

BILATERAL CONTACT SEMINAR

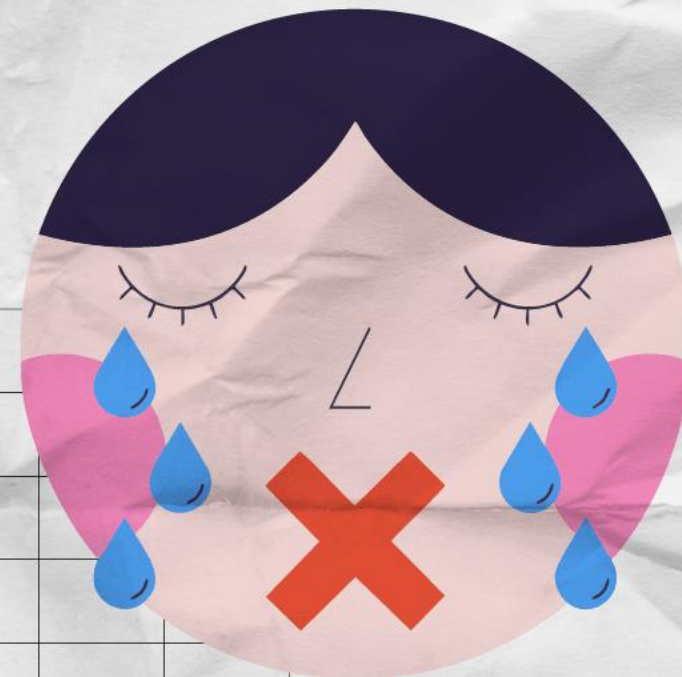
BULLYING-FREE CLASSROOMS:

LIFE SKILLS



@#&!

PRACTICAL TOOLS



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+ 09-11
OCT. 2026 MARATHONAS.
ATHENS.GREECE.



KEYNOTE SPEECH 1

From Policy to Practice:

European Cooperation and Life Skills for Bullying-Free Classrooms



Panagiotis Passas

Director General for Human Resources; acting Director General for International and European Affairs, Education for the Hellenic Diaspora and Intercultural Education

Panagiota Karkaletsi

Head of the Department of European Programmes; member of the Erasmus+ Committee for Education and Training

Hellenic Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports | Erasmus+ National Authority for Greece



BILATERAL CONTACT SEMINAR
Bullying-Free Classrooms:
Life Skills & Practical Tools



HELLENIC MINISTRY OF
Education, Religious Affairs and Sports



OUR STARTING POINT

One message: policy sets the stage, skills and cooperation change the classroom



POLICY

Rights, laws, strategies, platforms,
training



LIFE SKILLS

Empathy, self-regulation,
communication, cooperation,
digital citizenship



PRACTICE

Classrooms where every child
feels seen, heard and safe



Erasmus+ and eTwinning: European cooperation connects every step





ROADMAP

Our journey in five steps



1

Understanding bullying today

From a “bully–victim” dyad to a social process, and what the data tell us

2

International and European frameworks

Rights, well-being, safe classrooms, active citizenship, online safety

3

Greece: from law to school life

Law 5029/2023, stop-bullying.gov.gr, Skills Labs, National Strategy 2025–2030

4

Life skills: the bridge

What they are, how they interrupt bullying, what the evidence says

5

European cooperation in the classroom

Erasmus+, eTwinning, a framework and a toolkit for Monday morning



01



Understanding bullying today

From a “bully–victim” dyad to a social process, and what the data tell us

1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

From a dyad to a social process



THE CLASSIC VIEW (Olweus, 1993)

- Repeated, **intentional** aggression
- An **imbalance of power** between two people
- Focus on the individual “bully” and “victim”
- Response: detect and sanction



UNESCO & WABF DEFINITION (2023)

*“A damaging **social process** characterized by an imbalance of power driven by **social and institutional norms**... among students or school personnel ... that causes physical, social and emotional harm to the targeted individuals or groups, and **the wider school community**.”*

Sources: Olweus (1993); UNESCO/World Anti-Bullying Forum definition (2023), cited in OECD (2026), Education Working Paper No. 341, p. 7.

