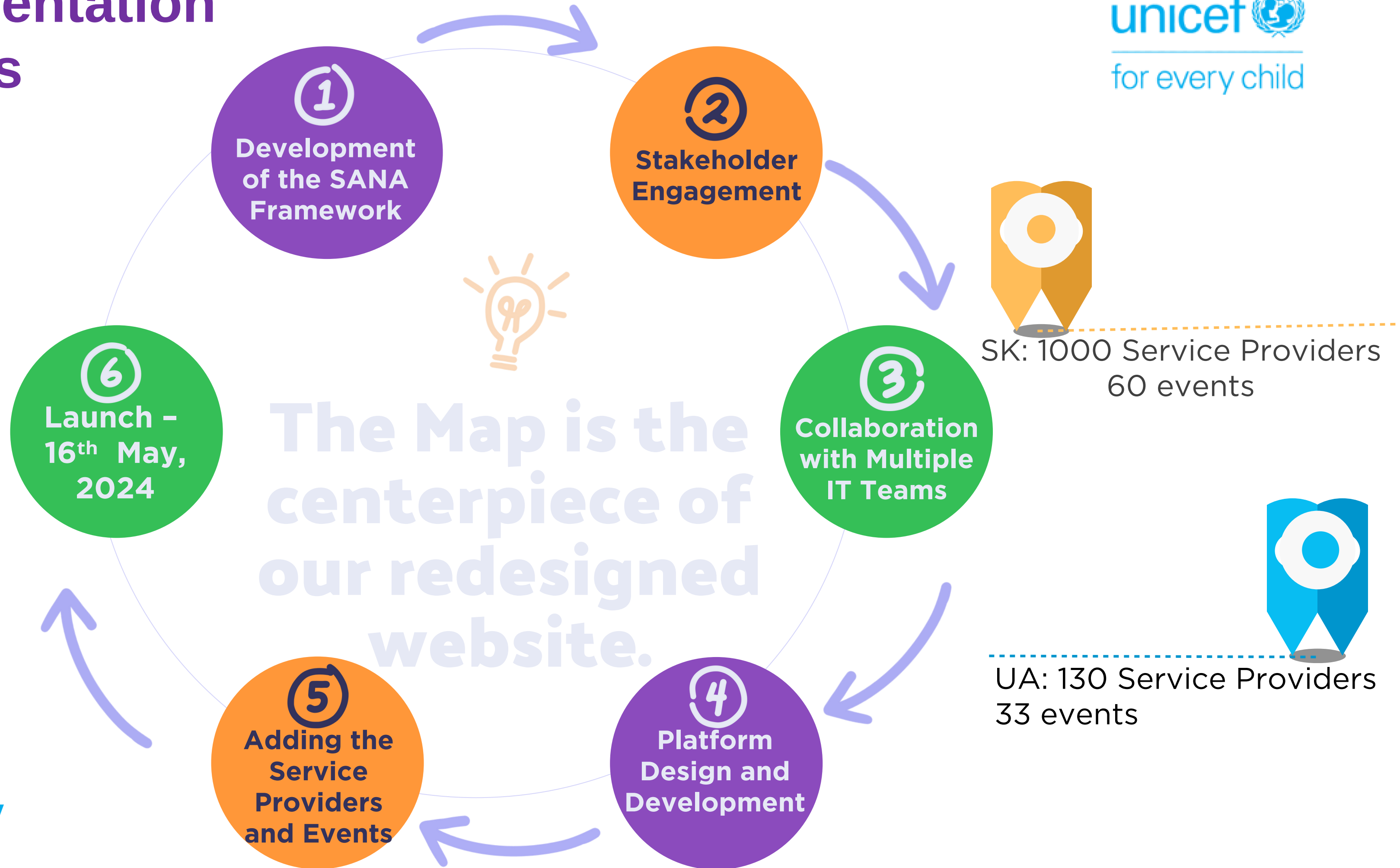
- Reducing stigma and isolation
- Improving communication between MH providers
- Raising awareness and utilization of MH resources

