

DWELL

A holistic approach for the well-being in the
broader digital education ecosystem



D2.2: Report with the Findings and Conclusions of Focus Groups

Educators — Cross-Country Synthesis



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DWELL Project

Report with the Findings and Conclusions of Focus Groups

Educators' Perspectives on Digital Well-Being — Cross-Country Synthesis

Deliverable: D2.2 — Report with the Findings and Conclusions of Focus Groups in EN (Educators)

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1. Introduction

The DWELL project (Digital well-being: A Holistic Approach for the Well-being in the Broader Digital Education Ecosystem) is a 36-month Erasmus+ Policy Experimentation initiative (Grant Agreement No. 101195998, April 2025 – March 2028) implemented by a consortium of European partners from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Poland, and Romania. Its central aim is to equip educators, parents, and other stakeholders with evidence-based tools, frameworks, and policy recommendations to promote digital well-being in schools across Europe.

Within Work Package 2 (WP2 — Research and Analysis), a series of qualitative focus groups were conducted with educators across the partner countries. These focus groups formed part of a broader research strategy that also included a literature review, informative visits to schools and parents' associations, and the customisation of the SELFIE tool. The purpose of the educator focus groups was to capture professional perspectives on how digital technologies affect students' well-being across six interrelated domains: emotional well-being, behavioural well-being, mental health, social relationships, physical health, and cognitive functioning.

This report presents a cross-country synthesis of those educator focus group findings. It integrates evidence from Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece, Poland, and Romania, reflecting a wide range of educational contexts and perspectives. The report identifies shared themes, country-specific emphases, and cross-cutting challenges that will directly inform the development of the DWELL framework (FRAME-DWELL), the capacity-building materials (CERTIFY-DWELL and AWARE-DWELL), and future policy recommendations.

The overarching finding across the participating countries is consistent: digital technologies are now structurally embedded in school life and students' wider daily routines, and their impact on well-being is mixed and highly context-dependent. Educators did not describe technology as inherently positive or negative. Rather, they emphasized that outcomes depend on how technologies are used, for what purpose, with what level of adult guidance, and within what kind of pedagogical and institutional structure. Positive effects were most visible where digital use was purposeful, selective, and well regulated. Negative effects were most evident where use was excessive, fragmented, overstimulating, or

weakly bounded. Across countries, educators repeatedly stressed the need for balance, consistency, and stronger alignment between educational goals, digital practice, and student well-being.

2. Methodology

The focus groups were conducted as semi-structured qualitative discussions, following a shared conceptual and procedural framework developed within WP2. A common set of guiding questions ensured comparability across countries, while flexible prompts allowed facilitators to explore local realities, emerging concerns, and country-specific examples in greater depth. Discussions were organised around six core domains of digital well-being: emotional well-being, behavioural well-being, mental health, social relationships, physical health, and cognitive functioning.

Where relevant, the focus groups were conducted after the implementation of SELFIE-related activities in participating schools. This sequencing helped ground the discussions in concrete school practices and gave educators an opportunity to reflect not only on general attitudes toward technology, but on actual patterns of digital use in their teaching environments.

2.1. Data Collection

Focus groups were conducted across the partner countries using a combination of face-to-face and online formats. The educator data included participants from a wide range of educational roles and settings, including teachers, school psychologists, principals, and educational support staff. The table below summarises the available data:

Country	Participants / Institutional Context	Focus Groups	Format	Notes
Bulgaria	32 participants from 18 schools	5	Face-to-face	Included teachers, psychologists, principals, and inspectorate representatives
Greece	32 educators from 7 schools	4	Online	Cross-regional participation

Finland	157 educators from 6 lower secondary and comprehensive schools	4	Online	Strong lower-secondary representation
Romania	103 teachers from 11 educational units	11	Face-to-face	Many schools in rural areas
Poland	34 participants from primary, secondary, vocational, and non-public institutions	6	Mixed	Broad institutional diversity
Cyprus	27 educators across 5 online focus groups	5	Online	Lower-secondary representation

Analysis Approach

Findings were coded inductively across the six well-being domains, with a supplementary focus on educators' digital competences and cross-cutting issues. This cross-country report draws on national educator focus group reports prepared by each partner, alongside SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection results, synthesising Areas of Interest (positive impacts, AOIs) and Areas of Concern (negative impacts, AOCs) for each domain. Direct quotations from educators are included where available to illustrate key themes. Country codes (BG, CY, FI, GR, PL, RO) are used throughout to indicate the geographic origin of specific observations.

Limitations

The focus groups are qualitative and exploratory. Findings reflect educators' professional perceptions and experiences rather than direct measurement of student outcomes. Sample sizes vary substantially across countries, and the educator evidence is not statistically representative of all schools or all educators in each national context. The dataset includes educator-based evidence from all participating countries. Nonetheless, the strong convergence of themes across diverse systems and settings lends considerable credibility to the cross-country patterns identified.

3. Cross-Country Insights

A clear overarching message emerged across the national reports: the impact of digital technologies on student well-being is mixed, conditional, and relational. Educators consistently rejected simplistic assumptions that technology is either inherently beneficial or inherently harmful. Instead, they described digital tools as amplifying the conditions in which they are used. When use is purposeful, time-bound, and pedagogically justified, digital technologies can support motivation, access, participation, and learning. When use becomes excessive, fragmented, fast-paced, or weakly regulated, the same technologies contribute to overstimulation, behavioural disruption, fatigue, and weakened depth of learning.

Across all countries, educators emphasized that digital technology is no longer an occasional supplement to school life. It has become part of the routine structure of teaching, assessment, communication, and administration, while also shaping students' habits, expectations, and social experiences beyond school. This embeddedness creates a fundamental tension: schools are expected to prepare students for a digital world, yet they must also protect concentration, relational depth, and healthy development within that same environment.

3.1 Emotional Well-Being

Overall perceived impact: Mixed

Emotional well-being was one of the most consistently discussed domains across the educator focus groups. Educators described digital technologies as capable of generating enthusiasm, confidence, curiosity, and participation, while also intensifying stress, frustration, emotional volatility, and dependency. This domain illustrates particularly clearly the ambivalent nature of students' digital experience: the same digital environments that motivate and engage can also destabilise and exhaust.

3.1.1 Areas of Interest

Across the reports, educators identified several positive emotional effects of digital engagement when use was structured and pedagogically purposeful:

- **Increased motivation and enjoyment through interactive learning.** Educators in Bulgaria, Romania, and Poland repeatedly observed that gamified tasks, digital quizzes, and visually engaging materials often generated visible enthusiasm and enjoyment. Bulgarian educators described interactive tools, digital quizzes, and inspirational video materials as increasing students' curiosity, willingness to participate, and sense of enjoyment. Romanian teachers similarly noted that gamification and immediate feedback can boost motivation, especially among students who are otherwise hesitant or less active in class.
- **Sense of achievement and participation.** In several countries, educators noted that digital tools can lower barriers to participation and make success feel more immediate. In Finland, some educators observed that certain students perform better on digital platforms than through traditional formats, and that allowing students to choose between digital and pen-and-paper work may support both autonomy and emotional security.
- **Support for self-expression and confidence.** Bulgarian educators highlighted examples where digital tools supported self-expression, creativity, and competence-building, especially when students used them actively rather than passively. These included digital presentations, interactive activities, and tasks where students could demonstrate initiative and agency.
- **Emotional relief and engagement beyond school tasks.** Evidence from the Cyprus educator focus groups reinforces this pattern, with participants noting that digital technologies can provide students with opportunities for relaxation, connection, and enjoyment through hobbies, entertainment, and communication. These examples support the broader cross-country finding that the emotional role of digital technology is not limited to risk; it can also offer pleasure, a sense of belonging, and confidence when used in balanced and meaningful ways.

3.1.2 Areas of Concern

Negative emotional effects were described with greater consistency and depth across the educator reports:

- **Stress, frustration, and emotional strain linked to digital tasks.** In Finland, educators noted that technical problems, unclear task purposes, digital submission systems, and uncertainty around AI can all increase student stress and frustration. One particularly notable Finnish example was the

observation that digital submission practices in arts subjects may encourage perfectionism and pressure rather than confidence and creativity.

- **Overstimulation and irritability.** Polish and Bulgarian educators described students as increasingly overstimulated, emotionally fragile, and less able to calm down after prolonged digital exposure. In Bulgaria, this included mood swings, irritability, and rapid emotional shifts from excitement to frustration. Polish educators linked digital environments to tension, agitation, and increasing dependence on rapid feedback and external validation.
- **Social comparison and emotional insecurity.** Educators in Cyprus, Finland and Greece also referred to the emotional effects of digitally mediated comparison, visibility, and performance pressure. Students' online lives were seen as contributing to anxiety, insecurity, and emotional instability that then carry into the classroom.
- **Dependency and emotional discomfort when devices are removed.** In Poland and Bulgaria especially, educators described students becoming tense, frustrated, or emotionally reactive when access to devices was interrupted. These patterns were framed not simply as dislike of limits, but as signs that digital habits are shaping emotional regulation itself.
- **Pressure from constant connectivity.** The Cyprus contextual material strengthens this interpretation: educators described children as emotionally absorbed by always having the phone with them, becoming distracted, pressured by trends, and irritable after prolonged social media use. This closely aligns with educators' broader concern that emotional readiness for school is increasingly shaped by students' digital experiences outside school hours.

3.2 Behavioural Well-Being

Overall perceived impact: Mixed, with predominantly negative patterns

Behavioural well-being was among the most practically observable domains. Educators repeatedly linked digital technologies with distraction, compulsive checking, impulsive task-switching, low frustration tolerance, and difficulties with self-regulation. At the same time, they also acknowledged that digital tools can support organisation and structured participation when use is clearly bounded.