1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Cyberbullying: what changes when bullying goes online



Expanded social spaces

Social media, messaging and gaming become the new playground; bystanders can amplify harm with one click.



Persistence and virality

Content stays online, spreads beyond the school gate and follows the child home, day and night.



Power is redistributed

Anonymity and digital skills, not size or popularity, can create the power imbalance.



New and evolving practices

Impersonation, exclusion from groups, and AI-generated deepfakes used to shame and humiliate.



Source: Joint Research Centre (2025), Cyberbullying: considerations towards a common definition. Online and offline bullying overlap strongly (OECD, 2026).

1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

The scale of the challenge



1 in 3

learners worldwide bullied at least once a month (UNESCO)

1 in 10

learners worldwide experience cyberbullying (UNESCO)

20%

of 15-year-olds in OECD countries bullied at least a few times a month (PISA 2022)



1 in 6

 adolescents (11–15) in Europe has been cyberbullied; 1 in 8 admits cyberbullying others.

Cyberbullying is the most common reason for calls to Europe's Safer Internet helplines over the last five years.



Sources: UNESCO (2019, 2024); OECD (2023), PISA 2022 Results Vol. II; HBSC 2021/22 (Cosma et al., 2024); European Commission (2026).



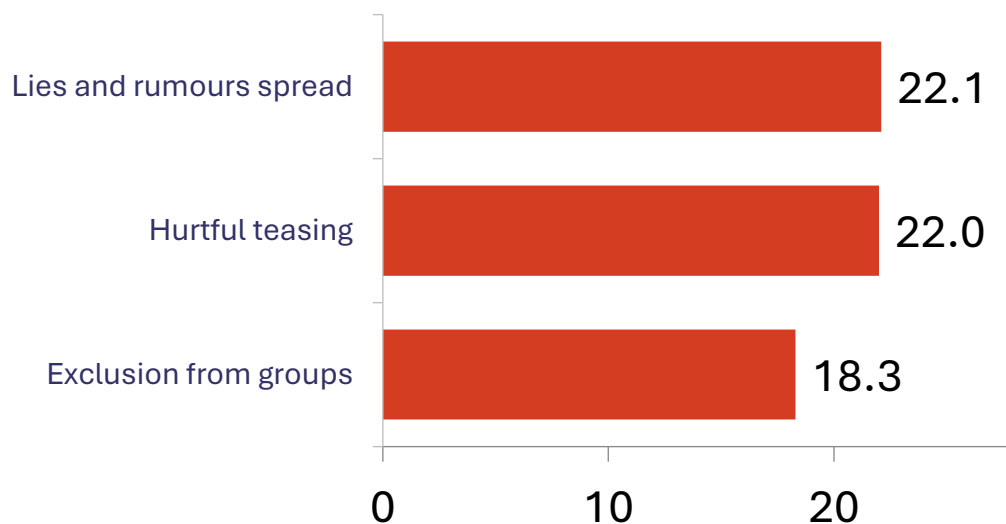
1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Greece: what pupils tell us



Nationwide survey, 2022, 6,250 pupils, Grades 6, 8 and 10

Most frequent forms experienced (%)