## Value

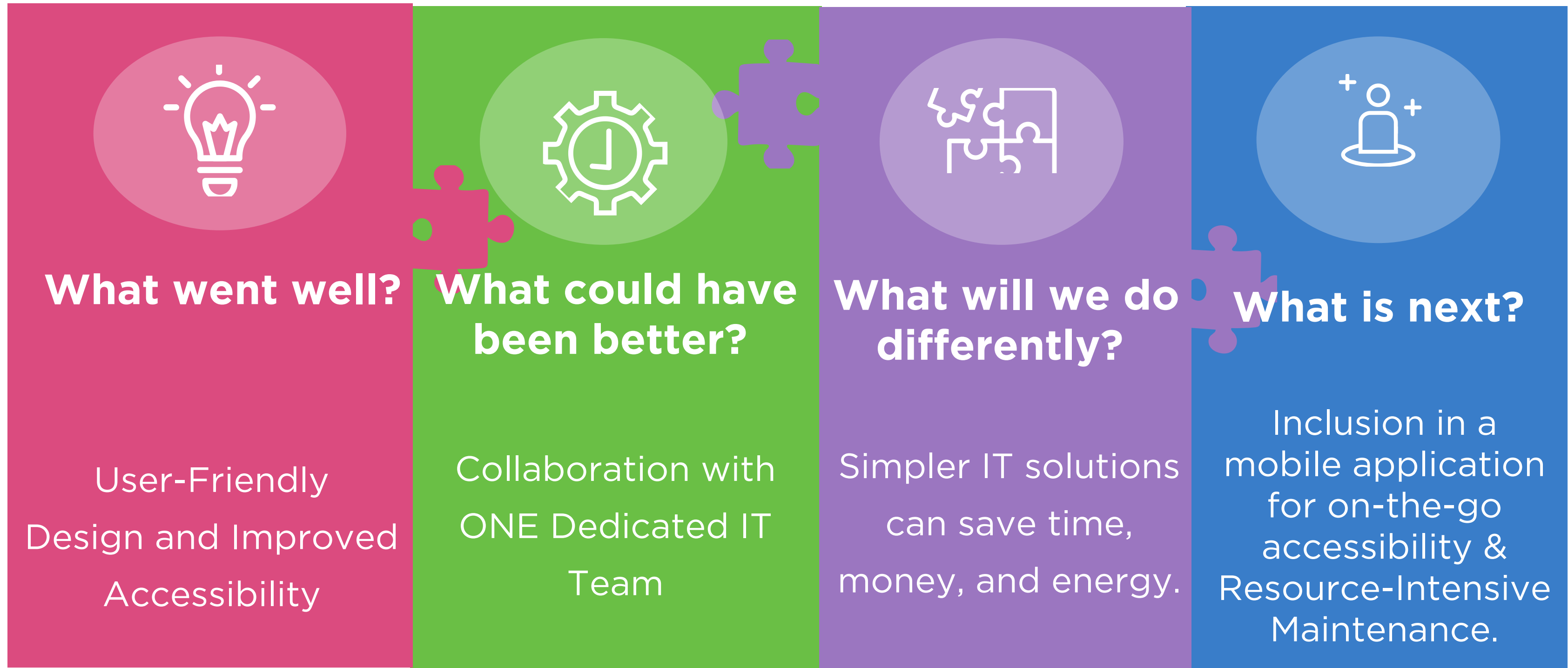
- User-friendly interface
- Improved access to information and resources
- Targeted information for different population groups

What truly sets this tool apart is its accessibility.

# Implementation Process



# Validation & Credibility in Slovakia



## THE MAP OF SUPPORT



Support needed to expand its reach and impact

Partnerships, advocacy, and funding to scale the MAP

Collaboration opportunities to integrate the Map

Engagement with stakeholders to promote widespread adoption and long-term sustainability

### **For more information contact us:**

**Emanuela Del Savio**, Project Coordinator -  
*Mental Health Europe*

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# From Engagement to Empowerment