3.2.1 Areas of Interest

- **Support for organisation and task completion.** In Bulgaria and Romania, educators noted that digital tools can help students structure tasks, complete homework more efficiently, and develop more predictable routines when use is guided and limited.
- **Short-term engagement and participation.** Educators in Poland, Greece, and Bulgaria described digital tools as capable of increasing classroom participation when tasks are clearly defined and linked to concrete learning goals. Gamified activities, quizzes, and interactive platforms were especially associated with visible short-term engagement.
- **Structured digital use supporting responsible routines.** The Finnish data provides the clearest example of behavioural support through structure: when devices were used within predictable and limited routines, students were better able to engage, settle into lessons, and adapt to expectations.

3.2.2 Areas of Concern

- **Distraction and compulsive checking.** Across Poland, Greece, Bulgaria, and Romania, educators described smartphones as major behavioural disruptors. Polish teachers referred to students as mentally attached to their devices even when not actively using them, with patterns of compulsive checking and reduced ability to persist in non-digital tasks.
- **Impulsivity, task-switching, and fragmented attention.** Bulgarian educators described behavioural outcomes such as impulsive switching between tasks, impatience, hyperactivity, and growing preference for simplified, bite-sized content. Greece reported similar issues, especially where digital integration occurred in already fragile attention environments.
- **Weak self-regulation.** In several countries, educators stressed that students should not be assumed capable of regulating complex digital environments independently. This concern closely mirrors the findings from Cyprus and Greece, where children were described as checking phones constantly, interrupting meals and routines, and struggling to limit screen time without adult intervention.
- **Open-ended device presence undermining classroom stability.** Finland provided especially strong evidence that reducing device presence through school-wide phone policies significantly

improved concentration and classroom calm. Educators noted that even occasional retrieval of phones could disrupt lesson flow and delay work initiation.

- **Inconsistency of rules increasing conflict.** Poland and other countries highlighted that fragmented, teacher-by-teacher enforcement of phone rules is weak and conflict-generating. Behavioural well-being improved where expectations were clear, school-wide, and consistently maintained rather than negotiated repeatedly in individual classrooms.

3.3 Mental Health

Overall perceived impact: Mainly negative; protective when balanced

Mental health emerged as one of the most serious domains in the educator reports. Participants repeatedly referred to anxiety, fatigue, overstimulation, digital overload, sleep disruption, and difficulty disconnecting. Technology was rarely framed as the sole cause of mental-health difficulties, but it was consistently seen as an amplifier of strain.

3.3.1 Areas of Interest

- **Sense of competence and control through purposeful use.** Some educators noted that well-structured digital learning can produce confidence, control, and positive engagement. In Bulgaria and Romania, students were perceived as benefiting psychologically when digital tasks were clear, purposeful, and achievable.
- **Constructive use supporting interest and agency.** Across countries, there was recognition that students may experience satisfaction and competence when digital tools help them explore personal interests, understand difficult content, or complete meaningful tasks successfully.
- **Balance as protection.** A recurring educator perspective was that mental well-being is best protected not by rejecting technology but by ensuring balance between digital and non-digital tasks, between stimulation and rest, and between connectivity and disconnection.

3.3.2 Areas of Concern

- **Digital fatigue and overstimulation.** Poland's report was especially explicit in connecting excessive screen exposure, gaming, and constant connectivity with fatigue, reduced emotional

stability, and broader mental strain. Bulgaria described doomscrolling, gaming addiction, reduced tolerance for boredom, and inner tension.

- **Anxiety and pressure from digital environments.** Across countries, participants referred to pressure created by digital visibility, rapid response culture, and social comparison. Finland additionally highlighted the emotional burden created by digital assessment systems, remote feedback, and school communication platforms such as Wilma.
- **Sleep disruption as a mental health mechanism.** Several reports linked late-night messaging, gaming, and scrolling to tiredness, irritability, and reduced resilience the next day. The Cyprus material strongly reinforces this, with repeated references to children arriving tired after late-night device use.
- **Psychological strain from constant access and inability to disconnect.** Teachers across countries suggested that students are increasingly expected to remain mentally available across school, home, and peer spaces, making genuine recovery more difficult.
- **AI and uncertainty as emerging stressors.** Finnish and Polish educators described uncertainty about AI as not only an academic issue but also a mental burden, creating questions about fairness, authenticity, expectations, and assessment.

3.4 Social Relationships

Overall perceived impact: Mixed

Social relationships were described as one of the most ambivalent domains. Educators acknowledged that digital tools can support connection, participation, and collaboration, especially for quieter students. At the same time, they expressed strong concern that mediated communication may weaken empathy, face-to-face interaction, and group cohesion.

3.4.1 Areas of Interest

- **Alternative routes to participation.** In Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, educators noted that quieter, more withdrawn, or socially anxious students may find it easier to contribute through digital platforms, chats, or collaborative online tasks than in open classroom discussion.

- **Support for communication and collaboration.** Across countries, digital systems were described as helpful for school-related communication, collaborative work, and maintaining peer interaction beyond lesson time.
- **Maintaining connection beyond school hours.** Educators across several countries noted that digital platforms enable students to remain connected with peers beyond the school day, supporting both social interaction and collaborative learning. In particular, teachers in Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece highlighted that students frequently use messaging applications, shared platforms, and video-based tools to communicate, exchange materials, and in some cases study together outside formal lesson time, for example by working simultaneously on tasks or connecting online during homework activities.

3.4.2 Areas of Concern

- **Displacement of face-to-face interaction.** This was one of the most consistent social concerns. Polish educators described students communicating through screens even when physically together. Similar observations were reported in Bulgaria and Romania, where educators noted that students often prioritise digital communication over direct interaction, even in shared physical spaces, leading to reduced face-to-face engagement and weaker interpersonal communication skills.
- **Reduced empathy and weaker live communication.** Bulgarian and Polish reports referred to superficial relationships, poorer live communication, reduced vocabulary richness, and weaker public speaking and interpersonal skills.
- **Cyberbullying and online hostility.** Finland was particularly strong on this issue, describing how bullying increasingly shifts into social media and messaging spaces, then feeds back into the school environment as stress, conflict, and additional teacher workload. Bulgaria and Poland also referred to online shaming, hostile language, and digital exclusion.
- **Poor netiquette and conflict escalation.** Several countries highlighted that digitally mediated communication may intensify misunderstandings, disrespect, and exclusion, especially where students lack explicit guidance in digital etiquette.

- **Loss of informal social space.** Finnish educators stressed that shared breaks, cafeterias, and informal in-person presence are central to well-being, and that phone-free spaces support real conversation and group cohesion. This suggests that digital devices affect not only formal classroom interaction but the wider social ecology of school life.

3.5 Physical Health

Overall perceived impact: Mainly negative

Physical health was one of the clearest negative domains across the educator evidence. Participants referred repeatedly to eye strain, poor posture, fatigue, sedentary routines, sleep disruption, and reduced stamina. Positive physical-health examples existed, but they were limited and clearly secondary to the dominant pattern of concern.

3.5.1 Areas of Interest

- **Movement-supporting digital tools.** Bulgarian educators mentioned movement-break applications, guided exercise videos, and health-related apps as examples of technology potentially supporting physical well-being.
- **Potential for active learning support.** Romanian teachers also referred to possibilities for integrating digital tools into more active or varied learning routines.
- **Compensatory role of structured activities.** The Cyprus material reinforces the importance of sports and extracurricular activity as counterbalances to sedentary digital time.

3.5.2 Areas of Concern

- **Eye strain, poor posture, and fatigue.** Across Poland, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, and Finland, educators consistently identified bodily strain as a visible effect of prolonged screen use. Polish teachers referred to posture problems, fatigue, and declining stamina; Bulgarian educators mentioned chronic tiredness, eye strain, and sedentary behaviour.
- **Sedentary lifestyles and reduced physical fitness.** Poland described declining physical fitness, reduced stamina, and possible obesity linked to screen-heavy routines. Cyprus similarly noted that children often prefer staying inside and playing online games rather than going outside.

- **Sleep disruption and next-day tiredness.** This appeared as a major cross-cutting mechanism in all focus groups across all countries. Late-night device use was linked to tiredness, lower resilience, and weaker classroom functioning the next day.
- **Normalization of physical strain.** One notable insight across the reports is that symptoms such as tired eyes, poor posture, and fatigue are described almost as routine side-effects of school and leisure screen use. This normalization suggests that physical strain may be underestimated even though it affects many other well-being domains.

3.6 Cognitive Functioning

Overall perceived impact: Mixed

Cognitive functioning generated some of the richest and most nuanced discussion across the educator reports. Educators acknowledged real benefits in terms of access, explanation, interactivity, and creative production, but they also raised strong concerns about declining attention span, surface processing, AI overreliance, and weakened independent thinking.

3.6.1 Areas of Interest

- **Access to information and explanation.** Educators in Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece noted that digital tools can help explain difficult concepts, broaden access to resources, and support research, revision, and project work.
- **Interactive learning supporting understanding.** Across countries, interactive applications, visual resources, and digital content creation tools were described as capable of supporting active learning rather than passive reception.
- **Differentiation and flexible performance.** Finnish educators observed that some students perform better digitally than through traditional methods, and that the option to work in different formats can support both confidence and cognitive engagement.
- **Support for homework, presentations, and study.** This positive pattern is also reflected across several national reports, where educators described students using digital tools to support assignments, prepare presentations, and access a range of online resources for study. In countries such as Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece, teachers noted that digital platforms can facilitate

research, content creation, and, increasingly, the use of AI-supported tools to assist with preparation and understanding of schoolwork.

