



# IMPACT REPORT

## WP5 - A1 - DISSEMINATION & MULTIPLIER EVENT

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OCTOBER 17, 2024 | BUCHAREST, ROMANIA



Co-funded by  
the European Union

PROJECT: "RESILIENCE AND INCLUSION FOR THE MILITARY"  
# 2022-1-R001-KA220-VET-000085808

# **IMPACT REPORT**

## **WP5-A2 - DISSEMINATION AND MULTIPLICATION EVENT**

**- October 17, 2024 | BUCHAREST, ROMANIA -**

Erasmus+ Programme – Strategic Partnership

Project **“Resilience and inclusion for the military”**

# 2022-1-Ro01-Ka220-Wet-000085808

**Partners:**

DIGITAL KOMPASS - Bucharest, Romania

I.V. International - Foggia, Italy

Organization for Promotion of European Issues - Paphos, Cipru

BUMIR - Bucharest, Romania

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**Location:** Bucharest, Romania

**Organizer:** DIGITAL KOMPASS

**Number of Participants:** 90 people

**Date:** October 17, 2024

## I. Context and objectives of the event

The "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military" project is part of a European support and inclusion program dedicated to military personnel, veterans and military personnel with disabilities, who are facing PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder). This dissemination event aimed not only to present the results and resources developed within the project, but also to create a space for open dialogue between professionals from various fields, from psychologists and military personnel, to representatives of NGOs and policy makers.

### Specific objectives of the event



**Raising awareness** of PTSD among military members and veterans.



**Promoting the educational resources** developed within the project, such as the brochure "The Invisible Front" and the dedicated online course.



**Presentation of the digital application "Freedom for Army"** as an innovative tool to support the mental health of active military, veterans and military personnel with disabilities.



**Facilitating the exchange of best practices and experiences** between participants to develop a community of support and resources.

## II. Conduct of the event

### 2.1. Registration and official opening

The event started with a recording session, where the participants were welcomed by members of the organizing team. Each participant received a welcome package that included informative materials about the project, a folder that included a stick with the intellectual products made, the feedback form, materials. The atmosphere at the beginning of the event was warm and friendly, offering the opportunity for participants to interact before the official opening.

**The opening speech** was given by the project coordinator, who stressed the importance of the initiative in the current context of support for military and veterans affected by psychological trauma. The focus was on the urgent need to address the issue of PTSD in a structured and effective way, providing solutions that support the social and professional reintegration of active military personnel and veterans.

### 2.2. Presentation of the context and motivation of the project

This section of the event was dedicated to understanding the context that was the basis for the development of the project. The challenges faced by active military personnel, those retired from theaters of operations were discussed, emphasizing the long-term impact of PTSD on their personal and professional lives.

The project coordinator explained how **recent studies have shown that PTSD is a severely underdiagnosed problem**, leading to a lack of adequate support for the military. The project has been developed to respond to these needs, proposing concrete solutions for the early identification of symptoms and the provision of tailored psychological support.

### 2.3. Presentation of project objectives and results

Obiectivele proiectului „Resilience and Inclusion for the Military” includ

- ❖ **Development of an information booklet** on PTSD and symptom management methods.
- ❖ **Create an online course** aimed at understanding and managing PTSD by military personnel and training mental health professionals and those who work directly with military personnel.

- ❖ **The launch of a digital application**, "Freedom for Army", aimed at supporting the mental health of military personnel, giving them access to self-help techniques and monitoring of their emotional state.

**The presentation of the booklet "The Invisible Front"** highlighted its usefulness in recognizing the early signs of PTSD. The brochure includes case studies, coping techniques and resources for accessing support services.

Next, **the demonstration of the online course** showed how it can be used by military personnel and professionals to better understand the specificities of PTSD in military personnel and provide effective interventions. The feedback received from the participants was extremely positive, many of whom showed interest in recommending it in their professional networks.

## **2.4. Networking breaks and lunch**

The networking breaks were strategically designed to maximize the interaction between participants. During the coffee break and lunch, the participants had the opportunity to get to know the project team members better, but also to develop professional relationships with other experts from various fields.

**The informal interactions** that took place in these moments proved to be extremely valuable, contributing to the creation of connections between psychologists, military personnel and representatives of non-governmental institutions involved in supporting veterans. The discussions focused on topics such as the importance of psychological support for retired servicemen from theaters of operations, good practices in recognizing PTSD symptoms and innovative intervention methods.