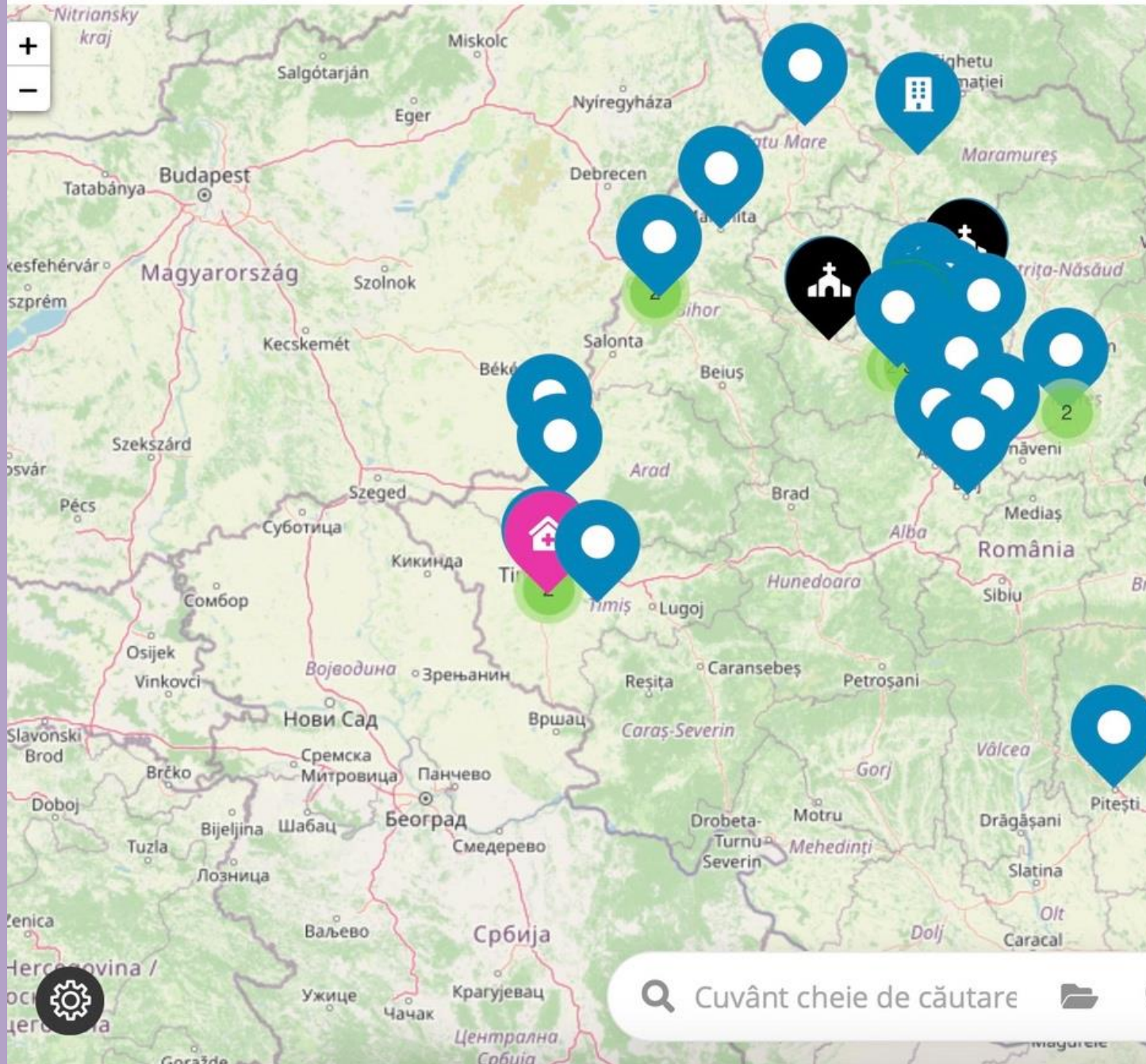
Free interactive map of mental health  
support centres

