ON THE WAY
TO EXCELLENCE

BEGINNER TEACHER
SUPPORT PROGRAM

TRANSNATIONAL
EVALUATION REPORT

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Introduction

This document is a compilation of feedback received from teachers who participated in the pilot training of the "On the way to excellence – beginner teacher support program" project in the various countries of the partnership – Poland, Greece and Italy. Several questionnaires were given out to all the teachers involved, one for each module attended, i.e. 5 in total. Within the questionnaires, questions were asked about the topics covered in the various modules to check the teachers' level of knowledge and preparation. The teachers responded to two different types of questionnaires: pre-training and post-training questionnaires. The questionnaires given out before and after the training contained the same questions. This made it possible to verify the results of the training and the skills acquired during the course.

In addition to the questionnaires, teachers participated in a final focus group, during which they were able to express their opinions on the progress of the training, pointing out its strengths and weaknesses, thus helping to shed light on the functioning of the course in its current format. Thanks to the focus groups, through creating a positive atmosphere and encouraging the free expression of opinions and experiences, it was possible to address several pressing issues in terms of the way the structure of the training and the content delivered. Questionnaire and interview questions are presented in the Annex to the report.

The report produced is extremely useful for understanding the effectiveness of the implemented program and the viability of replicating the experience. Participants of the test trainings played a key role in the project, allowing the partnership to develop a final shape for the product. It is their opinions, program evaluations and the observed increase in their own competences that will determine the ultimate format of the training program, so that it brings measurable results and becomes an important tool in the professional development of young teachers.

The project

According to some research conducted by the European Union in the school environment, the training needs most frequently requested by teachers concern social skills. When asked about their weaknesses, they mention above all: the difficulty in maintaining discipline in the classroom, the inability to establish relationships with their students, the distrust of the class group, the excessive indulgence or the lack of patience, the use of stereotypes in student evaluation.

In many European countries, a large number of new teachers quit their job. This fact questions the type of support these teachers received during the difficult early stages of their professional careers. Research shows that the departure from teaching is often due to a too heavy workload and communication problems with students, parents and colleagues.

The "On the way to excellence – beginner teacher support program" project is a response to the needs of these young teachers: a training program that aims to integrate the knowledge acquired during their studies with the experience gained through internships. The training provides new teachers with the skills and tools necessary to deal with everyday situations, more complex challenges and post-pandemic crisis situations.

The partners, as institutions operating within the education system, take on the task of bridging the gap in access to support programs to improve teachers' social skills. Thanks to the project, a ready-to-use training program has been designed, with specific material attached, responding to newly hired teachers' professional growth needs.

The training program: overview

The training course developed by the partnership consists of 5 different modules. Each partner worked on designing one or more modules, focusing on a specific subject and providing useful materials. The first three modules are designed for classroom implementation, while the last two consist of a collection of materials that teachers can consult independently and use as needed.

The modules that can be found within the training program are as follows:
MODULE 1 – Interpersonal skills in working with students;
MODULE 2 – Supporting the student in dealing with a crisis situation;
MODULE 3 – Communication with students with special educational needs;
**MODULE 4** – Educational materials to support teachers in dealing with crisis situations;
MODULE 5 – Pass it on – how to use your potential and experience (mentoring in the workplace).

The first three modules follow the same structure. Within them, it is possible to find:
– **General Information on the Topic**: A summary of the subject matter containing the most salient points.
– **Definitions**: A collection of definitions from subject matter experts regarding the topic.
– **Importance of the Topic**: An explanation of why, when beginning work in the school context, it is essential to have an understanding of the chosen topic.
– **Learning Outcomes**: A list of the different content that teachers can acquire through the module.
– **Diagnostic Tools**: Online tools useful for self-assessment with respect to the subject matter.
– **Training Program**: A timetable for carrying out the training activities included in the 16 hours of the module.
– **Learning Activities**: A detailed description of all training activities to be carried out within the module.
– **Bibliography**: General recommendations.

The remaining two modules contain useful materials for consultation and good practices identified in the partnership countries.

