



Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union



Newsletter 2 – June 2022



SOUL- skills project

What is it about?

Soft skills OUTside of a school Learning environment (SOUL Skills) is an **Erasmus+ project** implemented by 7 partners from 6 European countries (BG, IT, GR, ES, IS, FR). The main aim is to provide information about the **effects of social isolation** experienced by participating countries as a measure to mitigate the spread of **COVID-19** pandemic among **children aged 6-12**.

The project's purpose is to provide modern and innovative methodologies and tools that will assist in the evaluation of transferable skills of children outside the classroom context, as well as to empower professionals in supporting transferable skills rooted in cultural activities in non-formal education settings.

SOUL - skills project started in May 2021 and will continue until April 2023.



RESEARCH

On the impact of social isolation on children's soft skills (aged 6-12) who were unable to go to school due to COVID-19 restrictions.



MECHANISM FOR JOINT EVALUATION

Of children's transferable skills outside of the classroom context.



TOOLBOX

For Strengthening Soft Skills affected by COVID-19 social isolation in children aged 6-12.

<https://www.facebook.com/SOULSkillsProject>



SOUL SKILLS

NEWSLETTER



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 1- ANALYTICAL REPORT

The main aim of IO1 was to prepare an analytical report synthesizing the current literature with field research collected by questionnaires to teachers and parents about the effects on children's (6-12 years old) skills development.

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 2 - EVALUATION MECHANISM

We are now elaborating on the second output of the project. This phase of the project is devoted to the development of a mechanism that can be used in and outside of the school learning environment for assessing children's soft skills. Next, the designed methodology will be tested by each partner and approved.

INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT 3 - TOOLBOX

The main aim will be to empower educators and parents in supporting the development of soft skills and their evaluation in children aged 6-12. A comprehensive learning model to enhance transferable, indispensable skills, with modern approaches and innovative tools based on cultural activities in the non-formal education setting will be created.

OUR FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH

The situation in the partner countries:

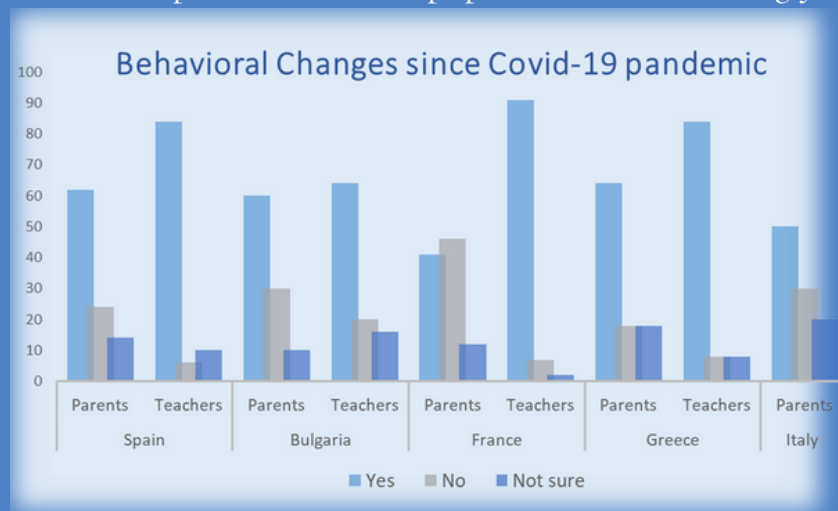
In Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Spain, and France schools were closed at various periods of time during the COVID-19 pandemic. For that reason, the results are presented in the following comparative chart.

In Iceland, schools did not shut down uniformly, like in the other partner countries, so the results are explained in the text and not in the graphic. There were a number of adjustment in the schools' life such as reduced attendance and shorter teaching times. Distance learning was offered primarily for older students; only 16% of first graders received some distance education. However, after-school and leisure activities did shut down for a period of time at different intervals.

Parents and teachers were asked to reflect on the pupils' transferable skills development during that period. More than 50% of the parents in Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Spain and France noticed negative changes in the pupils' behavior as described in the diagram. In contrast, Icelandic parents reported an increase in their children's: curiosity, communication skills and independence in decision making following the pandemic. Teachers in all partner countries reported that their pupils became increasingly distracted and bored in class and demonstrated worse learning habits.

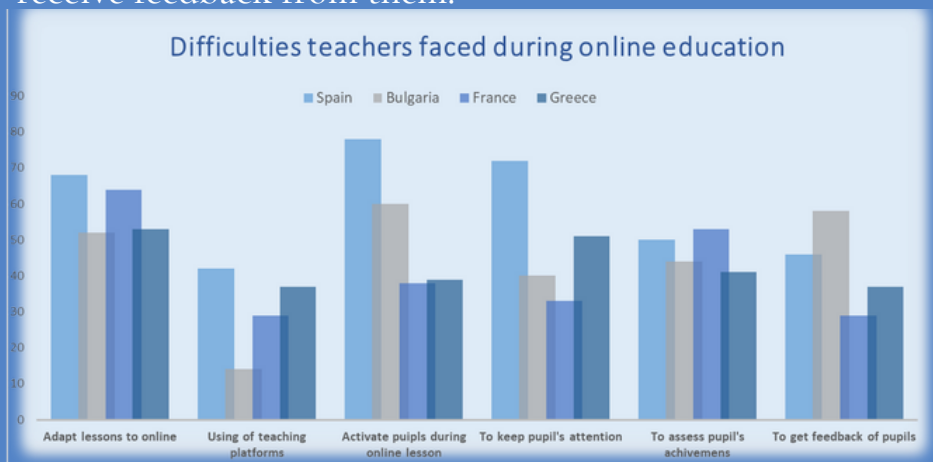
Moreover, in Iceland, the majority of the teachers (77.8%) saw a change in the behavior of their children, while 33.3% of the parents answered the same question positively, 40% negatively and 26.7% didn't know.

Distance learning did not adequately meet expectations of planned academic knowledge acquisition.



Which difficulties did teachers face during online education?

The majority of the interviewed teachers in Spain, Bulgaria, France and Greece claim it was difficult to adapt their lessons to the online format, although it wasn't hard to use the teaching platforms offered to them for implementing the classes. It was difficult for most of them to activate and engage pupils during the class. A general problem mentioned by the interviewees was that it was difficult to assess the development of pupils' skills during the distance learning and to receive feedback from them.



The data presented here are merely indicative. The final analysis with the concrete and conclusive data of every country will be presented on the websites and social media of the partners.

Stay in touch!

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[SOULSKILLSPROJECT](#)

WHO ARE WE

-  AGORA Platform - Active Communities for Development Alternatives Association (Bulgaria)
-  GIS-Transfer Center Foundation (Bulgaria)
-  DEFOIN Formación para el Desarrollo y la Inserción (Spain)
-  Athens Network of Collaborating Experts (Greece)
-  J&M Synergie (France)
-  NORTH Consulting (Iceland)
-  Fondazione Hallgarten-Franchetti Centro Studi Villa Montesca (Italy)