Amedeea Enache  
Estuar Foundation

January 30th, 2025

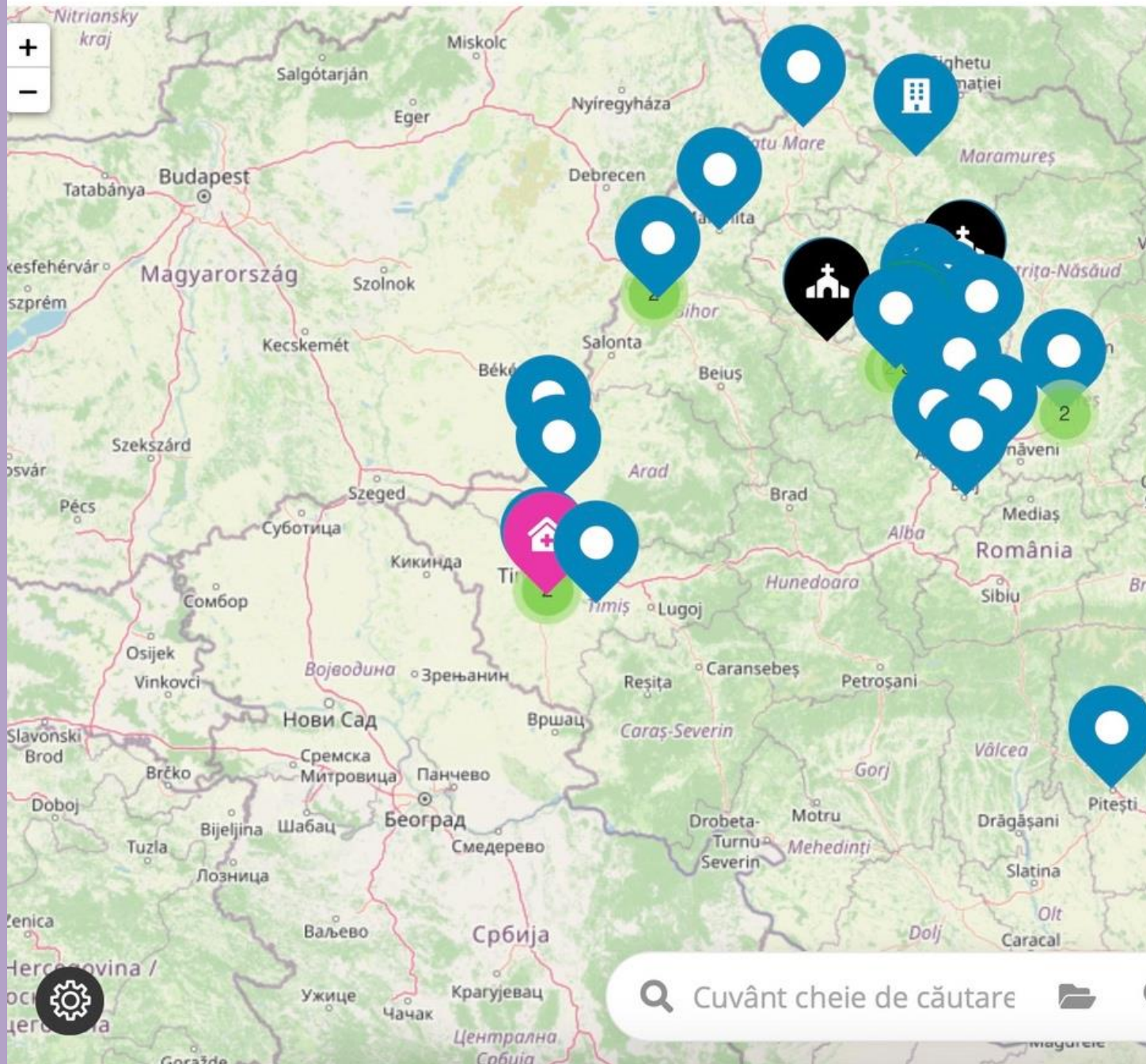


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The Map in Romania – an online tool that engaged people with lived experiences, volunteers and professionals replicated after a Polish practice from Human Foundation

[www.hartasanatatiimintale.ro](http://www.hartasanatatiimintale.ro)



## Objectives:

- to engage and empower people with lived experiences during the entire process
- high diversity of service providers
- holistic view in the bio-psycho-social model
- increase cooperation and communication
- evaluate services and providers --> trigger improvements

## Target population:

- adults with mental health disabilities, carers/ relatives
- general population
- mental health professionals and institutions
- educators and researchers
- companies

# Impact

- Various collaborators - Estuar Cluj servioeces users, students, volunteers, Estuar staff.
- Over 165 institutes/organizations introduced on the Map of Support
- Over 800 participants during the promoting events for the map
- Other collaborators: psychiatric hospitals in Cluj county, Social Work Faculty and Psychology Faculty, public institutions (medical, social, administrative sectors) in the Cluj county





Are you in Cluj-Napoca/ Romania?

[www.hartasanatatiimintale.ro](http://www.hartasanatatiimintale.ro)

Do you wanna know how to build a  
mental health map?