To obtain a complete overview of the progress of the training course in the various countries of the partnership, it is useful to analyse some specific data and make a comparison between the various participating nations. On the following pages, we will analyse the different situations, taking each state into account and considering that 46 teachers participated in the training, this to include 40 women and 6 men.
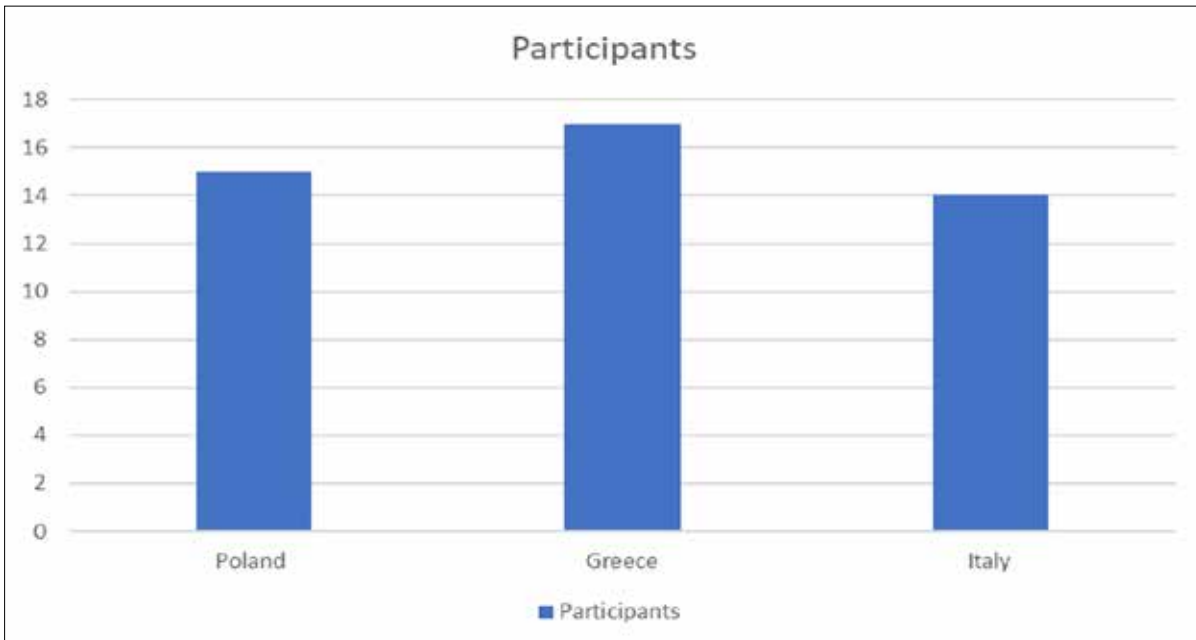
Number of training participants by country
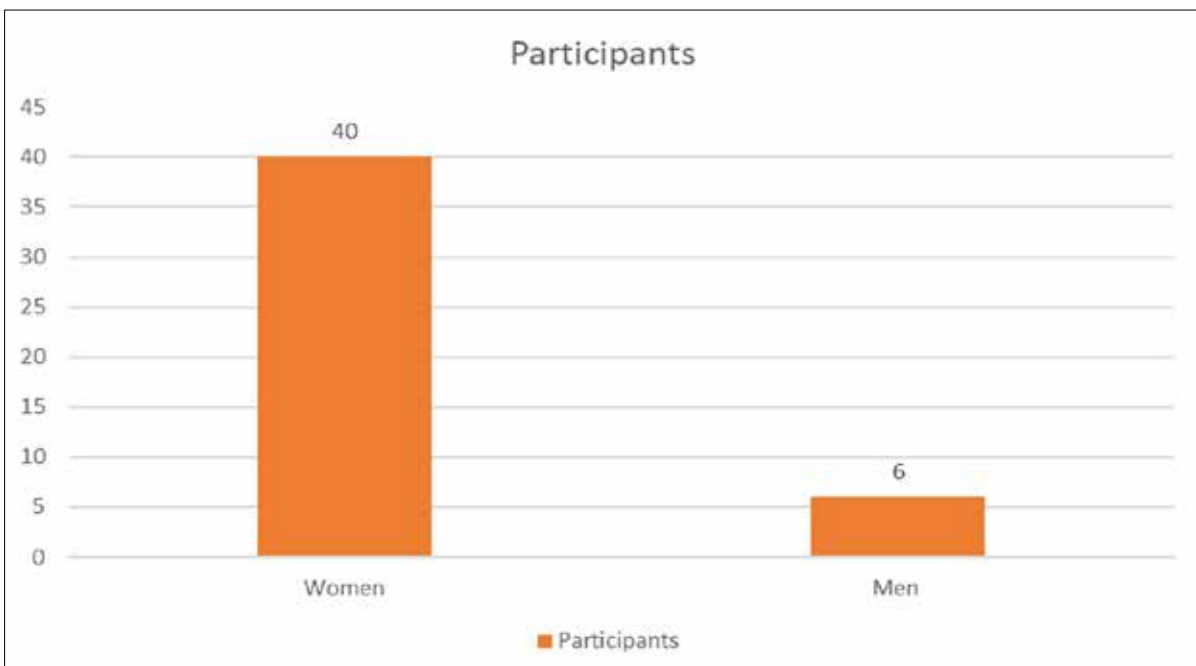
Number of participants by gender

Poland

In Poland, the training course was held from 21st April to 17th June 2023. In total, 15 teachers were involved: 14 women and 1 man. The age of the participants ranged from 26 to 42. The involvement of teachers was made possible as a result of direct communication between the reference association and the various schools, all of which were contacted via e-mail. The training was carried out by a single trainer who worked on preparing for the course for 36 hours and then additionally for the 48 hours required for its implementation. There were no particular changes to

the program except for some editing of the PowerPoint presentations to adapt them to the local context. The participants said they were overall satisfied with the training experience, although they would have preferred more meetings and opportunities for discussion with other teachers to be organised. The trainer also emphasized the need to allow more time for exchange of opinions and discussion among participants.

Greece

In Greece, the course started on June 15th and finished on June 29th, 2023. There were 12 women and 5 men involved. The schools of the teachers involved were reached in various ways, i.e. via e-mail, newsletters, phone calls and social media posts. Not all teachers were able to attend the entirety of the classes. One of the enrolled teachers had to drop out of the pilot course due to contracting Covid. The course was run entirely by one trainer who spent more than 40 hours organizing the training activities. For the teachers, the course could be improved by limiting some of the more theoretical parts and affording more space to the interactive sections. In addition, some teachers pointed out that a part related to establishing relationships between teachers and parents was missing. Others stated that taking such a long course posed a challenge in itself. As far as the positive aspects of the training are concerned, the variety of topics covered, the different points of view collected and the role playing carried out were named. It was also difficult for the trainer to keep the group focused and engaged throughout the course, which ultimately proved to be too long and tiring.

Italy

In Italy, the course started on November 13th and ended on the 29th. Classes were held twice a week. 14teachers participated in the course, all of whom identified with the female gender. The teachers' age ranged from 29 to 52. Some teachers, despite their more advanced age, started their teaching careers later in life, having previously worked in other professions. Most of the recruitment took place by reaching out by telephone to one specific institution, i.e. the Ferrara School in Palermo, which decided to participate in the course, having taken part in previous trainings organized by the Danilo Dolci Center. Some teachers from another institution were contacted personally by the course organizers. Initially, there were supposed to be 23 participants, however a number of teachers from another institution, i.e. the Convitto Vittorio Emanuele II School, were no longer able to participate in the training as it coincided with another course organized by their school. Two trainers from the association worked on the pilot training. The main trainer spent approximately40 hours preparing the project activities, while support in implementation was required for the 48 training hours.

Where the course held in Palermo is concerned, some minor changes to the initial format were implemented after taking into consideration the teachers' needs.