3.6.2 Areas of Concern

- **Shortened attention span and reduced concentration.** This was among the most widespread cognitive concerns. Polish teachers linked short-form content, speed, and constant stimulation to declining attention and weaker ability to sustain longer tasks. Greece and Bulgaria reported similar issues around fragile concentration and fast-paced media habits.
- **Surface processing and loss of depth.** Bulgaria and Romania stressed that digital reward systems, multitasking, and overstimulation can encourage shallow engagement rather than real understanding. Students may focus on points, speed, or completion rather than conceptual depth.
- **Overreliance on AI and ready-made answers.** Poland and Finland were especially explicit in raising concern about AI use as a shortcut that bypasses critical analysis, source verification, and independent reasoning. The Cyprus report echoes this directly, including the remark: “I feel like they don’t use their brains anymore.”
- **Weak critical evaluation of information.** Across countries, educators challenged the assumption that digital fluency implies critical competence. Students were often described as accepting internet or AI-generated content without sufficient verification or reflection.
- **Loss of foundational analogue competences.** Polish educators referred not only to attention decline but also to weakening handwriting, memory, non-digital problem-solving, and other analogue competences. Finland likewise emphasized that deeper thinking, writing, and comprehension are often better supported through pen-and-paper methods in certain tasks and subjects.
- **Mismatch between digital format and cognitive purpose.** Finland provided some of the clearest evidence that different kinds of cognitive work require different media environments. Digital tools may support basic skills practice effectively, but longer-form reflection, writing, and deeper thinking often require slower, less fragmented formats.

3.7 Cross-Country Overview Table of Key Themes

The following table should be read as a summary of dominant emphases rather than a substitute for the detailed analysis above. The same domain often contains both positive and negative dimensions, and countries differ not only in what they report but in how strongly particular concerns are framed.

Domain	Cyprus	Greece	Finland	Bulgaria	Romania	Poland
Cognitive	Concerns about attention span, AI reliance, ready-made answers, and reduced independent thinking; also strong use of digital tools for homework and presentations	Difficulty sustaining focus; infrastructure and lesson logistics affect the cognitive value of digital use	Strong emphasis on purposeful use, pen-and-paper balance, and limiting overload for deeper thinking	Guided use, meaningful content, and concern about surface processing and overstimulation	Balanced use, critical thinking development, and concern about reward-driven learning	Attention decline, weak source verification, AI overreliance, and loss of analogue competences
Emotional	Social media pressure, emotional strain, irritability	Stress linked to lesson integration, comparison, and	Emotional calm improves when use is limited	Motivation and enjoyment through gamification,	Emphasis on emotional balance, motivation,	Overstimulation, fragility, instant validation, and agitation

	after prolonged use, constant connectivity; also entertainment and feelings of connection through digital communication	classroom pressure	and clarified; stress can arise from unclear digital tasks and technical strain	but also mood swings, dependency, and overstimulation	and stress from overload	when devices are removed
Social	Reduced face-to-face interaction, texting instead of talking, peer pressure through trends and group chats; also sustained connection with friends	Need for meaningful digital collaboration and balance between online and direct interaction	Controlled interaction, phone-free spaces, and reduced social-media risk	Responsible communication, netiquette, and concern about online shaming and superficiality	Inclusion through collaboration but risk of superficial or reduced direct interaction	Weaker live interaction, cyberbullying, and communication through screens even when together

Physical	Sedentary behaviour, sleep issues, reduced outdoor activity, tiredness after late-night device use	Limited direct references but linked to screen exposure and tiredness	Strong focus on balance, ergonomics, and device-free school time	Posture strain, tiredness, sedentary routines, and body-related concerns	Strong emphasis on routines, tiredness, and physical well-being	Reduced fitness, posture problems, fatigue, and stamina decline
Mental	Digital fatigue, social-media-related stress, self-regulation problems at home, and emotional discomfort in online peer spaces	Stress from implementation realities and student distraction	Prevention of overload through structure and consistent rules	Moderation, digital addiction concerns, doomscrolling, and algorithm awareness	Overall mental balance, anxiety, and overload from excessive stimulation	Fatigue, anxiety amplification, sleep disruption, and online pressure
Behavioural	Device dependency, constant checking, interruptions	Classroom management difficulties and	Rules, regulation, and phone-free	Guidance, routines, and institutional framework	Consistent habits and boundaries	Distraction, compulsive checking, and

	to family routines, and difficulty limiting screen time independently	fragmented attention	policies as key support	matter strongly	are essential	weak self-regulation
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4. Digital Competences and SELFIE-Related Insights

Cross-country finding: A clear distinction between digital integration and digitally sustainable practice

Across the educator reports, one of the most important findings is that digital competence should not be understood narrowly as technical ability or routine use of digital tools. Educators across countries appeared generally confident in using platforms, digital resources, and classroom tools, yet much less confident in managing the wider pedagogical and well-being implications of digitalization. The evidence suggests a consistent gap between using technology and using technology in ways that protect and promote student well-being.

Educators' Digital Competences

The cross-country evidence indicates that many educators are active and adaptive users of digital tools. Across countries, they reported regular use of platforms such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Moodle, Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall, Canva, Genially, YouTube, and increasingly AI-related applications. However, the focus groups suggest that digital integration does not automatically mean digital sustainability.

Several recurring patterns emerged:

Educators are often more confident in professional engagement, digital resources, and routine digital teaching tasks than in areas such as assessment, learner empowerment, and digital well-being.

Teachers may be able to use digital tools effectively, while still feeling uncertain about how to prevent overload, maintain deep thinking, regulate AI use, or support healthier student habits.

The most difficult areas are not operational but pedagogical and developmental: balancing digital and non-digital methods, designing tasks that do not encourage superficial completion, and creating digital conditions that support concentration, autonomy, and well-being.

4.1. SELFIE-Related Insights

The available SELFIEforTEACHERS evidence provides useful additional perspective:

Greece: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection involved 10 participants and produced an overall result of 42%, corresponding to B1 (Integrator). Domain results were: 50% professional engagement, 47% digital resources, 42% teaching and learning, 30% assessment, 37% empowering learners, and 37% facilitating learners' digital competence. This aligns closely with the Greek focus group evidence: educators are active users of digital tools, but face difficulties in moving from functional use to more confident, well-being-sensitive pedagogy. The particularly low score in assessment is significant given Greek educators' concerns about superficial task completion, rapid-answer culture, and uncertainty around AI.

Poland: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection included 12 participants and produced an overall result of 51%, corresponding to B2 (Expert). This suggests relatively high confidence in digital practice. However, the Polish focus groups show clearly that stronger teacher competence does not automatically translate into healthier student digital environments. Educators remained deeply concerned about students' concentration, AI dependence, weak source verification, and digital habits driven by speed and convenience rather than reflection.

Bulgaria: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection involved 10 participants and produced an overall result of 54%, corresponding to B2 (Expert). Stronger areas included professional engagement, digital resources, teaching and learning, and assessment. However, digital well-being emerged as the weakest area. This is highly significant because it mirrors the Bulgarian focus group findings, which were especially rich in references to emotional acceleration, reduced tolerance for boredom, algorithmic influence, and cognitive overload.

Finland: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection involved 10 participants and produced an overall result of 48%, corresponding to B1 (Integrator). This indicates that educators are actively integrating digital technologies but are still developing more systematic and pedagogically aligned practices. This aligns with the Finnish focus group findings, where teachers emphasized purposeful use, balance between digital and non-digital methods, and careful management of cognitive load and student concentration.

Cyprus: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection involved 10 participants and produced an overall result of 52%, corresponding to B2 (Expert). This suggests that educators demonstrate confident and purposeful use of digital technologies. At the same time, the group description places strong emphasis on promoting balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies, highlighting the importance of modelling positive habits and fostering critical awareness. This reflects the broader DWELL focus on integrating digital competence with digital well-being.

Romania: The SELFIEforTEACHERS group reflection involved 47 participants and produced an overall result of 48%, corresponding to B1 (Integrator). This indicates that Romanian educators are actively experimenting with and integrating digital technologies across different contexts, but are still developing more consistent and strategically aligned practices. The relatively large sample size strengthens the reliability of this result. The emphasis within the group description on promoting balanced technology use, digital resilience, and students' well-being aligns closely with the Romanian focus group findings, where concerns were raised about digital overload, attention difficulties, and the need for stronger guidance in managing digital environments. This suggests that, similarly to other countries, the key challenge lies not in access or basic use, but in translating digital competence into sustainable, well-being-oriented pedagogical practice.

Students' Digital Competence: Fluency without Maturity

A strong cross-country pattern emerging from both the SELFIEforTEACHERS evidence and the national focus group reports is educators' rejection of the assumption that students are naturally digitally competent simply because they are surrounded by digital technologies. Instead, a recurring mismatch was identified:

- Students may be highly skilled in smartphone communication, short-form content, gaming, and social media, yet struggle with more complex or educationally relevant tasks such as typing, structuring written work, organising information, or critically evaluating online sources.
- Students may appear confident with AI tools and digital platforms, but often use them in ways that replace rather than support thinking, limiting opportunities for deeper understanding, reflection, and independent problem-solving.

Students' digital fluency often exceeds their digital maturity. While they are confident users of digital technologies, they do not consistently demonstrate the ability to regulate their use, manage attention, verify information, or engage ethically and critically with digital content.

This pattern is consistently reflected across both SELFIE findings and national reports, where educators highlighted that students', digital practices are often shaped by speed, convenience, and constant connectivity, rather than by critical awareness, self-regulation, or purposeful learning.

Cross-Country Implication

Taken together, the focus group and SELFIE evidence suggest that digital competence development for educators must go beyond tool mastery. Across countries, educators are generally active users of digital technologies, most commonly positioned at the Integrator (B1) level, with some reaching Expert (B2). However, this competence does not consistently translate into well-being-oriented pedagogical practice, highlighting the need for a more balanced and reflective approach to digital use in education. It must therefore include:

- balanced and pedagogically justified digital use
- critical and media literacy
- AI literacy and ethical guidance
- strategies for protecting concentration and mental well-being
- awareness of algorithmic influence and digital overload
- the capacity to design healthier digital learning environments

In this sense, digital well-being is not an optional addition to digital education. It is a core dimension of what meaningful digital competence now means in schools.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall Conclusions

The cross-country synthesis of educator focus group findings reveals a clear and consistent picture across the DWELL partner countries. Digital technologies are now embedded in the everyday structure of teaching, learning, communication, and school organisation. They are no longer supplementary tools but part of the environment in which students develop academically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

The impact of digital technologies across the six well-being domains is mixed, but with a strong common pattern: positive effects are most likely when use is purposeful, selective, structured, and pedagogically justified; negative effects are most likely when use is excessive, fragmented, weakly regulated, or poorly aligned with developmental needs.