22.1%

bullied at school in the previous two months

9.5%

experienced cyberbullying in the same period

12.1%

took part in bullying someone else

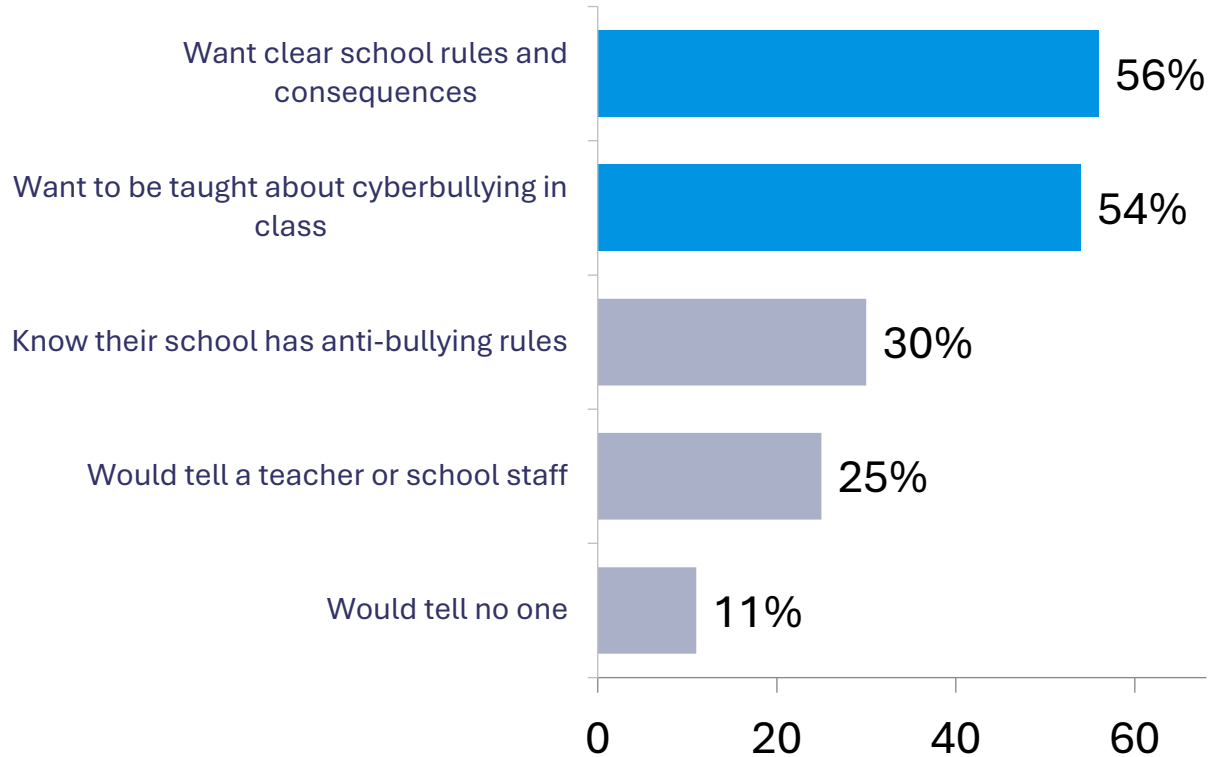


Below the international average and declining over 12 years; age 13 is the peak.

Source: EIPSY nationwide survey (2022), in National Strategy for the Prevention of Juvenile Violence 2025–2030 (Presidency of the Government, 2025).

1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Children's voices: they want clear rules, and adults they trust



EU survey, Sept 2025

6,343 children aged 12–17, all 27 EU countries

24% experienced cyberbullying

39% have witnessed it

“More counselling to help both victims and bullies understand what’s happening.”

Girl, 17, Romania



Source: EU Children's Participation Platform (2025), Children's voices on cyberbullying.

1. UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

Why it matters for well-being, learning and inclusion



Mental health

2.8 times more likely to report depressive symptoms when bullied; cyberbullying predicts lasting anxiety.



Learning

Lower reading scores (about 13% of a standard deviation in PIRLS 2021) and more truancy as bullying intensifies.



Early leaving

Bullying raises the risk of dropping out, feeding exclusion, unemployment and NEET status.



Equity

Pupils seen as “different”, migrant, disabled, LGBTIQ+, poorer, face higher risk.



“Healthy context paradox”: as bullying falls, those still bullied may suffer more, universal prevention needs targeted support.