The course, as it was originally structured, did not include any time necessary for the group to gather, mutual acquaintance and analysis of the participants' specific training needs. For this reason, time was allocated during the first session for ice-breaking activities and getting to know each other. In module 1, emphasis was mainly placed on communication skills and conflict management, which were considered most useful by teachers. For module 2, there was a noted lack of topics such as gender-based violence, which is an issue considered crucial by teachers.

Teachers expressed the need to deal in more depth with the topic of conflict and suggested that more time should be devoted to it. In addition, they said they needed more tools to address issues such as gender education and interculturalism.

Finally, the trainer noted that the use of diagnostic tools that could often be used only by specialized personnel was of little help and in some cases confused teachers. It was also pointed out that some videos offered in the course were not available in the language of the participants and not easily usable by participants with low fluency in English. The trainer also stressed the need to supplement the training with some additional activities, games and exercises to create an atmosphere of serenity and mutual understanding.

At the end of the introductory part, the feedback from the questionnaires was collected by referring to each module separately and relating the different responses given in the various countries of the partnership. We will, therefore, proceed in the following way: one module at a time will be analysed and the responses obtained in the three countries participating in the training pilot will be compared.

MODULE 1: Evaluation and main feedback

Poland

In Poland, it can be seen that the responses of the course participants to the first training module, the one on teachers' interpersonal skills, changed when comparing the questionnaires given out before and after the training. In the pre-training questionnaires, teachers' responses were more fragmented, while in the post-training questionnaire, teachers seemed to have gained the necessary awareness and almost all responded in the same way, valuing the importance of interpersonal skills and fully understanding how crucial they are in the school context and in building a relationship with students. By the end of the training, teachers were almost all able to give a correct definition of the interpersonal skills focused on during the training.

With respect to awareness as to the value and significance of some specific interpersonal skills, however, it can be noted that at the beginning of the training course

teachers felt more confident about certain skills such as patience and responsibility. It seems, therefore, that in Poland the teaching staff tended to emphasize the importance of certain characteristics that can enable better classroom management. After the training, however, it emerged that teachers also tend to value other interpersonal skills, which, on the other hand, can serve to relate more to students, such as: communication, listening and teamwork. The training, therefore, made clear the teachers' need to fortify and feel more confident about those behavioural skills that foster dialogue and understanding in the classroom group. The training served to highlight the importance of talking and listening to students.

Participants particularly appreciated the theatre-themed activities, the skills they learned in conflict management and the opportunity to put the theory they have learned into practice through various games.

Greece

In Greece, it was also possible to see the difference between the responses given by teachers at the two different points in the training process. The definition of interpersonal skills given by teachers before and after the training, for example, changes. Before the sessions, teachers preferred a broader definition. After the training, however, some teachers changed their response, focusing more on the emotional state of students. Responses also varied when dealing with the awareness and value given to each interpersonal skill. We can see that before the training the Greek teachers felt more competent in some areas such as listening, patience, responsibility and team work. In turn, it can be inferred that at the end of the training teachers seemed to have gained more knowledge and awareness in conflict resolution, self-motivation, and communication (areas covered in the first module).

Additionally, the level of accuracy represented by the teachers drastically improves with regard to defining the interpersonal skills specifically covered in the training. In fact, some teachers who had given a specific answer in the opening questionnaire, changed it after having attended the lessons and having studied the topic in more detail. For example, the teachers, when asked about resilience and what it means to be a good leader, all gave the correct answer following completion of the training.

The participants were particularly interested in the practical activities included in the first module, namely identifying different leadership styles and role playing. In addition, it helped them to take a critical look at themselves and answer the question as to what skills they needed to improve as teachers.

Italy

In the Italian case, the trend with respect to the first module does not differ much from the other two countries. The teachers, after attending the training, gave more accurate answers to questions, had a clearer idea as to what is meant by

interpersonal skills and felt more knowledgeable about some specific interpersonal skills required for their role in school. On some definitions in particular, they improved their awareness, demonstrating that they have learned from what was discussed during the course. Taking into consideration their perceptions of themselves with respect to certain skills, it was found that, after the training, they felt they have increased their communication, listening and relational skills, thus having greater ability to communicate with and understand their students.

In the post-training questionnaire, the participants stated that they felt particularly engaged and interested during the role playing. In fact, they allowed them to experience in practice what they have studied in theory. In addition, this type of activity fostered dialogue and exchange of opinions with new acquaintances from other educational backgrounds, from whom something could be learned through active listening.

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Poland	Identifying different leadership styles, theatre-themed exercises and empathic communication were the most appreciated.
Greece	Practical activities (namely identifying different leadership styles and role playing were appreciated. The module helped the participants to take a critical look at themselves and identify the skills needed to be a good teacher.
Italy	Role playing, transformation of theory into practice, activities on conflict management and empathic communication were the most appreciated elements of the module.

Module 1: What was appreciated?

MODULE 2: Evaluation and main feedback

Poland

Regarding the second module, in Poland, it was possible to see a substantial improvement within the group in terms of awareness regarding the issues considered. In fact, the participants' answers tended to be more accurate and exact in the second questionnaire. Teachers, moreover, while assessing their own skills and abilities at the beginning and end of the module, felt more confident at the end of the course. In fact, we could see a marked improvement in the perception of their own crisis management knowledge. The responses to question no. 4 (What is your level of awareness and knowledge – between 1 (nothing) and 5 (a lot) – as to how to intervene in the event of one of the following happening?) showed that most teachers would feel more comfortable if they faced a crisis at school.

Not only did the teachers increase their crisis management skills and improve their perception of their ability to handle difficult situations, but they also participated actively, going to the bottom of the issues and listing what they liked about the module. Working in groups, imagining scenarios, trying to solve them and explaining how one would behave in a given situation were the elements of the training greatly appreciated by the teachers involved. Practical work and trying to place oneself in the situation presented made it possible to evoke and analyse the psycho-emotional aspects underlying a given situation. It helped teachers to learn more precise techniques in supporting others in crisis situations.