**The feedback received** during these breaks highlighted the fact that the participants particularly appreciated the opportunity to openly discuss the challenges encountered in their field of activity and to explore future collaborations. The possibility of organizing more in-depth workshops on specific topics related to mental health and social reintegration of servicemen was also discussed.

## **2.5. Demonstration of the "Freedom for Army" app**

One of the highlights of the event was the detailed presentation of the digital application "Freedom for Army". This app was developed to support veterans in managing PTSD symptoms through modern technology. The application includes functionalities such as:

- ❖ **Daily journaling** to monitor emotional state;

- ✧ **Guided breathing and relaxation techniques** to reduce anxiety;
- ✧ **Regular assessments** that allow users to track progress in symptom management;

The live demonstration was made by a member of the technical team, who presented how to use the application in an interactive way, involving participants in testing different functionalities. The participants were extremely interested in understanding how the application can be integrated into psychological counseling sessions and social reintegration programs for military personnel.

Following the demonstration, participants expressed interest in **adopting the app in their organizations**, considering it an effective and modern tool for supporting mental health. Many of them suggested that the app could be used not only by the military, but also by other categories, such as firefighters, police officers, ambulance doctors, emergency medicine volunteers, etc.

## 2.6. Q&A session

This session was very interactive and gave participants the opportunity to ask questions to the project team. The discussions focused on the following topics:

- **Long-term sustainability of the project:** The participants were interested in the plans to continue and expand the project after the completion of the European funding. The project team explained that there are strategies being developed to obtain additional sources of funding and partnerships.
- **Integration of the "Freedom for Army" app** into existing support systems: Ways in which the app could be integrated into already existing mental health programs within military institutions and rehabilitation centers were discussed.
- **Long-term impact on veterans:** The importance of monitoring veterans' outcomes through the use of the app and how it can help improve their quality of life was discussed.

The participants appreciated the openness of the project team in answering questions and clarifying any doubts. This session was considered extremely valuable, as it provided the possibility for an open and constructive dialogue.

## 2.7. Awarding of diplomas and formal closure

The last part of the event was dedicated to the ceremony of awarding the participation diplomas. This ceremony had a **strong emotional impact** on the participants, being a moment of recognition of each one's contribution to the success of the event. The diplomas were

handed over by the representatives of the organizing team, accompanied by thanks and appreciation for the active participation and interest shown.

In the closing speech, the project coordinator stressed that **the event was a success due to the involvement and enthusiasm of the participants**. Special thanks were given to those who contributed to the realization of this project, and the participants were encouraged to continue to support the veterans and promote the resources developed.

### **III. Detailed analysis of participant feedback**

To assess the success of the event and the impact of the resources presented, participants were asked to complete a feedback questionnaire at the end of the event. This questionnaire included both closed-ended and open-ended questions to get a detailed picture of the participants' experience. Of the 90 people present, **85** completed the questionnaire, which represents a **response of over 94%**, indicating a high level of involvement.

#### **Feedback questionnaire completed by participants**

##### **A. Questionnaire**

##### **1. How do you rate the overall quality of the event?**

- a. Excellent
- b. Very good
- c. Good
- d. Satisfactory
- e. Unsatisfactory

##### **2. How relevant do you think the information presented was?**

- a. Highly relevant
- b. Very relevant
- c. Moderately relevant
- d. Not at all relevant
- e. Not at all relevant

**3. Which part of the event did you like the most?**

- a. Demonstration of the "Freedom for Army" application
- b. Presentation of the "Invisible Front" brochure
- c. Q&A session
- d. Networking and coffee break
- e. Awarding of diplomas and closing of the event

**4. Do you think that the information presented will be useful in your professional activity?**

- a. Yes, a lot
- b. Yes, to a large extent
- c. Moderate
- d. A little
- e. Not at all

**5. Will you recommend the resources presented to colleagues or other professionals?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**6. Do you feel better informed about PTSD issues among the military?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

**7. What suggestions do you have for improving similar events in the future?**

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**8. What did you consider most valuable during this event?**

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**B. Results of the feedback questionnaire**

Following the collection and analysis of the completed questionnaires, we obtained the following results:

1. **Overall quality of the event:**
  - o 75% considered the event **Excellent**.
  - o 20% rated the event as **Very Good**.
  - o 5% chose the rating **Good**.
2. **Relevance of the information presented:**
  - o 82% considered the information **highly relevant**.
  - o 15% rated them as **very relevant**.