[office@estuar.org](mailto:office@estuar.org)

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# SESSION 2

## Strengthening European Mental Health Preparedness in a period of polycrisis



**Hannes Jarke**  
**(moderator)**  
EuroHealthNet



**Maria Walsh**  
MEP, EPP



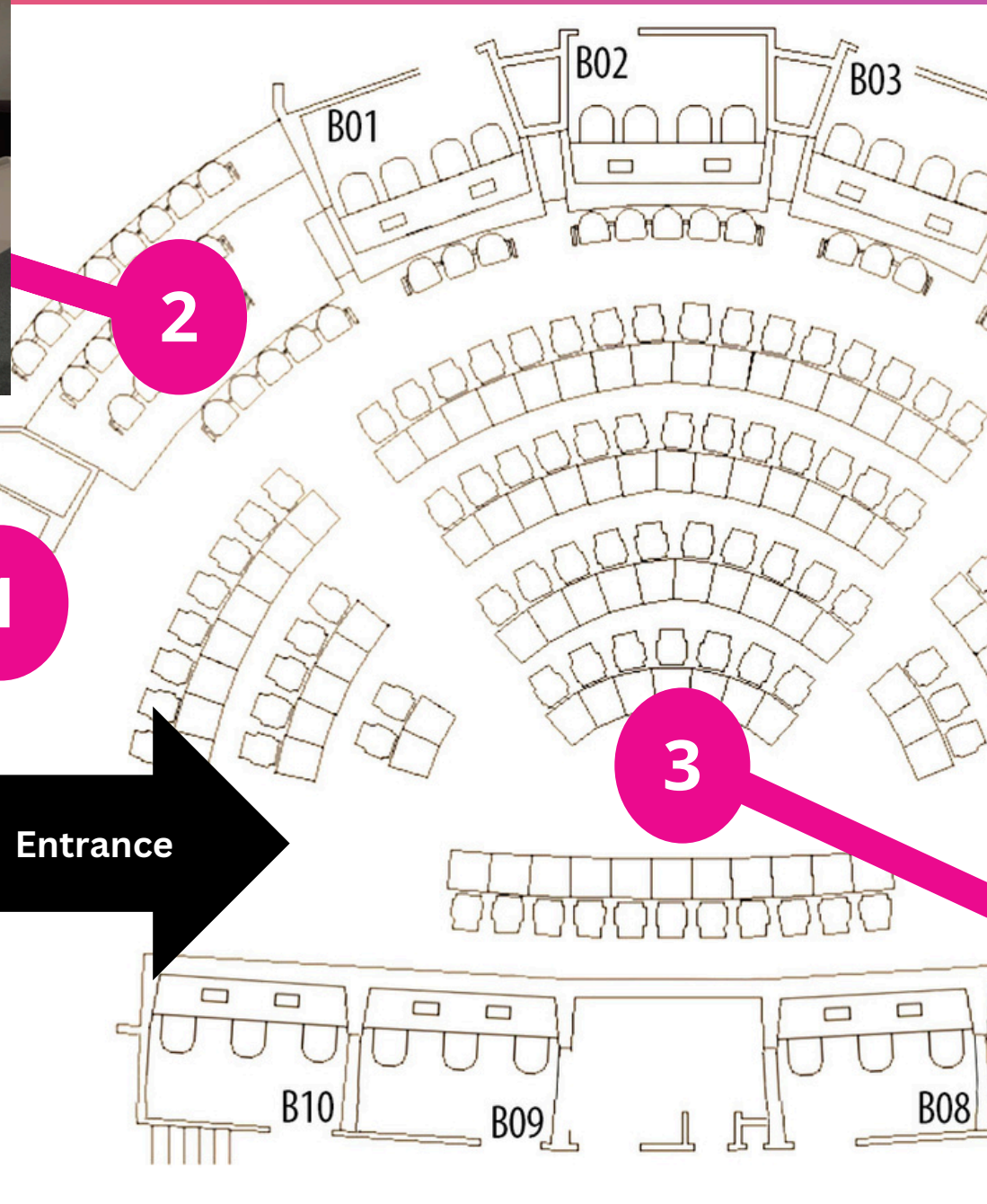
**Claudia Marinetti**  
Mental Health Europe



**Ana Maria  
Tijerino Inestroza**  
WHO Europe

# SESSION 3

## Engagement and Synergy Session



1. **Map of Mental Health Services** (Romania, Slovakia)
2. **Toolkit for Teachers** (Greece, Slovakia)
3. **Team Reflection** (Latvia)
4. **Discover Your Potential** (Poland)

**Fill in the feedback questionnaire**



**Thank you**