02



International and European frameworks

Rights, well-being, safe classrooms, active citizenship and online safety

2. FRAMEWORKS

A rights-based foundation



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- **Art. 19** protection from all forms of violence
- **Art. 28** school discipline respecting dignity
- **Art. 29** education for respect, tolerance and responsible life



Sustainable Development Goal 4

- **Target 4.a:** “safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all”
- Bullying prevalence is a global SDG indicator



UNESCO

- International Day against Violence and Bullying at School, including Cyberbullying, **first Thursday of November**
- Only **32 countries (16%)** have a comprehensive legal framework against school violence (2024)



Sources: United Nations (1989, 2015); UNESCO (2024), *Safe to learn and thrive* / press release, 6 November 2024.

What works at system level: OECD and Council of Europe



OECD (2026): four policy levers

- 1 Comprehensive system-level strategy with a shared definition
- 2 Capacity of teachers and school leaders
- 3 Whole-school programmes + targeted support
- 4 Systematic monitoring and evaluation

Council of Europe

- **Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (2010):** combat all forms of violence, including bullying
- **Competences for Democratic Culture (2018):** 20 competences, respect, empathy, co-operation, conflict resolution, listening



Sources: OECD (2026), *Bullying in education*, Education Working Paper No. 341, cites Greece's 2024 survey and reporting platform; Council of Europe (2010, 2018).

2. FRAMEWORKS

The European framework: four connected agendas



Well-being and school success

- Pathways to School Success (2022)
- Wellbeing and mental health at school guidelines (2024)
- Council conclusions on well-being in digital education (2022) and on mental health in the digital era (2025)



Safe digital environments

- Better Internet for Kids (BIK+, 2022) and Safer Internet Centres
- Digital Services Act, protection of minors (Art. 28)
- Action Plan against Cyberbullying (2026); EU KIDS Act proposal (2026)



Active citizenship and common values

- Paris Declaration (2015)
- Council Recommendation on common values and inclusive education (2018)
- Working Group on Equality and Values: bullying (2024)



Skills for life

- Key competences: personal, social and learning to learn; citizenship (2018)
- LifeComp framework (2020)
- Union of Skills (2025)

2. FRAMEWORKS

EU Action Plan against Cyberbullying, 10 February 2026



1

Coordinated protection

Member States invited to adopt national cyberbullying policies based on a common understanding; better data.

2

Prevention and awareness

Healthy, responsible digital habits from an early age; EU tools co-created with children, parents and educators.

3

Reporting and support

An online safety app to report, store evidence and get help, linked to national helplines.



Next: EU KIDS Act proposal (Sept. 2026), services safe by design; 15 as minimum age for an independent account. Regulation helps, but prevention is built in schools.





03



Greece: from law to school life

Reading the national response through the public policy cycle



3. GREECE

A decade of policy: from evidence to an integrated response



Agenda setting → formulation → decision → implementation → evaluation



Sources: Artinopoulou et al. (2016); Ministerial Decision 94236/ΓΔ4/2021; Law 5029/2023; Presidency of the Government (2025).

3. GREECE

Law 5029/2023: building relationships of trust



Purpose: to prevent and tackle school violence and bullying “on the basis of strengthening relationships of trust among the members of the educational community” (Art. 1)



Every school

Designated report recipients



Every Directorate

Four-member action groups



National level

Scientific Committee;
handling protocols



Digital platform

stop-bullying.gov.gr for
pupils and parents

- **Broad definition (Art. 4):** physical, verbal, psychological, social, racist, sexual and online violence; discrimination against vulnerable groups
- **Training:** about 25,000 educators trained by the Institute of Educational Policy

Sources: Law 5029/2023 (ΦΕΚ Α' 55/10.03.2023); JMD 35692/ΓΔ4/2024 and 36421/ΓΔ4/2024; MD 123399/ΓΔ4/2023; Ministry of Education (2026).