Greece

If we take a look at the answers given by the Greek participants at the beginning and end of the second module, we can see how the differences in the acquisition of skills are less marked than in the case of Poland. With regard to some of the questions, the teachers involved had pre-existing knowledge and participation in the module did not significantly change their awareness of the specific topics. It is important to underline, however, that, despite the theoretical basis, many teachers admitted that they did not feel particularly comfortable in managing crisis situations. The materials provided in the second module seem to have increased the confidence of the teachers, who, in the post-training questionnaire, answered the questions relating to perception of own skills in a crisis situation in a more confident way.

According to what the trainer reported, in the second module, the participants particularly appreciated the opportunity to have a dialogue and discuss crisis situations sometimes experienced in class with regard to which it was not always clear how to react.

Italy

Where the second module is concerned, Italy follows much the same trend as Greece. The teachers involved seemed to already have some useful information on the topics covered, and they demonstrated this in the questionnaires given out before the training. For example, they already knew how to define a traumatic event, what the main consequences of a crisis can be, and they were more or less aware of the number of young people showing PUI symptoms. In fact, their responses did not vary much before and after the training. A small change can be seen, however, in perception of their own skills. Despite getting the answers right, in fact, many teachers did not feel confident at all in dealing with a crisis. From the surveys, it could be seen that the participants did not feel they had the proper tools to deal with the situations listed. However, when comparing the answers with the ones given after the training, a change could be seen. The teachers felt more prepared on some topics, especially those related to child abuse and grief management. This shows that the training enabled them to feel more confident and adequate in handling certain situations.

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Poland	How to deal with a crisis situation; how to deal with parents in certain contexts.
Greece	Sharing experiences with other teachers.
Italy	Tools to understand and act in specific situations. Listening to other teachers' opinions and going through the facts together.

Module 2: What was appreciated?

MODULE 3: Evaluation and main feedback

Poland

Analysing the answers provided by the Polish teachers at both stages of the training, it is evident that the third module posed more difficulties. Compared to the two previous modules, where the correct answers increased dramatically, in this module, the difference between the pre- and post-training questionnaires is not so clearly marked. This is particularly true with regard to the question as to the right words to use when dealing with students with special educational needs (SEN), where it is possible to see that the teachers were confused regarding the correct use of the words even following completion of the training. Even the definition of students with special educational needs was not fully understood by the teachers. In fact, at the end of the training, half of the class thought that migrant students should be considered to be SEN students. There was an improvement in the true/false questions on the use of certain activities and materials with SEN students, almost all of which the teachers answer correctly, demonstrating improved knowledge of the subject. The situation seemed to change when the teachers were asked to list 3 consequences of a poor relationship between a teacher and a SEN student. Following completion of the training, the teachers were aware that a lack of commitment to this type of a relationship can cause anxiety, aggression and a lowering of self-esteem in the student. Furthermore, it was interesting to see how most teachers felt more confident about the topic after the training. In fact, almost all of them answered that on a scale of 1 to 5, they would rate their confidence in dealing with SEN students at 4.

The teachers found the module particularly interesting and useful; many of them did not have an easy time dealing with SEN students and were not always able to identify their needs. The use of social stories aroused a lot of interest among the teachers. The materials were found to be extremely practical and entertaining. Many also emphasised that the module allowed for the exchange of views, an experience considered to be valuable and enriching.

Greece

In Greece, the situation is slightly different from what was observed in Poland, although there were some points of contact. Here too, for example, teachers gave the same definition of SEN students in both questionnaires and most of them included migrant students in this category. Question no. 2 (Which of the following expressions should not be used when referring to a SEN student?) could not be answered because it was accidentally not included in the questionnaire. If, on the other hand, we compare the true/false questions on the materials, the teachers' answers were more or less the same at both stages of the training. The teachers seemed to already have some knowledge of the content presented.

When the teachers were asked to indicate some characteristics of a dysfunctional relationship between a teacher and a SEN student, they answered in the second questionnaire that this could lead to frustration, lack of motivation, school dropout and student delinquency, adding some important reflections to the list. Finally, following completion of the third module, the teachers stated that they felt more comfortable dealing with SEN students. They were very interested in the learning activities – social stories and comic strip conversations – which, in their opinion, could make the relationship between students and teachers more interactive and creative.

Italy

It is interesting to note that in Italy, as in the two other countries of the partnership, knowledge with respect to the definition of SEN students is not high. Again, many teachers provided, both in the pre-training questionnaire and in the post-training questionnaire, the definition that also sees migrant students as students with special educational needs. They, however, are not considered as such. Despite the need for help and support, they are not included in this category. Responses improved when it came to identifying expressions that should not be used when talking to people with disabilities. In this case, the Italian teachers, after completing the training, demonstrated that they have learned what the right terms to use were.

When listing some characteristics of a dysfunctional relationship between students and teachers, the teachers used more or less the same expressions in both questionnaires: demotivation, disinterest, anxiety and frustration. Looking at the answers on how comfortable teachers felt in dealing with SEN students, we could see that the answers before and after the course tended to be more or less the same.

Despite the difficulties in feeling comfortable with the subject, most of the teachers emphasised how important it was for them to follow the third module to learn more about a topic that was of key importance but on which they often did not feel adequately prepared. The social stories and the various tools provided by the trainer to deepen the relationship with SEN students were the elements most appreciated by the group as they could be reused in the classroom.

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Poland	Social stories, comic strip conversations, deep understanding of SEN students' needs.
Greece	Learning activities (social stories and comic strip conversations) making the development of the relationship between students and teachers more interactive and creative.
Italy	Social stories and various tools provided by the trainer to deepen the relationship with SEN students. Possibility of reusing the activities.

Module 3: What was appreciated?

MODULE 4: Evaluation and main feedback

Poland

The questionnaires for the fourth module, compared to those for the previous modules, focused on more personal, rather than content-related questions. The questions referred to the teachers' perception of the specific topics and their personal experiences. In Poland, the teachers answered that they mainly experienced stress during their teaching experience. Moreover, half admitted to having gone through crisis situations in exercising authority in the classroom. The situations they witnessed most often concerned the aggressive attitude of a student or lesson disruption. The vast majority stated that they had never participated in a training course on this topic. Some admitted that they were not able to openly discuss the crises they experienced at school with colleagues, while others felt quite comfortable sharing what they went through with other teachers.