The main cross-cutting concerns identified across the educator evidence are:

1. Digital intensity and fragmentation affect multiple domains simultaneously, including concentration, emotional regulation, self-regulation, sleep, and social interaction.
2. The presence of smartphones and always-on digital environments makes limit-setting and sustained attention structurally difficult.
3. Students' apparent digital fluency often conceals significant weaknesses in critical thinking, information evaluation, self-regulation, and responsible AI use.
4. Teachers' digital competence is stronger in operational use than in digital well-being-oriented pedagogy, especially in assessment, learner empowerment, and the management of overload.
5. School-level consistency matters greatly: where rules, routines, and expectations are coherent, behavioural and social conditions improve.
6. Digital well-being is systemic and relational, not reducible to one domain or one stakeholder. Difficulties in sleep, attention, mood, or peer interaction are interconnected and often shaped across both school and home settings.

7. AI introduces a new layer of complexity, especially around independent thinking, academic integrity, fairness, and assessment design.
8. Digital well-being should be treated as a central condition of educational quality, not as a secondary issue attached to digital innovation.

5.1. Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn directly from educators' expressed concerns, observations, and suggestions across all six partner countries. They are framed at the strategic level and are structured around the six well-being domains and the cross-cutting theme of digital competences.

Emotional Well-Being

Schools should use digital tools in ways that support confidence, curiosity, and participation without intensifying unnecessary pressure. Educators should be supported in identifying when digital tasks motivate students and when they create frustration, stress, or perfectionism. Digital practices that increase comparison pressure, emotional overload, or constant responsiveness should be reviewed critically. Emotional well-being should be considered when designing digital tasks, submission systems, and communication routines.

Behavioural Well-Being

Schools should establish clear, coherent, school-wide expectations regarding device use, mobile phones, classroom attention, and digital routines. The Finnish evidence strongly suggests that consistent phone-related policies can improve concentration, reduce disruptions, and strengthen peer interaction. Behavioural self-regulation should not be treated as something students are expected to manage alone in highly stimulating environments. Instead, schools should design structures that make focus and healthier habits realistic.

Mental Health

Schools should recognise that digital well-being and mental well-being are inseparable. The cumulative effects of overstimulation, constant connectivity, digital assessment pressure, and disrupted sleep should be addressed as part of educational design, not only as individual student problems. School

communication systems, feedback routines, homework expectations, and digital workload practices should be reviewed for their contribution to stress and fatigue. Educators also need support in identifying when students' digital behaviours may indicate overload rather than simple disengagement.

Social Relationships

Digital communication should support, not replace, direct human interaction. Schools should actively protect face-to-face social space through phone-free routines, collaborative activities, and shared environments where conversation and presence are prioritised. Digital etiquette, respectful communication, and cyberbullying prevention should be integrated into school practice explicitly, rather than assumed. Students need guidance not only in staying connected but in maintaining the quality of connection.

Physical Health

Schools should treat physical well-being as a necessary component of sustainable digital learning. This includes promoting movement, providing device-free intervals, varying the format of learning activities, and using ergonomic and screen-balance principles in lesson design. Awareness of eye strain, posture, fatigue, and sleep disruption should be integrated into school health and well-being communication. Digital learning should not simply increase sedentary intensity by default.

Cognitive Functioning

Educators should use digital tools as aids to learning rather than as substitutes for independent thought. The reports strongly suggest the need to preserve slower, deeper, and less fragmented forms of learning through handwriting, printed reading, extended reflection, and discussion. AI tools should be addressed explicitly in school policy and classroom practice, with clear guidance on their appropriate use, limitations, and implications for academic integrity and cognition. Different tasks require different media environments, and digital choice should be guided by cognitive purpose rather than convenience alone.

Digital Competences and Professional Development

Capacity-building for educators should move beyond technical tool training and place stronger emphasis on digitally sustainable pedagogy. Professional development should include:

- balanced and pedagogically justified digital integration
- AI literacy and ethical assessment practices
- critical media and source evaluation
- algorithm awareness
- strategies for reducing overload and protecting concentration
- approaches to self-regulation and digital maturity
- methods for aligning digital practice with student well-being

This is especially important given the SELFIE evidence showing weaker confidence in areas such as assessment, learner empowerment, and digital well-being.

Home–School Collaboration

The findings also underscore the need for stronger collaboration between schools and families. Many of the behaviours and vulnerabilities observed in school are shaped partly by digital routines outside school, including late-night device use, constant messaging, and social media pressure. Schools should therefore communicate with families not only about risk, but about routines, sleep, balance, AI use, and realistic strategies for healthier digital habits. Parents should be treated as partners who may also need targeted support and up-to-date guidance.

Policy and System-Level Coordination

At policy level, digital well-being should be embedded into teacher development frameworks, school guidance, and digital education strategies. This includes ensuring that schools have not only devices and connectivity, but also pedagogical support, coherent expectations, practical resources, and sufficient institutional capacity to manage digital well-being meaningfully. Digital well-being should be treated as a quality condition of digital education, not as an optional add-on.

Report prepared within the DWELL project (Grant Agreement No. 101195998)

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Appendixes

Appendix 1: Focus Group Educators Report: Poland

INTRODUCTION

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational settings by equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. WP2 focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on digital technology impacts (T2.1), SELFIE customization (T2.3), informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6-T2.10). Focus groups are selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction among participants. They will follow SELFIE assessments in 5 schools per country, referencing results to ground discussions.

The design is semi-structured: core questions with flexible probes to adapt to group dynamics, aligned with the research template's domains and findings (e.g., positive effects like enhanced engagement via gamification; negative effects like screen addiction). This in-person approach is recommended for building social presence and addressing sensitive topics like digital isolation. Outputs will contribute to policy recommendations and dissemination activities.

This report presents the results of a national focus group conducted within the implementation process of the **DWELL project**, aiming to explore educators' and/or parents' perceptions of the impact of digital technologies on students' digital well-being across six well-being domains. The focus group contributes to **WP2 research outputs** and informs the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

Focus Group Details

Six educator focus groups were conducted in Poland as part of the DWELL project. The discussions involved teachers from a range of educational settings, including primary, secondary, vocational, and non-public education. Across all sessions, a total of 34 educators participated.

The focus groups were conducted between December 2025 and March 2026. Three sessions were organised online via Google Meet, while three were held face-to-face in participating schools. Most

sessions lasted approximately 55 to 60 minutes, with one online session lasting 1 hour and 2 minutes. This mixed format allowed the project team to include participants from different geographical and institutional contexts while maintaining a consistent discussion structure.

The schools and educational institutions involved in the educator focus groups were:

¹⁵ No Bell School, Konstancin-Jeziorna

¹⁵ Zespół Szkół Zawodowych nr 4 im. Adama Chetnika w Ostrołęce

¹⁵ Zespół Szkół Akademickich MANS w Łomży

¹⁵ I LO im. Adama Mickiewicza w Kolnie

¹⁵ I LO im. Marii Konopnickiej w Suwałkach

¹⁵ Szkoła Podstawowa Nr 28 im. Kornela Makuszyńskiego w Poznaniu

Table 1. Focus Group Details

	Date	School / institution	Number of participants	Format	Facilitator	Duration
1	15.12.2025	No Bell School, Konstancin-Jeziorna	6	Face-to-face	Kinga Cmiel	1 h
2	20.02.2026	Zespół Szkół Zawodowych nr 4 im. Adama Chetnika w Ostrołęce	7	Online	Kinga Cmiel	55 min
3	25.02.2026	Zespół Szkół Akademickich MANS w Łomży	7	Face-to-face	Wojciech Rod	1 h
4	04.03.2026	I LO im. Adama Mickiewicza w Kolnie	6	Online	Kinga Cmiel	55 min
5	09.03.2026	I LO im. Marii Konopnickiej w Suwałkach	2	Online	Wojciech Rod	1 h 2 min
6	18.03.2026	Szkoła Podstawowa Nr 28 im. Kornela Makuszyńskiego w Poznaniu	6	Face-to-face	Wojciech Rod	55 min
During the discussions, educators reflected on students' use of smartphones, social media, gaming environments, AI tools, educational platforms, and school communication systems. They shared						

observations on student behaviour, concentration, emotional regulation, peer relationships, physical activity, and the changing role of teachers and parents in shaping healthy digital habits. The sessions also explored educators' own use of digital tools, their confidence in using them pedagogically, and the kinds of school-level or systemic support they consider necessary to improve student digital well-being.

Executive summary

During the introductory discussion, participants described digital technologies as an unavoidable and deeply embedded part of school life. Teachers reported regular use of tools such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, Librus, Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall, Genially, Canva, YouTube, ChatGPT, and subject-specific platforms. At the same time, many educators framed their relationship with technology as pragmatic rather than enthusiastic: digital tools are used when they genuinely support teaching, but several participants also stressed the continuing importance of paper-based work, discussion, handwriting, and other "analog" practices.

The main discussion revealed a consistently ambivalent picture. Teachers acknowledged that digital technologies can increase motivation, diversify lessons, improve access to information, and support communication or specialised vocational learning. However, the dominant concern across the focus groups was that unregulated or excessive digital use is affecting multiple aspects of student well-being at once. Participants repeatedly referred to declining concentration, dependency on smartphones, weaker face-to-face communication, disrupted sleep, reduced physical fitness, and the growing role of social media in shaping students' emotions and self-image.

A further key theme concerned the difference between operational digital fluency and meaningful digital competence. Teachers frequently noted that students are confident smartphone users but often lack basic computer skills, critical evaluation of online information, and the ability to use AI tools responsibly. Educators also highlighted the need for more support for themselves, especially in relation to AI, digital literacy, and the creation of classroom routines that protect student well-being while still using technology constructively.