3. GREECE

Beyond the law: a prevention ecosystem



Skills Labs

Empathy, mediation, communication and digital citizenship in the timetable



Active Citizen Actions

New curriculum for all levels (2024): citizenship, sustainability, digital rights



Psychosocial support

1,212 new permanent psychologist posts (KEDASY and EDEY)



School regulations

Every school: approved internal regulation with anti-bullying provisions



“Mobile phone in the bag”

Phones out of sight during the school day



Safer Internet Centre

Helpline 210 6007686; ~17,000 pupils, 4,000 teachers, 3,000 parents a year

Sources: MD 94236/ΓΔ4/2021; Ministry of Education (2026); Presidency of the Government (2025); Better Internet for Kids (2026).

3. GREECE

National Strategy 2025–2030: a whole-of-government approach



138

policies and actions
reviewed (2019–2024)

29

new policies proposed

69

measures in the Action Plan

38

indicators to monitor
progress



Flagship: “Educating non-violent citizens”

- Compulsory education in peaceful conflict resolution and mediation
- Pedagogical, counselling approach to discipline within the school
- Digital adulthood at 15, age verification and the Kids Wallet app



Source: Presidency of the Government (2025), National Strategy for the Prevention of Violence and Juvenile Delinquency 2025–2030; 10 ministries coordinated.



04



Life skills: the bridge

What they are, how they interrupt bullying, and what the evidence says

4. LIFE SKILLS

What are life skills?

“Abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life.”

World Health Organization

Self-awareness

Empathy

Coping with emotions

Coping with stress

Effective communication

Interpersonal relationships

Critical thinking

Creative thinking

Decision-making

Problem-solving



Converging frameworks

- **LifeComp (EU, 2020)**
9 competences: personal, social, learning to learn
- **RFCDC (Council of Europe, 2018)**
20 competences for democratic culture
- **OECD SSES**
Big Five: emotional regulation, collaboration, engagement...
- **CASEL**
Self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships, decisions



Sources: WHO (1997); Sala et al. (2020); Council of Europe (2018); OECD (2024); CASEL (2020).

4. LIFE SKILLS

Life skills in the Greek curriculum: Skills Labs



FOUR THEMATIC AREAS



Living Better
Well-being



Caring for the Environment
Sustainability



Taking Interest and Taking Action
Social awareness and responsibility



Creating and Innovating
Creative thinking and initiative

Life skills strand (B)

- Social-life skills
- Digital citizenship
- Mediation and social empathy
- Entrepreneurship

Alongside 21st-century skills (4Cs), technology and science skills, and thinking skills. Compulsory nationwide since September 2021.



Sources: Ministerial Decision 94236/ΓΔ4/2021 (ΦΕΚ Β' 3567); Ministry of Education press release, 3 August 2021.

4. LIFE SKILLS

How life skills interrupt bullying



Life skill	Mechanism it addresses	Classroom practice
Self-regulation	Reactive aggression, retaliation	Emotion check-ins, calm-down routines
Empathy	Moral disengagement, online disinhibition	Stories, role play, perspective-taking
Assertive communication	Silence of targets and bystanders	Practise saying “stop”; know how to report
Mediation	Disputes escalating into bullying	Peer mediation, restorative circles
Collaboration	Exclusion of those seen as “different”	Mixed teams, eTwinning projects
Digital citizenship	Rumours, humiliating images, deepfakes	“Verify before you share”, consent
Civic responsibility	Group norms that tolerate bullying	Co-created class charter, student voice



Source: authors' synthesis based on WHO (1997), Sala et al. (2020), Council of Europe (2018), OECD (2024, 2026), JRC (2025).

4. LIFE SKILLS

What the evidence says, and what it does not



+11

percentile points in achievement from school SEL programmes (213 programmes, 270,000+ pupils)

–20%

bullying perpetration and –15% victimisation on average after anti-bullying programmes

–15%

approximate reduction in cyberbullying after prevention programmes



What makes programmes work

- Whole-school and whole-community approach, with parents
- Clear policies: definitions, reporting, consistent and restorative responses
- Targeted support for pupils who remain at risk

A caution: skills alone are not enough. They work when embedded in a coherent whole-school framework.