In the questionnaires that were answered after the independent review of the module, the teachers replied that it would be easier for them to identify crisis situations from now on and that they would treasure the content they have learnt. After the training, all the teachers wrote that they felt well prepared on the topics covered and underlined that the most interesting parts of the module were those relating to the acquisition of useful and concrete tools to understand and identify that they were going through a crisis situation and how to manage it.

Greece

In Greece, too, it emerged from the pre-training questionnaires that teachers mostly experienced stress and emotional fatigue during their teaching journey. In the Greek context, however, unlike in the Polish context, most participants admitted to having gone through a crisis situation. For the Greek teachers, the most common situations they witnessed were lesson disruption and aggressive attitude from a student. And again, as with the Poles, participation in trainings on these issues was not very high. One positive finding concerned the relationship with

other teachers. Indeed, it emerged from the questionnaires that many of the participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences with crisis situations with their colleagues.

Regarding the post-training questionnaire, on the other hand, the Greek teachers all responded that the module helped them better identify crisis situations but not all of them were convinced that the content chosen would help them really handle crisis situations. Half of the teachers felt that they have gained certain knowledge but were not sure how useful it would be on a practical level. For instance, suicide and theft were identified as unaddressed topics. At the conclusion of the training, participants felt moderately knowledgeable and confident about the topics covered and stated that the most interesting part of the module was the detailed description of crisis situations.

Italy

As for the fourth module, looking at the responses of the Italian teachers, it could be seen that many of them found themselves in crisis situations not always knowing how to behave. Teachers have not always had the opportunity to train on the topic and acquire the necessary tools to overcome certain situations, this also due to the small number of trainings organized. In Italy, it emerged that what most often challenged teachers in their teaching was the disruption of lessons by students, where they did not always know how to react. Moreover, it is important to point out that not all the teachers found it easy to share their moments of difficulties with their colleagues. For those who have been working in education for a short time, showing their weaknesses was particularly not easy.

The module helped all the teachers involved to better identify crisis situations in which they could find themselves and provided useful tools for overcoming any crisis situations. After participating in the module, however, it continued to be complicated for teachers to feel completely comfortable with the issues addressed. Since it was a module that they reviewed independently, the teachers admitted that they had more difficulty in following it and were not able to go into all the topics it contained. However, what they appreciated most was that they were able to identify crisis situations in which they recognised themselves and admitted to having found themselves in on several occasions. They also found the tools from different educational contexts useful, particularly those related to dealing with bullying.

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Poland	Tools to counteract burnout, effective communication and examples of crisis situations given.
Greece	Detailed presentation of the steps for dealing with each crisis situation.
Italy	Opportunity to identify possible crisis situations; tools related to dealing with bullying.

Module 4: What was appreciated?

MODULE 5: EVALUATION AND MAIN FEEDBACK

Poland

In the last module, again to be reviewed independently, on peer-mentoring in the workplace, the answers given by the Polish teachers before and after the training did not change drastically. The right answers remained as such, but so did the wrong ones. The definition of peer-mentoring was correctly given both before and after reading the material, indicating that the teachers were already aware of this method, or at least that they knew its meaning. In both the true/false questions and the definition of the CLEAR methodology, the teachers made more or less the same mistakes. However, the participants found it useful to gain new insight regarding this method, and in the post-training questionnaire they responded that knowledge of this methodology could positively affect their role as teachers. They found it particularly interesting that it was a non formal, mutual-aid method and believed it could be of fundamental value in the school context.

Greece

In Greece, reviewing the module independently gave the participants the opportunity to acquire some basic knowledge on the topic. The definition of peer-mentoring, however, appeared to be more correct in the pre-training questionnaires than in the post-training ones. In turn, the concept of I-messages was known to the teachers before the training and they maintained their clarity on the subject after reading the material. As for the definition of the CLEAR method, the teachers seemed to be aware of it before the training. Turning to the perception of their own knowledge, before the training the Greek teachers claimed that the topic of peer-mentoring was quite useful, and after the training they felt moderately knowledgeable on the subject. When examining the more specific tools of the methodology, the teachers stated that they did not have adequate knowledge on the subject. The part that they considered most interesting had to do with the inclusive potential of the methodology, i.e. giving the teaching staff the opportunity to have a dialogue, establish relationships and experience both teaching and learning in the workplace.

Italy

Through the peer-mentoring module, the Italian teachers had the opportunity to approach a topic that they had some knowledge of but had never had the opportunity to fully explore. Their awareness of the definition of peer-mentoring or the use of certain tools was high and remained so following completion of the training. However, their own perception of the knowledge held on the topics discussed did not seem to increase exponentially from before to after the training. Those who considered themselves averagely prepared continued to do so. On average, peer-mentoring was considered by the teachers involved to be useful but not fundamental within the school context. However, delving deeper into this topic had a certain usefulness because it allowed the teachers to understand what it meant to play the role of mentor and mentee. Imagining a situation of sharing and mutual support between teachers was of great help, particularly for those who had just arrived in the school context and who felt they needed to be guided by more expert figures. Finally, the teachers particularly appreciated the clarity and precision with which the different topics within the module were covered.

COUNTRY	COMMENTS
Poland	CLEAR and GROW models; I-messages.
Greece	I-messages; opportunity for inclusion through peer-mentoring.
Italy	Interest in deepening a methodology that allows to talk to each other and swap roles; precision with which the topics were covered.

Module 5: What was appreciated?

Focus groups: evaluation and main feedback

Poland

In Poland, the focus group with the teachers involved in the training to gather some food for thought on the experience was organized in June. The group was moderated by the trainer who accompanied the teachers throughout the entire process. All 15 teachers who participated in the training took part in the discussion.