Analysis of Results

A. Impacts of digital technologies on student well-being across the six domains

Emotional Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mixed

Participants observed that digital tools can increase enjoyment, curiosity, and short-term motivation, especially when interactive or gamified platforms are used during lessons. Teachers described visible enthusiasm when students engage with quizzes, digital challenges, or well-designed visual materials. In this sense, technology can create a sense of participation and immediate reward.

At the same time, emotional risks were discussed far more extensively. Educators linked social media and gaming environments to overstimulation, irritability, and difficulty calming down after prolonged digital engagement. Some participants described students as emotionally dependent on their devices, becoming tense or agitated when phones are removed. Teachers also connected online environments with growing emotional fragility, including constant comparison with influencers, a need for instant validation, and the expectation of immediate positive feedback. Several groups further raised concerns about cyberbullying, online hostility, and the simplification of emotional expression through short and superficial forms of digital communication.

Behavioral Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mainly negative

Teachers consistently described behavioural challenges associated with constant digital access. Smartphones, notifications, games, and social media were seen as major sources of distraction, making it difficult for students to remain attentive during lessons or sustain effort in non-digital tasks. Participants also referred to compulsive device checking, habitual phone carrying, and patterns resembling dependency, including situations in which students appeared unable to disengage mentally even when devices were no longer in use.

Some educators noted that digital tools can increase immediate engagement in class, especially when structured through quizzes, interactive tasks, or visual presentations. However, this more positive

behavioural effect was usually seen as conditional and short term. Across the focus groups, participants agreed that the issue is not the existence of technology itself, but the absence of clear limits and well-regulated use.

Mental Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative

Participants strongly associated excessive digital use with broader mental well-being concerns. Teachers repeatedly linked prolonged screen exposure, gaming, and constant online connectivity with sleep disruption, fatigue, overstimulation, and a reduced capacity to rest. Late-evening device use was seen as particularly harmful because it affects sleep quality and leaves students exhausted and less emotionally stable during the school day.

In several focus groups, educators also referred to more serious mental health concerns, including anxiety, depression, self-harm, and emotional withdrawal. While participants did not claim that technology is the sole cause of these problems, many felt that online pressure, social comparison, constant accessibility, and digitally mediated conflict intensify existing vulnerabilities. Technology was therefore described as an amplifier of stress rather than a neutral background condition.

Social Relationships

Perceived impact: Mixed, but predominantly negative

Participants acknowledged that digital tools can help students stay in touch, share materials quickly, and maintain contact beyond school hours. In some cases, technology was also described as useful for communication around schoolwork and for supporting collaboration when applied purposefully.

Nevertheless, the dominant finding was that digital technologies are weakening direct interpersonal relations. Teachers from multiple settings observed that students often sit together physically while communicating through screens rather than speaking to one another. Participants described a decline in empathy, conversational confidence, public speaking, and conflict resolution. Cyberbullying, hostile language in private chats, and social exclusion were also recurring concerns. Across the discussions,

educators repeatedly stressed that students appear increasingly comfortable with mediated contact and increasingly uncomfortable with real-time, face-to-face interaction.

Physical Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative

Physical health was one of the most clearly negative domains in the discussions. Teachers referred to declining physical fitness, sedentary lifestyles, posture problems, worsening eyesight, obesity, fatigue, and reduced stamina. Some participants observed that students struggle with basic physical effort, and several linked these changes directly to long hours spent on screens both at school and at home.

At the same time, a limited positive dimension was identified when technology was used to support movement. Participants mentioned examples such as activity-tracking or gamified sports applications that can motivate walking, cycling, or outdoor competition. However, these examples were presented as exceptions rather than the dominant pattern. Overall, educators perceived the physical consequences of excessive screen use as one of the most urgent well-being concerns.

Cognitive Functioning

Perceived impact: Mixed

Teachers recognised important cognitive benefits when digital tools are used intentionally. Fast access to information, visual explanation of complex content, online educational resources, and interactive revision tools were all described as useful supports for learning. In specialised or vocational education, digital tools were also seen as necessary for preparing students for real professional environments.

At the same time, cognitive risks were discussed in every focus group. The most frequent concerns were declining attention span, reduced ability to sustain deep focus, superficial information processing, and over-reliance on ready-made answers from the internet or AI. Teachers repeatedly noted that students often accept online or AI-generated content without checking its quality and struggle to distinguish reliable from unreliable sources. Participants also referred to a decline in writing skills, independent reasoning, memory, and basic analog competences, including handwriting, reading an analog clock, and performing non-digital problem-solving tasks.

B. Digital Skills Competence as identified from both Focus Groups and SELFIE tool]

The focus groups suggest that both student and educator digital competence have a direct influence on well-being, but not always in the way conventional measures of digital use would imply. Teachers consistently described students as highly fluent in smartphone-based communication, social media, and entertainment-oriented digital environments. However, they also pointed to significant weaknesses in deeper digital competence. Across several sessions, educators reported that students struggle with basic desktop tasks such as typing, formatting documents, using spreadsheets, or organising information effectively. More importantly, participants stressed that many students do not critically verify online content, tend to trust AI outputs too quickly, and often treat algorithmically delivered information as authoritative.

Educators generally presented themselves as active and adaptive users of digital tools. Many reported regular use of learning platforms, gamified applications, communication systems, and AI-supported preparation. At the same time, teachers did not always feel confident in relation to the speed of technological change. Several participants described a gap between being able to use digital tools functionally and feeling fully prepared to guide students in a rapidly changing digital environment. The strongest unmet need concerned AI literacy, including prompt design, responsible classroom use of AI, source verification, and assessment strategies that reduce dependence on AI-generated outputs.

Where SELFIE-related reflections were available in the session materials, they broadly aligned with this picture. They suggested relatively strong levels of digital tool integration in teaching and learning, but weaker outcomes in areas connected to learner support, empowerment, and digital well-being. Educators themselves often highlighted a difference between technical availability and meaningful educational use. In other words, access to devices and platforms does not automatically translate into self-regulation, critical literacy, or healthier digital habits. Across the discussions, digital competence was therefore framed not only as a technical issue, but as a well-being issue.

C. School policies or classroom tools

Participants proposed a wide range of school-level practices and tools that could support student digital well-being. The most frequently mentioned suggestion was a clear and consistently enforced policy

limiting mobile phone use during school hours, including breaks. Teachers argued that fragmented or teacher-by-teacher enforcement weakens credibility, while school-wide rules are more effective and less conflict-generating. Some specific practices mentioned included phone boxes in classrooms, phone-free school days, and phone-free breaks.

At the pedagogical level, educators favoured balanced rather than maximal digitalization. Many supported using digital tools selectively for motivation, visualisation, or collaboration, while combining them with handwriting, discussion, paper-based tasks, and other analog methods that require sustained attention. Participants were particularly positive about tools such as Kahoot, Quizizz, Wordwall, Genially, Teams, Google Classroom, Canva, and selected AI tools when these were used purposefully rather than as a substitute for thinking.

Teachers also proposed wider well-being measures beyond technology management alone. These included outdoor breaks, school trips, sports, inter-class tournaments, quiet sensory rooms, and structured opportunities for direct peer interaction. Several participants emphasised that restrictions work best when students are offered meaningful offline alternatives. Other suggestions included explicit teaching of AI literacy, critical media analysis, and source verification, as well as moving some assessment away from homework and towards supervised in-class tasks to reduce AI-enabled plagiarism.

Conclusions

Across the educator focus groups, digital technologies were described as both educationally useful and developmentally disruptive. Teachers did not reject technology itself. On the contrary, most participants actively use digital tools and recognise their value in communication, motivation, access to information, and subject-specific teaching. However, the overall pattern across the discussions was clear: the benefits of digital technologies are most visible when use is structured, purposeful, and time-limited, whereas the negative effects are most visible when use is excessive, socially driven, or weakly regulated.

When considered across the six well-being domains, the findings show a predominantly negative pattern in behavioural, mental, physical, and social terms, with more mixed outcomes in emotional and cognitive domains. Emotional well-being was seen as mixed because digital tools can create enjoyment and engagement, but also intensify comparison, frustration, and dependency. Behavioural well-being was

largely perceived as negative due to distraction, compulsive checking, and difficulties with self-regulation. Mental health was also perceived mainly negatively, especially in relation to overstimulation, fatigue, and online pressure. Social relationships were described as mixed but mostly negative, as communication is easier but often shallower and more conflict-prone. Physical health was mainly negatively affected through sedentary routines, fatigue, and reduced fitness. Cognitive functioning was mixed, with real educational value on the one hand and reduced concentration, superficial processing, and over-reliance on AI or ready-made content on the other.

Several cross-cutting issues shaped these conclusions. Excessive screen time, smartphone dependency, social media pressure, and uncritical AI use were all linked to more than one domain. Another recurring theme was inconsistency between school expectations and home routines. Teachers repeatedly emphasised that schools cannot improve digital well-being alone if parents are not supported in setting boundaries and modelling healthier habits. Finally, the findings suggest that digital well-being is closely tied to broader structural conditions, including curriculum overload, inconsistent school policies, and insufficient systemic support for both educators and students.

Recommendations:

Emotional Well-Being

Educators highlighted the need to help students understand how digital environments affect their emotions, especially in relation to gaming, online comparison, and instant validation. Schools should create more space for discussing emotional responses to digital experiences and for helping students recognise frustration, overstimulation, and online pressure. Awareness-building activities on cyberbullying, social comparison, and emotional self-regulation should be strengthened. These actions should be shared between schools and families.

Behavioral Well-Being

Participants strongly recommended introducing clear and consistent limits around mobile phone use, particularly during lessons and breaks. School-wide device policies should be preferred over individual classroom improvisation. At the same time, students should be gradually supported in building self-

regulation skills rather than relying only on external restriction. This is primarily a shared responsibility between schools and parents.

Mental Health

Teachers stressed the importance of reducing overstimulation and protecting students' opportunities for rest, sleep, and recovery. Schools and families should raise awareness about the effects of late-night screen use, gaming, and constant digital availability. Schools should also strengthen referral pathways and supportive environments for students experiencing stress, anxiety, or emotional overload. In this domain, responsibility is shared, but stronger systemic support from policymakers and mental health services is also needed.