Sources: Durlak et al. (2011); Gaffney, Ttofi & Farrington (2019, 2021); Gaffney et al. (2019); OECD (2026), Box 4.1.



05



European cooperation in the classroom

Erasmus+ and eTwinning as an infrastructure for practising life skills

5. EUROPEAN COOPERATION

The Erasmus+ philosophy: mobility, inclusion, shared values



1987

a modest mobility scheme becomes Europe's flagship programme

18 m+

people reached by Erasmus+ and its predecessors

€26.2 bn

budget 2021–2027, nearly double the previous period



Horizontal priorities 2021–2027

- Inclusion and diversity
- Participation in democratic life, common values, civic engagement
- Digital transformation
- Environment and climate action

For schools

KA1 pupil and staff mobility, accreditation

KA2 cooperation and small-scale partnerships

2028–2034: Council position agreed 11 May 2026



Sources: Council of the European Union (2026), Erasmus+ explainer; European Commission (2025), Erasmus+ Programme Guide.

5. EUROPEAN COOPERATION

eTwinning: Europe's largest community of schools



IN EUROPE (2025)

1.2 m+

teachers

295,000

schools

160,000+

projects

46

countries

IN GREECE (2026)

≈40,000

active teachers

≈14,000

participating schools

27,000+

European projects since
2005

200 h

annual online seminars incl.
internet safety



Sources: EU Reporter (2025), eTwinning 20 years; Greek eTwinning National Support Organisation (2026). eTwinning has been part of the European School Education Platform since 2022.

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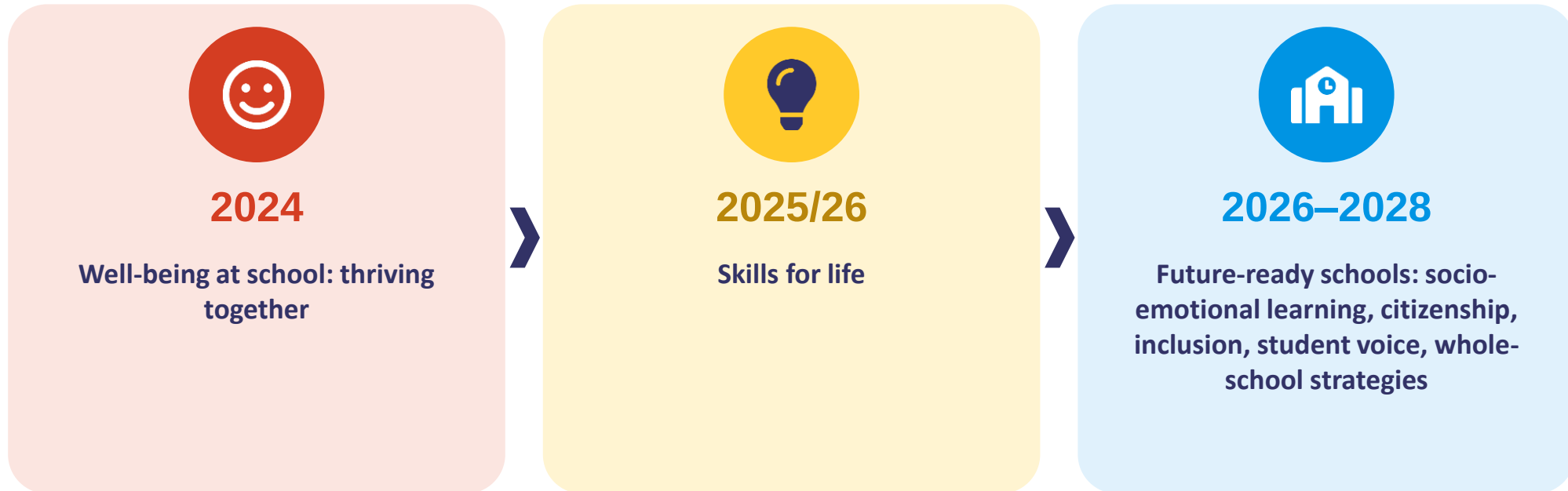