The first question that was asked to the teachers sought to highlight what obstacles and challenges the teachers encountered during the experience. For many of them it was especially difficult to have to open up and discuss things in front of other participants. Some teachers, in fact, underlined how difficult it was for them to show their weaknesses, expose themselves and ask for help. The training somehow

asked them to do it and it wasn't easy for everyone. For others, however, it was emotionally and personally difficult to relive some crisis situation sand traumatic experiences of their work. For some of them the real challenge is yet to come as they will have to put into practice what they have learned in class.

Next, the teachers were asked whether the training had helped them identify what their professional needs were. Many responded positively to the question, listing which of these needs they had explored. Below are some of the main needs reported by the teachers: learning to let go; improve from a relational and communicative point of view; strengthen their cooperation capabilities; discuss to get new ideas; strengthen their presence in the classroom as a reference figure. The positive note is that many of the teachers now feel more motivated to pursue their needs.

Most teachers stated that they would reuse the tools provided during the training with their students. The role playing, the activities to be carried out with SEN students (social stories and comic strip conversations) and the restorative circles for conflict management were especially successful. In fact, these are the exercises that the teachers will try to spread among their colleagues in the reference schools. All the teachers involved underlined how this training could be useful for their colleagues, particularly for those who have recently started in their teaching jobs and who are not yet fully comfortable in the classroom. Very often, in daily life, teachers do not have the time to discuss certain topics, which is why it is essential to carve out specific moments, such as these training sessions. The teachers were keen to say that the program provided them with very practical tips for work, was not detached from reality and addressed current problems. Furthermore, at school there are always more students who need to be looked after individually and this training helps the teachers to identify their needs.

The teachers were also asked what satisfied them most with respect to the contents learned. Many of them expressed their happiness with the atmosphere that had been created. The working conditions were positive, the trainer was available and attentive to everyone's needs, the group had a good energy. Other teachers expressed gratitude towards the group for the opportunity to exchange opinions, compare experience and have fruitful discussions. Some, however, were keen to underline again how important it was to now build a path that went from theory to practice.

Finally, the teachers were asked what other topics they would like to address. For many, the issue of communication between parents and teachers had not been adequately addressed. Others would have liked to delve deeper into conflict management and resolution in the classroom. The topic of communication with students with special educational needs aroused a lot of interest in the teachers who would have liked to know even more, acquiring further information and tools.

Greece

In Greece, the participants encountered the most difficulties during implementation of the third module. Some of them could not work together on one specific group learning activity (social stories). However, to still allow them to complete the exercise, the trainer asked them to imagine and invent their own social stories individually. In general, the biggest obstacle for many teachers was the long duration of the training. The length of the course meant that the participants sometimes felt tired and confused. On the other hand, what the teachers appreciated most was the variety of the topics covered.

In terms of professional needs, those identified most frequently by the teachers through participation in the course were the need for constant awareness, understanding children and their needs, communication with students, patience, empathy and acceptance of toxic colleagues. The skills that the participants felt they needed to improve included dealing with students with disabilities, conflict resolution, active listening and peaceful communication.

With respect to the use of tools provided, the participants responded that they would use all tools on a case-by-case basis. They specifically named comic strip conversations, social stories, role play, negativity handling and parental behaviour management. For all the teachers, participation in the training was extremely useful and they would recommend it to their colleagues. They felt very satisfied with what they have learned, this being particularly true for the newly acquired tools and ideas and the passion and creativity showed by the trainer.

Italy

The participants of the focus groups were the 14 teachers who participated in the training. They are teachers of different subjects, both humanities and science; two of the teachers involved are support teachers for students with special educational needs.

For some of the teachers involved, the biggest challenges were mainly related to the length and complexity of the modules. Had the modules been shorter or had there been fewer of them, they could have focused on fewer topics, giving participants the opportunity to delve deeper into the specific issues, thus bringing better results.

They emphasized how difficult it was to manage school commitments and training at the same time, mentioning the shortness of time. For others, it was a challenge to handle the modules independently, they would have preferred to be able to discuss them in class as they believe more in training and discussion within a group than in having to review materials independently. Some others also mentioned that it had been a challenge to be able to stay in the classroom for so many hours at a time

after class but they ultimately saw the training as time well spent and were happy with their personal handling of the situation and post-work fatigue.

Many of the teachers involved in the training, while participating in the focus group, admitted that they needed to improve their conflict management skills. In fact, it is in situations like that that they find themselves uncomfortable and feel that they lack the necessary tools to contain certain situations. The teachers stated that the role playing, theatre-themed exercises and ongoing discussions with other teachers had enabled them to identify techniques and ways to fortify their skills in certain areas.

Many of the teachers claimed that they had learned interesting new methodologies during the training and that although the games had been incorporated in the training primarily for understanding certain circumstances, they could also be crucial in the classroom with students. Games, playful activities and reflections on emotion management were the tools that the teachers said they would replicate in their daily work.

The use of games has met with great success. Students are often unaccustomed to such an approach, and the opportunity to get involved and express themselves in different ways could help them discover other aspects of their personality and interpersonal skills.

All the participants stated that they would highlight the importance of the training at their schools. Teachers often start working without having much knowledge of the underlying context and find themselves overwhelmed. Training of this type allows for comparison, exchange of opinions, questioning of one's knowledge and the rediscovery of some aspects of oneself that can be used in the work role – this is what was expressed by the teachers who explicitly asked to be involved in other courses of this type.

Many of the teachers said they were satisfied with the training because through it they were able to acquire creative tools to understand themselves and the class. Furthermore, they immediately noticed a change in their behaviour in class, thanks to putting into practice what they have learned during the training sessions.

Most of the teachers expressed the urgency of wanting to discuss issues regarding sexual education, education on differences and gender education. Furthermore, many felt the need to delve deeper into issues regarding students' psychological attitudes. It would be necessary to have greater awareness of the reasons and conditions that lead young people to develop anxiety disorders, panic attacks and depression. It is not only useful to understand how to act when faced with certain situations, but also how to prevent them and how to understand the reasons behind them.