Social Relationships

Schools should actively protect and expand opportunities for in-person communication, cooperation, and relationship-building. Participants recommended phone-free breaks, outdoor time, group activities, and classroom routines that encourage direct interaction instead of parallel screen use. Students should also receive more explicit guidance on respectful online behaviour, conflict resolution, and digital communication norms. This is a shared responsibility between schools, families, and the wider educational system.

Physical Health

Participants recommended stronger promotion of movement, outdoor activity, sports, and non-screen-based leisure both during and after the school day. They also highlighted the need to reduce prolonged sedentary behaviour and encourage healthier sleep routines. Where digital tools are used, students should be reminded about posture, breaks, and physical balance. Schools and families share responsibility here, while local and national policy can support through infrastructure and programme design.

Cognitive Functioning

Teachers recommended using digital tools more selectively and intentionally, with greater emphasis on depth, verification, and independent thinking. AI and other online tools should be presented as supports for learning rather than substitutes for reasoning. Schools should strengthen teaching on source

evaluation, algorithm awareness, and critical use of AI. Participants also emphasised the continuing importance of reading, handwriting, discussion, and longer-form tasks in sustaining attention and deeper cognition. Schools have the leading role here, but teacher training and curriculum support are essential.

Digital skills and capacity-building

Across the focus groups, educators repeatedly highlighted the need for targeted professional development on AI, digital hygiene, media literacy, and assessment design in the age of AI. Participants also stressed that parents need accessible guidance on digital boundaries, online risks, and modelling healthy habits at home. For this reason, digital well-being initiatives should include both teacher capacitybuilding and structured parent awareness activities. Policymakers should support these efforts through coherent national guidance, more stable school policy frameworks, and better access to relevant training.

Appendix 2: Focus Group Educators Report: Romania

INTRODUCTION

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational environments, equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. WP2 focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on the impact of digital technology (T2.1), the personalization of SELFIE (T2.3), informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6-T2.10). Focus groups are selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction between participants. They will follow the SELFIE assessments in 5 schools in each country, relating the results to field discussions. The design is semi-structured: core questions with flexible follow-up questions to adapt to group dynamics, aligned with the domains and findings of the research template (e.g., positive effects such as increased engagement through gamification; negative effects such as screen addiction). This face-to-face approach is recommended for building social presence and addressing sensitive topics such as digital isolation.

The results will contribute to policy recommendations and dissemination activities. This report presents the results of a national discussion group conducted within the implementation process of the DWELL project, aiming to explore the perceptions of educators and/or parents regarding the impact of digital technologies on the digital well-being of students across six domains of well-being. The discussion group contributes to the WP2 research results and informs the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

Focus Group Details

Number of focus groups organized with teachers	Date	Name of the Educational Institution	Number of participants per focus group - TEACHERS	Format	Facilitator	Duration
1	21.11.2025	„Gheorghe Popovici” Gymnasium School, Apateu	12	Face-to-face	Camelia Moler	2h

2	24.11.2025	„Tabajdi Károly” Gymnasium School, Zerind	13	Face-to-face, mix	Camelia Moler	4h
3	26.11.2025	Șimand Gymnasium School	7	Face-to-face	Camelia Moler	2h
4	28.11.2025	"Stefan Cicio Pop" Gymnasium School, Conop	10	Face-to-face	Camelia Moler	2h
5	02.12.2025	”Teodor Pacatianu” Gymnasium School, Ususau	6	Face-to-face	Camelia Moler	2h
6	04.12.2025	„Mihai Eminescu” Gymnasium School, Arad	9	Face-to-face	Camelia Moler	2h
7	24.11.2025	Vladimirescu Gymnasium School	10	Face-to-face	Raluca Lalyer	2h
8	26.11.2025	Zădăreni Gymnasium School	10	Face-to-face	Raluca Lalyer	2h
9	28.11.2025	„Aurel Sebeșan” Gymnasium School, Felnac	10	Face-to-face	Raluca Lalyer	2h
10	03.12.2025	Secusigiu Gymnasium School	10	Face-to-face	Raluca Lalyer	2h
11	08.12.2025	Dr. Ioan Danicico Gymnasium School, Semlac	6	Face-to-face	Raluca Lalyer	2h
TOTAL TEACHERS			103			

A total of 103 teachers from 11 educational units, 10 from rural areas and 1 from urban areas.

Participants:

- Primary education teachers – 3rd and 4th grades
- Romanian language and literature teachers
- Modern languages teachers
- Mathematics teachers
- Sports teachers
- History teachers
- Chemistry teachers
- Physics teachers
- Arts teachers
- Music teachers
- Science teachers
- Geography teachers
- Principals
- Deputy principal at the city school

List of Educational Institutions:

- "Ioan Dancico" Gymnasium School, Semeș
- Vladimirescu Gymnasium School
- "Teodor Pacatianu" Gymnasium School, Ușeu
- "Tabajdi Károly" Gymnasium School, Zărnand
- Zărnand Gymnasium School

- "Stefan Cicio Pop" Gymnasium School, Conop
- Şimand Gymnasium School
- "Aurel Sebeşan" Gymnasium School, Felnac
- Secusigiu Gymnasium School
- "Gheorghe Popovici" Gymnasium School, Apateu
- „Mihai Eminescu" Gymnasium School, Arad

Executive Summary

- Participants' responses to the facilitator's questions

Within the focus group, the participating teachers reflected on the concept of "digital well-being," highlighting a complex and balanced understanding of it. For the participants, digital well-being is closely linked to the responsible and balanced use of technology, which involves maintaining a healthy ratio between time spent online and offline activities, limiting screen time, and the conscious use of digital devices in educational and personal contexts.

The teachers emphasized the importance of physical and mental health, mentioning the need to protect vision and posture, reduce stress and digital fatigue, as well as prevent technology addiction. Also, digital well-being was associated with online safety and security, including the protection of personal data, the safety of children in the virtual environment, the prevention of cyberbullying, and the responsible use of passwords and privacy settings.

Another central aspect highlighted by the teachers was the role of digital well-being in education and the development of digital skills, by promoting digital literacy, critical thinking in the online environment, and the use of technology with a clear educational purpose. Participants also placed emphasis on online relationships and behavior, highlighting the need for respect, digital ethics, responsible communication, and empathy in virtual interactions.

From the perspective of inclusion, digital well-being implies equal access to technology, reducing the digital divide, and adapted support for students with different needs. At the same time, the teachers associated the concept with productivity and organization, using technology for efficiency, time management, and avoiding digital distractions, thus contributing to a general state of well-being, characterized by comfort in using technology, a sense of control over the digital environment, and harmony between digital and personal life.

Regarding the technologies used in daily educational activities, the teachers mentioned a variety of digital tools. Learning management platforms, such as Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams (Education), Moodle, and Edmodo, are used for distributing materials, managing homework, providing feedback, and facilitating collaboration. For assessment and rapid feedback, interactive applications such as Quizizz and Google Forms are used, which allow for individual evaluation and monitoring of student progress.

Also, teachers frequently use digital presentations and multimedia resources, such as PowerPoint, Google Slides, Canva, Prezi, Genially, but also educational video platforms like YouTube Edu or TED-Ed, to support visual, interactive, and engaging learning.

The responses of the teachers (and parents) highlight the fact that digital technology offers valuable educational opportunities but also involves real challenges related to balance, safety, and well-being. The effective management of these requires constant collaboration, communication, and support between school and family.

In this context, the DWELL definition was also formulated, according to which digital well-being represents the totality of practices, skills, and contexts that support students and teachers in the responsible, safe, and balanced use of digital technology, in order to sustain general well-being and the educational process.

- **Main discussion points:**

- Ambivalent impact of technology on students' well-being - Teachers highlight that digital technologies can support motivation, the sense of competence, and access to educational resources, but excessive or unorganized use generates stress, anxiety, emotional overload, and decreased self-esteem.

- Significant differences between schools in digital integration - The integration of technology varies depending on resources, teacher skills, and the involvement of school leadership, which leads to unequal practices and a different impact on students' well-being.
- Strong emotional effects of gamification and digital content - Gamification and interactive tools increase enthusiasm, engagement, and motivation, but they can produce anxiety, frustration, and emotional pressure when the focus falls excessively on competition, limited time, and rewards.
- Behavioral and cognitive influences of smartphone use - Teachers observe that the frequent use of digital devices affects concentration, encourages multitasking, superficial attention, and the emergence of cognitive traps, requiring clear rules and guided use.
- Mixed social impact of online communication - The digital environment facilitates collaboration and the participation of more withdrawn students, but it can lead to superficial relationships, social isolation, and diminished empathy if it is not complemented by interactive activities and authentic cooperation.
- The need for balance and adequate digital skills - Teachers emphasize the importance of a balanced use of technology, the development of students' digital skills, and the continuous training of teachers to prevent digital overload and support overall well-being.