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5. EUROPEAN COOPERATION

eTwinning's priorities converge with our theme



From well-being to life skills to whole-school change: the European agenda and the Greek agenda point in the same direction.

Sources: European School Education Platform (2024; 3 September 2025; 29 August 2026).

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5. EUROPEAN COOPERATION

eTwinning and Skills Labs: the Greek bridge



Ministry circular

Annual circular (127223/H1/10.10.2025) explicitly supports eTwinning within Skills Labs



Featured Groups

“Health and well-being in education”, “Citizenship education” and more, mapped to each thematic area



Teacher learning

MOOC “eTwinning & Skills Labs”: 8,069 teachers; activities adapted for collaboration between schools



Strategic Plan

School networking and inter-school projects modelled on eTwinning for preventing bullying and cyberbullying



Sources: Ministry of Education Circular 127223/H1/10.10.2025; Greek eTwinning NSO (2026); Strategic Plan for Primary and Secondary Education.

Five ways cooperation prevents bullying



Belonging

Every pupil gets a role in a shared product



Encounter with difference

Diversity experienced as a resource, not a threat



Digital citizenship in practice

Respectful online communication in a safe, moderated space



Student voice

Pupils co-create rules, decide and reflect



Teacher communities

Peer support, tested resources, confidence



BRINGING IT TOGETHER

From policy to practice: a multi-level framework



1 System

Shared definition, law, reporting, training, monitoring

Law 5029/2023, stop-bullying.gov.gr, National Strategy, EU Action Plan

2 School

Whole-school climate, regulation, protocols, families

Report recipients, action groups, EU well-being guidelines

3 Classroom

Life-skills routines, co-created rules, consistent responses

Skills Labs, new curricula, Active Citizen Actions

4 Learner

Voice, agency, peer support, trusted reporting

Student councils, Safer Internet Youth Panel

5 Europe

Collaboration, belonging, professional learning

eTwinning, Erasmus+ KA1/KA2, Safer Internet Centres



Source: authors' elaboration (see accompanying article, Table 2).

FOR TEACHERS

A toolkit for Monday morning



1

Co-create a class charter on respect, offline and online

2

Use Skills Labs “Living Better” for emotions, empathy and assertiveness

3

Teach pupils exactly how and to whom to report, school, stop-bullying.gov.gr, helpline 210 6007686

4

Talk with bystanders: what can I safely do when I see bullying?

5

Design an eTwinning project on well-being or digital citizenship (“Future-ready schools”)

6

Let pupils survey peers and present solutions, e.g. on 5 November 2026

7

Involve families and work with the school psychologist and report recipients

8

Measure class climate before and after; share what works



CONCLUSIONS

Three priorities for the next policy cycle



Coherence

One whole-school framework: clear rules, consistent adults, life-skills learning and targeted support



Evidence

Measure climate, belonging and skills, not only incidents; evaluate what works where



Participation

Children's voices shape definitions, rules and solutions



Greece holds the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the second half of 2027, an opportunity to share what works.



Every child seen, heard and safe.

When pupils in Greece and Italy design a project together, negotiate, disagree respectfully and create something they are proud of, they practise the very skills that make bullying less likely.

Thank you Grazie Ευχαριστούμε



Useful links

stop-bullying.gov.gr

Report and get support

saferinternet4kids.gr

Helpline 210 6007686

etwinning.gr

Greek eTwinning NSO

school-education.ec.europa.eu

eTwinning & ESEP

erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu

Erasmus+ opportunities



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