- 3% considered them **moderately relevant**.

### 3. Favorite part of the event:

- 60% indicated **the demonstration of the "Freedom for Army" application** as the most appreciated session.
- 20% were impressed by **the presentation of the brochure "The Invisible Front"**.
- 10% appreciated **the Q&A session**.
- 7% indicated that **networking breaks** were particularly valuable.
- 3% mentioned **the graduation ceremony**.

### 4. Usefulness of the information for professional activity:

- 88% felt that the information presented would be **very useful to them**.
- 10% stated that the information is **moderate in usefulness**.
- 2% answered that utility is **not very relevant** to their work.

### 5. Intent to refer resources:

- 100% of respondents said they **would recommend resources** to colleagues and other professionals.

### 6. Increasing the level of information on PTSD in the military:

- 95% of respondents said they **feel better informed** about PTSD.
- 5% answered that they need **more information** on this subject.

## C. Analysis of open comments

Based on the answers provided to the open-ended questions, the participants highlighted the following aspects:

### • What was the most valuable during the event?

- *"The demonstration of the application was very well done and I think it will bring real help to the military."*
- *"The presentation of the brochure was extremely informative and will be a valuable resource for the military."*
- *"I really appreciated the opportunity to network with other professionals in the field."*
- *"The Q&A session clarified many important aspects related to the implementation of the project."*

### • Suggestions for improving future events:

- *"It would be useful to organise more interactive workshops on specific topics."*
- *"I'd love to have more live demonstrations and hands-on sessions."*

## **IV. Assessing the impact of the event**

The dissemination event held in Bucharest within the "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military" project had a **major and profound impact** on the participants and the professional community. This event was not just a simple presentation of the project's results, but a catalyst for **creating a positive** and lasting impact in the field of support for military members and military veterinarians affected by PTSD.

### **4.1. Impact on professional awareness and education**

One of the most important aspects of this event was the significant increase **in awareness** of the complexity and severity of PTSD among military personnel. Through in-depth presentations and application demonstrations, participants gained a better understanding **of the profound impact that psychological trauma has on the lives of veterans** and were inspired to take concrete action in support of them.

The feedback collected showed that the participants were deeply impressed by **the impact of the educational materials presented**, such as the brochure "The Invisible Front" and the online course. These resources were perceived as having a **direct impact on participants' professional practices**, providing them with clear and applicable tools for identifying and managing PTSD cases.

### **4.2. Impact of the 'Freedom for Army' app on the military**

The demonstration of the "Freedom for Army" app had a **strong and immediate impact** on attendees, with many expressing excitement about the app's potential to support veterans' mental health. **The innovative impact of digital technology** was widely recognized, with participants considering the app to be a revolutionary tool that can have **a significant impact on the recovery and reintegration of military personnel** into society.

### 4.3. Impact on the professional network and collaborations

The event facilitated valuable interactions between professionals from various fields, creating a **positive impact on the development of the collaborative network** in support of veterans. The networking breaks allowed the participants to build lasting professional relationships, reinforcing **the collaborative impact** of the project. This extensive network of contacts and partnerships has the potential to generate a **long-term sustainable impact**, both in Romania and at European level.

### 4.4. Impact on the community and sustainability of the project

Beyond educating participants and developing new professional relationships, the event had a **significant impact on the military community** and paved the way for a better understanding and support of veterans. The presentations and Q&A sessions stimulated a **profound impact on mindsets**, encouraging participants to integrate the knowledge gained into their daily activities.

This shift in perception and approach, combined with the innovative resources presented, has the potential to create a **long-lasting impact** on how veterans suffering from PTSD are supported. In particular, the application of digital technologies and modern educational resources in this area will continue to have a **transformative impact** on the mental health of active and retired military personnel.

### 4.5. Impact of the event on participants

The dissemination event "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military" held in Bucharest had a **remarkable and profound impact** on the participants, transforming the way they perceive and address the issue of PTSD among the military. Although the event lasted only one day, **its effect on the participants was long-lasting**, many of them confessing that they left inspired and motivated to make significant changes in their fields of activity.

#### A. Increased awareness and empathy

Participants were deeply impressed by the **level of detail and clarity** with which information about PTSD and its impact on the military was presented. Many in attendance acknowledged that while they had knowledge of PTSD, this event gave them **a much more nuanced perspective** on the emotional and psychological difficulties faced by the military.