Conclusions

At the conclusion of this evaluation report, it is deemed necessary to briefly summarize what emerged overall from the feedback collected from the questionnaires filled out by teachers from the three partnership countries. In general, the course had a very good impact on the teachers, almost all of whom found it extremely useful and felt that the tools provided could be easily reused in the classroom with students. The duration of the course, however, was considered too long. Many of the teachers expressed their difficulty in reconciling attending the training with work commitments. In fact, they would have preferred the course to be shorter and the topics covered to be less extensive. The majority of those involved found the topics to be of great interest, but the variety of subjects sometimes led to confusion and fatigue among teachers. Some would have preferred to cover fewer topics but in more depth.

Among the most appreciated aspects of the training was definitely the use of playful activities and the ongoing discussion with teachers from other educational backgrounds. Dialogue and putting into practice what has been learned theoretically helped the teachers identify with the situations covered. In order to increase group cohesion, it would be necessary to include some icebreaker games at the beginning of the course to facilitate connection among teachers and the building of a stimulating environment. In addition, it might be useful to explore some topics on which the teachers feel they do not yet have the adequate knowledge, such as conflict resolution and management, communication between parents and teachers, gender education issues, interculturalism at school.

Overall, however, the training experience was of great value, and teachers would recommend that their colleagues take such a course to boost their confidence and skills as teachers. Apart from a few minor changes, the training modules can remain unchanged. The modules for independent review were the ones that caused the most difficulty because the teachers were not always able to work through them, given the length of the content and the short time available. Finding ways to also briefly cover modules 4 and 5 in class, through targeted activities and discussions, would enable teachers to understand the course more.

Finally, implementation of the program enabled us to meet the indicators in the project. 90% of the teachers involved were able to improve and strengthen their skills with respect to the topics covered in the program, as can be seen from the pre- and post-training questionnaires. Furthermore, more than 85 % of the participants viewed the opportunities provided by the program positively and believe they could be of value to other teachers as well.

ANNEX

Template for the collection of feedback before and after the pilot training

Name of the partner organisation							
Country							
General information on the pilot training							
1. Duration							
Start date of the pilot training							
End date of the pilot training							
2. Participants							
Number of participants enrolled in the course *You can add participants' details at the end of this form.*		Female		Not specified		Male	
Age range (from – to)							
How did you recruit the participants for the pilot training?							
Any drop-outs? For what reason?							
3. Managing the pilot training							
Number of trainer(s) required for the implementation of the pilot training: *Please, add a list of trainers involved at the end of this form.*							
Estimated amount of time (number of hours) dedicated by the trainer to preparing and running the pilot training							
Estimated amount of time (number of hours) dedicated by the trainer or other staff to providing support							
Additional comments on how the pilot training has been managed across the country							
4. General overview of the online course							
Has a deviation occurred as compared to the initial plan of the pilot training? If so, why? How did you adapt it?							
Please, summarise here the recommendations of the participants on how to improve the course following their participation in the pilot training.							
Please, summarise here any comments by the trainer on their general experience of the course.							

Feedback on the content of the different modules:

Please, upload each Excel file to the dedicated online folder. For each question, please, upload the graphs of the pre- and post-training questionnaires and your comments on the key results. On the open questions, please, provide a brief summary of the answers, grouping the similar ones together (if possible).

For each training session, remember to upload:
• PowerPoint presentation used
• Materials shared
• Attendance sheet
• Photographs taken

Module 1 – Interpersonal skills in working with students

1) By interpersonal skills we mean:

– The ability to be in a relationship between two or more people and capitalise on their social network
– The ability to relate to others and manage the emotional fatigue that accompanies it
– The ability to relate to others and feel emotionally empowered
– The ability to interact with other people and have a sense of being an active member of a larger community

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

2) Please, on a scale of 1 (nothing) to 5 (a lot), rate your level of awareness as to the meaning and importance of the following interpersonal skills:

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

3) Conflict Resolution in education is:

– The ability to counteract students' attitudes of restlessness, challenge, and transgression
– The ability to counteract attitudes of restlessness, challenge, transgression of the rules, and peer abuse
– The ability to counteract and deal with students' attitudes of restlessness, challenge, transgression of the rules, and peer abuse
– The ability to address students' rage and violence and redirecting them

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

4) Resilience is:
– The ability to resist changes in a new context – The ability to develop adaptability skills to new contexts – The ability to react actively to changes in a new context – The ability to surrender to changes in a new context
Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

5) A good leader is:
– A person able to work for and with other members of a team so that everyone feels to be an active and responsible part of the team – A person responsible for a group of people, taking decisions for them – A person able to be responsible for a group a people to whom people delegate all the decisions to be taken – A person who knows how to give direct orders and move people from one level of awareness to another
Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

6) Please, write in a max. of 3 lines what you found most interesting within the module
Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

Module 2 – Supporting the student in dealing with a crisis situation		
1) Please, mark the following statements as true or false:		
– A difficult situation is a stressful situation that is associated with experiencing unpleasant emotions and requires a lot of effort and mobilisation in dealing with it from the person who experiences it	T	F
– In a crisis situation, the event can before seen and people can be equipped to deal with it	T	F
– Consequences of a crisis situation are always short-term	T	F
– The most common consequence of a crisis is the loss of emotional balance by the person affected by the crisis, and thus their difficulty incognitive functioning and being able to react in a given situation	T	F

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

2) How many young people show symptoms of PUI (Problematic Internet Use)?
– One out of three
– One out of ten
– One out of five

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

3) A traumatic event is:
– violent, sudden, surprising, and poses a threat to life and health
– violent, foreseen, and physically and emotionally exhausting
– violent, sudden, surprising but not posing a threat to the life of the person involved

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

4) What is your level of awareness and knowledge – between 1 (nothing) and 5 (a lot) – as to how to intervene in the event of one of the following happening?