Analysis of the results

A. The impact of digital technologies on students' well-being across the six domains

DOMAIN	Positive (AOIs)	Negative (AOCs)	Example
EMOTIONAL	One of the most significant emotional effects of using digital technologies, particularly gamification and virtual reality, is the increase in students' motivation and engagement.	The most frequently mentioned effect is the increase in stress and anxiety, which occurs when technology is used excessively or when the focus falls too heavily on competition, limited time, and online comparisons. Under these conditions, students may manifest frustration,	+ A student with a low level of classroom participation becomes more engaged when lessons are presented in the form of an educational game. By earning points and receiving

	ment. Ludic elements (scores, levels, challenges) and immediate feedback generate enthusiasm, a sense of well-being, and a feeling of achievement, stimulating active participation and interest in learning, including among more withdrawn students.	agitation, decreased self-esteem, and emotional overload.	immediate feedback, they gain self-confidence, participate more actively, and demonstrate joy and increased interest in the lesson content. - A student who fails to complete tasks on time during a gamified activity with a strict time limit becomes anxious and frustrated, constantly comparing themselves with peers on the leaderboard. Over time, this leads to stress, avoidance of digital activities, and a decrease in motivation for learning.
BEHAVIOURAL	Improving organization and autonomy in learning, when it is used in a balanced way and for educational purposes. Students manage to handle their homework more efficiently.	The most frequent negative behavioral effect is the decrease in the ability to concentrate and the fragmentation of attention, occurring in the context of excessive and uncontrolled use of digital devices. Students become	+ A middle school student uses their tablet only for school activities, within intervals established together with parents and teachers. Access to educational

	iently, quickly access information, and communicate more easily with teachers, developing predictable routines and responsible digital habits, supported by clear rules and the collaboration between school and family.	me more easily distracted, procrastinate on tasks, manifest impatience and difficulties in maintaining sustained attention, while their daily routine is disrupted by fatigue, irritability, and an addiction to rapid stimuli.	platforms and workgroups helps them complete homework more efficiently, respect their daily schedule, and become more autonomous in organizing their learning, demonstrating responsible behavior toward technology use. - A student who constantly has their phone at hand, without clear usage limits, frequently interrupts school activities to check apps or social networks. They procrastinate on tasks, go to sleep later, become irritable when restrictions are imposed, and face difficulties maintaining attention in class, manifesting digital addiction behaviors and a decrease in academic performance.
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MENTAL	A significant positive psychological and mental effect of using technology consists in activating internal motivation and the sense of personal competence. When students interact with well-structured, attractive educational digital content used in moderation, a state of mental efficiency is observed, characterized by cognitive clarity, increased concentration, and psychic satisfaction. Immediate feedback and symbolic rewards support the sense of progress and success, reduce uncertainty, and give students a sense of control over their own learning, thus contributing to a positive short-term mental state, with a favorable impact on self-confidence and willingness for cognitive effort.	Psychological overload, resulting from the excessive use of highly stimulating digital content. Short videos, competitive games, and platforms with public exposure accentuate stress, mental fatigue, and difficulties in emotional self-regulation, affecting self-confidence and the ability to concentrate, especially in the case of sensitive or anxious students.	A student participates in a well-structured digital educational activity that includes an interactive game with clear objectives and immediate feedback. After completing the task, the student demonstrates satisfaction, increased motivation, and a state of mental clarity, being more willing to continue the learning activity without signs of stress or fatigue. A student spends long periods using platforms with fast-paced videos and competitive games involving public comparisons. Over time, they exhibit irritability, mental fatigue, and decreased self-confidence, having difficulties concentrating and experiencing intense emotional reactions when they
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			do not achieve the expected results.
SOCIAL	Facilitating communication and maintaining relationships between students, including in educational contexts. Digital tools (educational platforms, communication applications, online meetings) support collaboration, the exchange of ideas, and active participation, especially for more withdrawn students, who express themselves more easily in the online environment. Thus, technology can support the sense of belonging and group cooperation when it is used in a structured manner and with a clear purpose.	The reduction of authentic face-to-face interactions and the emergence of superficial relationships as a result of frequent or exclusive use of the online environment. The lack of direct contact can lead to a decrease in empathy, difficulties in managing conflicts, and misinterpretations of written messages, fostering tensions, social exclusion, or even cyberbullying. In some cases, students may become passive or socially isolated, withdrawing from real-world interactions.	+ In a classroom, an introverted student rarely participates in face-to-face discussions; however, in online activities (chatting on the educational platform, collaborative projects in Google Classroom), they express their ideas, ask questions, and collaborate with peers. This form of interaction increases their social confidence and helps them feel included in the group. - A group of students spends most of their breaks playing on their phones, avoiding games and direct interactions. Over time, difficulties in face-to-face communication emerge, along with conflicts generated by misinterpreted online

			messages and a decrease in empathy, leading to social isolation and strained relationships among classmates.
PHYSICAL	A positive physical effect observed is that when technology use is moderate and alternated with physical activity, no significant negative consequences on students' health occur. Some children demonstrate self-regulation capacity, are aware of the importance of movement, and manage to maintain an adequate level of energy, sleep, and overall well-being, even if they use digital devices for educational purposes.	A student uses their phone and computer for long periods, including late at night. At school, they exhibit constant fatigue, difficulty concentrating, back pain, and low performance in physical activities. Teachers observe sleepiness and a lack of energy, associated with excessive technology use and a lack of physical movement.	+ A student uses a tablet for homework and educational activities but has a clear schedule for breaks and participates in sports activities daily. Teachers do not observe signs of fatigue or decreased energy, and the child actively engages in physical education classes, maintaining a good overall state of well-being. A student uses their phone and computer for long periods, including late at night. At school, they exhibit constant fatigue, difficulty concentrating, back pain, and low performance in physical

			activities. Teachers observe sleepiness and a lack of energy, associated with excessive technology use and a lack of physical movement.
COGNITIVE	Digital technologies, educational applications, and interactive platforms stimulate students' attention, memory, logical thinking, and creativity. Gamification and immediate feedback increase motivation and engagement in the learning process, transforming lessons into an attractive and interactive experience.	The excessive or uncontrolled use of technology can diminish the capacity for concentration, patience, and critical thinking. Students may end up focusing more on digital rewards (points, levels) than on the actual learning process, affecting deep understanding and the organization of information.	+ A middle school student uses an interactive programming application that provides immediate feedback. Through games and logical challenges, the student develops strategic thinking, attention, and problem-solving skills, demonstrating active engagement and increased motivation for computer science lessons. - A high school student spends hours on educational platforms with points and levels, but without guidance and without alternating digital activities with traditional ones. Although they accumulate points and

			levels, their attention diminishes, and their ability to understand and memorize the information presented is affected, as they focus more on rewards than on the actual content.
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A. Digital Competencies as Identified in Focus Groups and the SELFIE Tool

The level of students' digital competencies significantly influences their well-being, both at home and at school. Students with developed digital skills feel more confident, motivated, and autonomous; they participate actively in lessons and effectively manage online tasks, which reduces stress and enhances academic and social satisfaction. In contrast, students with low digital competencies experience frustration, anxiety, and isolation; they feel insecure and avoid digital activities, which negatively impacts their academic performance and emotional balance.

Teachers generally perceive that they possess the necessary digital competencies to support students, utilizing educational platforms, digital resources, and progress monitoring tools. However, some acknowledge limitations in managing digital overload and using complex new technologies, which can lead to decreased confidence when attempting to help students with digital difficulties.

This gap between student and teacher competencies can widen the holes in effective support, highlighting the need for continuous training and strategies focused on students' digital well-being. Therefore, the equitable development of digital competencies—for both students and teachers—is essential to prevent emotional and educational imbalances and to ensure a safe, positive, and inclusive digital experience.

B. School Policies and Classroom Tools

- Use of Technology with a Clear Educational Purpose and Defined Timeframes
 - Teachers explicitly explain the objective of the digital activity (e.g., practicing a specific skill).
 - Digital activities are integrated into blended lessons (digital + offline) and are limited in duration.
 - Observed Impact: Increases concentration, reduces stress, and prevents excessive screen time.
- Progress-Centered Gamification Rather Than Score-Centered
 - Permanent public leaderboards are avoided; the focus is on individual progress and constructive feedback.
 - Rewards are linked to effort, strategy, and collaboration, not just the final result.
 - Observed Impact: Maintains motivation, reduces anxiety, social comparisons, and frustration.
- Alternating Digital Tasks with Active and Collaborative Activities
 - Movement breaks, role-playing, pair discussions, or group projects follow digital activities.
 - Technology is used to initiate collaboration, not to replace it.
 - Observed Impact: Reduces sedentary behavior, increases empathy, and improves the quality of relationships between students.
- Clear and Predictable Digital Routines
 - Establishing clear rules regarding the timing and manner of digital device usage.
 - Avoiding digital multitasking (one task at a time).
 - Observed Impact: Reduces attention fragmentation and anxiety associated with chaotic technology use.
- Developing Basic Digital Competencies for All Students
 - Mini-lessons dedicated to online safety, fact-checking, and responsible use.
 - Differentiated support for students with lower digital competencies.

- Observed Impact: Increases the sense of competence, reduces stress, and minimizes online risks.
- Introduction of Emotional Regulation Micro-exercises
- Short breathing breaks or "conscious decision" exercises after intense digital activities.
- Observed Impact: Supports emotional self-regulation and reduces impulsive reactions or frustration.
- Active Use of Technology in Teaching Practice
- Students create digital content (presentations, projects) instead of being mere consumers.
- Emphasis on reflection: "What did I learn?" and "How did this tool help me?".
- Observed Impact: Reduces dependence on rewards and stimulates authentic learning.
- Continuous Teacher Training on Digital Well-being
- Participation in courses and training on digital balance, managing overload, and well-being.
- Exchange of best practices among teaching staff.
- Observed Impact: Increases teachers' ability to prevent the negative effects of technology and to guide students toward responsible use.
- Joint Family–School Activities and Initiatives
- Projects and themed weeks for "Mindful Technology Use" carried out simultaneously at home and at school.
- Students, parents, and teachers monitor technology use, reflect, and discuss observations.
- Observed Impact: Increases student responsibility, reduces conflicts related to screen time, and strengthens the family–school partnership.
- General Principles Agreed Upon by Participants
- Technology use must be balanced, intentional, and age-appropriate.

- Rules must be clear, explained, and consistently applied at both home and school.
- Digital activities must be alternated with play, movement, and offline activities.

Conclusions and Recommendations

General Patterns and Key Messages Identified in Focus Groups

Based on the analysis of the participants' (teachers') responses, several clear general patterns emerge:

Ambivalent Impact of Technology

Digital technologies are perceived as having both significant benefits and real risks for student well-being. No single domain is affected exclusively in a positive or negative way.

The Decisive Role of Usage Patterns

The difference between beneficial and harmful effects is determined by the duration, purpose, content, and the degree of guidance provided during technology use.