**The emotional impact** of the sessions, combined with the life stories and case studies presented, led to an **increase in empathy** and understanding towards servicemen struggling with invisible trauma. One participant mentioned in the feedback questionnaire: *"This event opened my eyes to the depth of suffering that many servicemen go through. I will try to apply what I have learned to make a difference in my community."*

## **B. Motivation for action and professional change**

Another **strong impact** of the event was to stimulate participants to become **agents of change** in their own organizations and communities. Mental health professionals, psychologists, military personnel and NGO representatives left with a concrete set of **tools and resources** that they can implement in their activities. They were inspired to include in their programs **new strategies to support the military**, based on what they learned during the event.

A remarkable feedback was provided by a psychologist present at the event: *"I was deeply inspired by the 'Freedom for Army' app and the 'Invisible Front' brochure. I will use these resources in the advice I provide to the military in my community, convinced that they can have a real impact."*

## **C. Fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and sharing best practices**

For the participants, one of the most valuable **impacts** of the event was the opportunity to build professional relationships and learn from each other. The open and collaborative atmosphere allowed the exchange of **best practices and innovative ideas** between professionals from different fields. This event acted as a **catalyst for initiating interdisciplinary collaborations**, encouraging participants to join forces to improve the support provided to the military.

Another feedback from an NGO representative: *"The impact of this event does not stop here. We have met dedicated professionals and have already discussed possible collaborations to develop joint projects to support the military. The event was, indeed, a transformative experience."*

## **C. Creating a collective commitment to supporting veterans**

The event had a **strong impact on the participants' engagement**, inspiring them to take concrete action in support of the military. Many people mentioned that, following the

event, they changed their **perception of their responsibilities** as professionals and members of the community. Many of the participants decided to integrate **the newly acquired knowledge and resources** into their professional activity , thus contributing to a **long-term positive impact** on the Romanian military.

The conclusion of the event was that although PTSD is a complex challenge, collaboration and the use of innovative resources can have a **profound impact in improving the lives of military personnel**. Attendees left with a **renewed sense of responsibility** and a commitment to applying what they learned to support the military community.

**Overall, the dissemination event in Bucharest not only informed, but also inspired and motivated participants to become agents of change, having a transformative impact on both the professionals present and the military community as a whole.**

## **4.6. Conclusion**

### **A strategic impact for the future**

In conclusion, the dissemination event in Bucharest had an **extraordinary impact** on the participants, on the community of professionals and on the military, who will benefit from the resources developed. By raising awareness, strengthening professional relationships and introducing innovative technological solutions, the event managed to create a **profound impact, with long-term effects**.

This event is a clear example of **the positive impact that well-structured and collaborative initiatives can have** in support of vulnerable groups. The significant impact generated by this event will continue to be felt in subsequent initiatives, contributing to better military support and the creation of more resilient and inclusive communities.

## V. Conclusions and recommendations

### 5.1. General conclusions

The dissemination event organized within the "Resilience and Inclusion for the Military" project proved to be a resounding success, managing to achieve all its objectives. The participants appreciated both the quality of the **information presented** and the opportunities offered for the exchange of experiences and the development of new collaborations.

In the wake of the event, it became apparent that there is a real interest and acute need for resources dedicated to supporting the mental health of servicemen. Detailed presentations of the Invisible Front brochure, the online course and the digital app demonstrated how these tools can help improve the quality of life for people affected by PTSD. **The impact of the event** was amplified by the diversified participation, bringing together specialists from multiple fields, which contributed to a better understanding of common challenges and to the identification of effective solutions.

### 5.2. Recommendations for the future

Based on the feedback received and the conclusions drawn from the discussions held during the event, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Organizing in-depth workshops** that allow participants to explore in detail the use of the "Freedom for Army" application and the implementation of the online course. These sessions could include case studies, practical demonstrations and exchanges of best practices.
2. **Expanding the project nationally and internationally**, through strategic partnerships with other organizations, both in the public and private sectors. This will contribute to the dissemination of the resources developed and to the increase of the impact of the project.
3. **Continuous monitoring of the impact of the application and the online course**, by collecting data from users and adjusting resources according to identified needs. This process will ensure the long-term relevance and effectiveness of the project.
4. **Exploring opportunities for additional funding** to ensure the sustainability of the project, including by applying for additional European grants or attracting private sponsors.

The event demonstrated that there is a real interest in supporting the military and confirmed the need for similar initiatives in the future. Building on the success of this project, new initiatives can be developed to expand the impact on military communities in Romania and other European countries.



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