Chronic somatic disease of a student	(1-5)
Bereavement experienced by a student	(1-5)
Immigration and studying in a foreign country	(1-5)
A child in a situation of parental divorce	(1-5)
Violence against a child in the family	(1-5)

Child depression and suicide crisis	(1-5)
COVID-19 pandemic	(1-5)

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

5) Please, write in a max. of 3 lines what you found most interesting within the module

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

Module 3 – Communication with students with special educational needs
1) Which categories are included within the SEN (Special Educational Needs) definition?
– Students with learning disabilities (for example Dyslexia and Dysgraphia) and ADHD (Attention-Deficit-Hyperactive) disorder – Students with learning disabilities, ADHD disorder, ASD (Autism spectrum) disorder, cognitive impairments, physical disabilities – Students with learning disabilities, ADHD disorder, ASD (Autism spectrum) disorder, cognitive impairments, physical disabilities, migrant background
Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments
2) Which of the following expressions should not be used when referring to a student with SEN?
– Deaf mute – Wheelchair user – Epileptic – Normal – A child with developmental delay
Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

3) Please, mark the following statements as true or false:		
In social stories it is preferable to address only one topic at a time so as not to overload students with too much information	T	F
Comic strips are mainly used to analyse and represent difficult situations in order to find creative ways to overcome them	T	F

Please, report here the pre- and post-training results (a graph is suggested) and provide comments

4) Please, list 3 consequences of a poor teacher-student with SEN relationship (report the answers received below):

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants (both from the pre- and post-training questionnaires), highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

5) Please, compare the answers to question no. 5 given in the pre- and post-training questionnaires by providing the data gathered (a graph is suggested) and comment on the differences (if any)between the results:

Pre-training: On a scale of 1 (not comfortable at all) to 5 (very comfortable), how comfortable do you feel in dealing with students with SEN?

Post-training: On a scale of 1 (not comfortable at all) to 5 (very comfortable), how comfortable do you feel in dealing with students with SEN?

6) Please, write in a max. of 3 lines what you found most interesting within the module

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

Module 4 – Educational material to support teachers in dealing with crisis situations
Pre-training
1) Which of the following sensations have you felt the most during your teaching experience?
– Stress – Emotional fatigue – Loneliness – Hopelessness
Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment
2) Have you ever experienced a crisis situation in your teaching authority?
Yes No
Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment
3) In which of the following situations have you found yourself most often?
– A student's suicide attempt – Educational crisis – Lesson disturbance – Student's aggressive behaviour
Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

4) Have you ever participated in a training on this topic?

– Yes, it was a training organised by my school
– Yes, it was a training organised by others
– No, never

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

5) On a scale of 1 (not comfortable at all) to 5 (very comfortable), how comfortable do you feelsharing your moments of crisis with other colleagues or with the school head teacher?

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

Post-Training

1) After reading the module, was it easier for you to identify critical situations experienced in the past within the school context?

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and gathering the similar ones

2) Do you think the information contained in the module will help you deal with a crisis?

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

3) Which of the following crisis situations have not been analysed in the module?

– Lesson disturbance
– A student's suicide attempt
– Theft at school
– A student's aggressive behaviour

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

4) On a scale of 1 (not prepared at all) to 5 (very prepared), how prepared do you feel about the topics covered in the module?

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

5) Please, write in a max. of 3 lines what you found most interesting within the module

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

Module 5 – Pass it on: how to use your potential and experience (mentoring in the workplace)

1) Which of the following definitions is the correct definition of "peer-mentoring"?

- Peer-mentoring is a vertical form of teaching that involves the transfer of skills from a mentor to a class group
- Peer-mentoring is a bottom-up teaching methodology through which students learn to self-manage and coordinate in presenting innovative content to the teacher
- Peer mentoring is a form of mentoring that takes place in a partnership relationship between a person who has gone through a specific experience (peer mentor) and a person who is new to that experience (peer mentee)

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

2) The I-Message is a conciliatory dialogical approach which allows the speaker to take responsibility without judging the other person:

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

3) The CLEAR model, which is used in coaching work, is useful for determining the structure of peer mentoring meetings. Every letter of the name corresponds to a step within the structure. Which of the following letters corresponds to the correct name?

- C - Contracting
- L - Listening
- E - Evaluating
- A - Asking
- R - Reviewing

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

4) Please, compare the answers to question no. 4 given in the pre- and post-training question-naires by providing the data gathered (a graph is suggested) and comment on the differences (if any) between the results:

Pre-training: On a scale of 1 (not useful at all) to 5 (very useful), how useful do you think this methodology can be within the school context?

Post-training: On a scale of 1 (not prepared at all) to 5 (very prepared), how prepared do you feel about the topics covered in the module?

5) Please, report here the results by providing a graph of the answers to question no. 5 of the pre-training questionnaire: "On a scale of 1 (nothing) to 5 (a lot), what is the level of your knowledge on peer-mentoring tools and methodologies?" and provide a comment

Please, report here the results (a graph is suggested) and provide a comment

6) Please, write in a max. of 3 lines what you found most interesting within the module

Please, summarise here the answers of your participants, highlighting the different points of view and grouping the similar ones together (if possible)

Please, summarise here the general comments given by teachers (if any) to improve the course

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Please, summarise here the general comments given by trainers (if any) to improve the course

Template for collection of feedback from the focus groups

A. Introduction	• The moderator welcomes the participants making a small summary of what was experienced during the pilot training. • Introduction of the Focus Groups set of rules. • The moderator asks if there are still some doubts to be clarified before starting.
B. Profile of participants	• The moderator asks participants to introduce themselves and to say a summary word about the training experience.
C. Obstacles and challenges	1. What were the greatest obstacles and challenges you experienced during the training?
D. Needs and skills	2. Did you manage to realise what your main needs were in your profession through the participation in the training? If yes, why? 3. Has this experience allowed you to identify which skills you should improve? If yes, how?
E. Experience and application	4. What content you are going to use in your daily work with students? Is there something else you would like to know regarding these topics and that could be the topic for future trainings?
F. Learning styles	5. Do you think that the participation in programs of this type could be useful for colleagues who face the same difficulties as you in their daily lives? 6. What makes you feel satisfied with what you have learnt?
G. Other topics	7. Do you have any other topics/issues you'd like to talk about?