Balance as a Transversal Key Message

The idea of balance—between online–offline, work–breaks, and competition–cooperation—consistently appears as an essential element of digital well-being.

The Need for Clear Rules and Adult Guidance

Both teachers and parents emphasize the importance of explicit rules, structure, and adult support in forming healthy digital habits.

Student Vulnerability to Digital Overexposure

Students are perceived as highly sensitive to intensely stimulating content, excessive competition, and rapid rewards, all of which impact their emotions, attention, and behavior.

The Impact of Digital Technologies on Student Well-being Across the Six Domains

1. GENERAL DOMAIN

Impact: Mixed

- Positive: Technology facilitates rapid access to information, supports the organization of school activities, and develops essential digital competencies.
- Negative: Excessive use or the lack of a unified system generates stress, overload, and inequalities among students.

2. EMOTIONAL DOMAIN

Impact: Mixed

- Positive: Interactive and gamified activities increase motivation, enthusiasm, a sense of achievement, and student engagement.
- Negative: Excessive competition, social comparisons, and score pressure lead to anxiety, frustration, and decreased self-esteem.

3. BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN

Impact: Predominantly mixed, with high negative risk

- Positive: Guided use contributes to organization, autonomy, and task adherence.
- Negative: Distraction, multitasking, impatience, and difficulties in following rules occur frequently in the context of uncontrolled use.

4. MENTAL (PSYCHOLOGICAL) DOMAIN

Impact: Mixed

- Positive: Well-structured educational content stimulates thinking, curiosity, and can support a positive mental state.

- Negative: Prolonged exposure to intensely stimulating content triggers mental fatigue, anxiety, concentration difficulties, and emotional vulnerability.

5. SOCIAL DOMAIN

Impact: Mixed

- Positive: Technology facilitates communication and collaboration, including more withdrawn students in activities.
- Negative: Reduces face-to-face interactions and empathy; may foster superficial relationships, conflicts, or social isolation.

6. PHYSICAL DOMAIN

Impact: Predominantly negative (duration-dependent)

- Positive: When used moderately and combined with physical activity, technology does not produce significant physical effects.
- Negative: Sedentary behavior, eye strain, back pain, sleep disturbances, and decreased energy levels are frequently reported.

Cross-Cutting Issues Identified

Major transversal problems emerge from the data, impacting multiple dimensions of well-being simultaneously:

- Excessive Screen Time: Simultaneously affects the emotional (stress), mental (cognitive fatigue), behavioral (impatience), and physical (sleep, posture) domains.
- Highly Stimulating Content and Instant Gratification: Negatively influences emotions, attention, self-regulation, and learning behaviors.
- Lack of Digital Breaks and Offline Alternation: Leads to mental overload, decreased physical energy, and irritability.

- Excessive Competition and Social Comparison: Affects the emotional, mental, and social domains, amplifying anxiety and eroding self-confidence.
- Gaps in Access and Digital Competencies: Create educational inequalities, emotional stress, and social integration difficulties.

Integrative Conclusion

- Digital technologies influence student well-being in a complex and ambivalent manner. They can support learning, motivation, and skill development when used in a balanced, intentional, and guided way. Conversely, they can generate emotional, mental, behavioral, social, and physical imbalances when use is excessive, uncontrolled, or centered solely on rewards and competition.

▪ Recommendations

GENERAL (EDUCATIONAL) DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Coherent and balanced use of technology in the educational process.
- Reducing digital overload and inequalities between students.
- Clarifying the educational purpose of technology use.

Recommendations:

- For Schools and Educators: Establishing shared principles for the use of technology (what, when, and why we use digital tools) to avoid excessive tasks that are exclusively online. Integrating technology as a support tool, not as an end in itself.
- For Parents: Maintaining a constant dialogue with the school regarding the volume and type of digital activities. Supporting the child in organizing their time and prioritizing activities.
- Shared Responsibility (School–Family): Aligning expectations related to homework, platforms, and time spent online.

EMOTIONAL DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Emotional regulation in digital contexts.
- Managing competition and the pressure of scores/rankings.
- Reducing anxiety and frustration associated with technology use.

Recommendations:

- For Schools and Teachers: Using gamification with an emphasis on progress and cooperation, not exclusively on competition. Providing feedback that values effort and the process, not just the result.
- For Parents: Observing the child's emotional reactions to technology use and discussing them without immediate sanctions. Avoiding the use of the phone as the primary tool for reward or calming.
- Shared Responsibility: Awareness of the fact that intense emotional reactions can signal digital overstimulation.

BEHAVIORAL DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Forming healthy digital routines.
- Reducing distraction and multitasking.
- Increasing self-control and responsibility.

Recommendations:

- For Schools: Establishing clear rules regarding the use of devices during classes. Alternating digital activities with non-digital tasks.
- For Parents: Establishing limits regarding screen time that are explained, not just imposed. Maintaining consistency between rules at home and those at school.

- Shared Responsibility: Transmitting coherent messages about priorities, time, and responsibility.

MENTAL (PSYCHOLOGICAL) DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Preventing mental fatigue and overstimulation.
- Supporting concentration and self-regulation.
- Managing the impact of emotionally intense content.

Recommendations:

- For Schools and Teachers: Introducing digital breaks and moments of calming during online activities. Using highly stimulating content (short videos, fast-paced games) in moderation.
- For Parents: Limiting screen use before sleep. Open discussions about the content consumed and its effects on the child's well-being.
- Shared Responsibility: Promoting simple self-regulation strategies (breaks, breathing, alternating activity with rest).

SOCIAL DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Maintaining authentic face-to-face interactions.
- Preventing isolation and superficial relationships.
- Developing empathy and real communication.

Recommendations:

- For Schools: Organizing collaborative activities that combine the digital environment with direct interaction. Supporting withdrawn students through well-structured group activities.

- For Parents: Encouraging physical play, meetings with peers, and offline activities. Monitoring online relationships and discussing conflictual situations.
- Shared Responsibility: Balancing online communication with real-world social experiences.

PHYSICAL DOMAIN

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Reducing sedentary behavior.
- Protecting sleep, vision, and posture.
- Increasing energy levels and physical movement.

Recommendations:

- For Schools: Integrating movement breaks and raising awareness of correct posture during digital activities. Limiting prolonged online activities without breaks.
- For Parents: Establishing daily routines that include movement and time spent outdoors. Avoiding the use of devices in the evening, before bedtime.
- Shared Responsibility: Promoting a balanced lifestyle in which technology does not replace physical activity.

General Conclusion of the Recommendations

The formulated recommendations directly reflect the real concerns of teachers and parents and highlight the fact that digital well-being does not depend on the elimination of technology, but on its conscious, balanced, and guided use, through a shared responsibility between school and family.

Appendix 3: Focus Group Educators Report: Cyprus

INTRODUCTION

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational settings by equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. WP2 focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on digital technology impacts (T2.1), SELFIE customization (T2.3), informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6-T2.10). Focus groups are selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction among participants. They will follow SELFIE assessments in 5 schools per country, referencing results to ground discussions.

The design is semi-structured: core questions with flexible probes to adapt to group dynamics, aligned with the research template's domains and findings (e.g., positive effects like enhanced engagement via gamification; negative effects like screen addiction). This in-person approach is recommended for building social presence and addressing sensitive topics like digital isolation. Outputs will contribute to policy recommendations and dissemination activities.

This report presents the results of a national focus group conducted within the implementation process of the **DWELL project**, aiming to explore educators' and/or parents' perceptions of the impact of digital technologies on students' digital well-being across six well-being domains. The focus group contributes to **WP2 research outputs** and informs the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

Focus Group Details

Five focus groups were conducted in Cyprus as part of the DWELL project to explore educators' perceptions of digital technologies and their impact on students' well-being. The discussions focused on students aged 12–15 years, reflecting lower secondary education, where digital engagement is particularly intensive both inside and outside the classroom.

The focus groups involved teachers from different educational settings who had experience teaching in digitally enriched environments and were familiar with the challenges students face when using

technology at school and at home. In total, five separate focus group sessions were organised between November 2025 and February 2026, as presented in Table 1 Focus Group Details. Each session included between 4 and 8 participants, resulting in a diverse range of perspectives from educators with varying levels of experience.

All focus groups were conducted online and lasted approximately 90 minutes each. The sessions were facilitated by ensuring consistency in the discussion process. The table below provides an overview of each session, including the date, number of participants, format, facilitator, and duration.

The discussions explored teachers' experiences with students' use of digital technologies, including smartphones, social media, educational platforms, and digital learning tools. Participants shared observations about students' behaviour, emotional responses, concentration levels, and social interactions when technology is used for both educational and recreational purposes. In addition, the focus groups examined educators' own experiences with digital tools, their perceived preparedness to manage digital environments in the classroom, and the types of support or policies they believe would help improve students' digital well-being.

No	Date	School	Number of participants	Format	Facilitator	Duration
1	22.11.2025	American Academy Limassol	5	Online	Maria Despoina Stylianou	1 h 30
2	08.01.2026	Different Secondary Schools	5	Online	Maria Despoina Stylianou	1 h 30
3	22.01.2026	Different Secondary Schools	6	Online	Maria Despoina Stylianou	1 h 30
4	28.02.2026	Different Secondary Schools	4	Online	Maria Despoina Stylianou	1 h 30

5	27.02.2026	Institute of Advanced Studies	8	Online	Maria Knais	1 h 30
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Table 1 Focus Groups Details

Executive summary

During the introductory discussion, participants described digital well-being primarily as the ability to use technology in a balanced, responsible, and healthy way. Teachers emphasized that digital tools should support learning and everyday functioning rather than dominate students' lives. Many participants highlighted the importance of maintaining control over technology use, setting boundaries, and ensuring that digital tools serve educational purposes rather than becoming sources of stress or distraction. Participants also associated digital well-being with feelings of safety, confidence, and autonomy when using technology. Teachers explained that students should understand the consequences of their online actions, develop responsible digital habits, and be able to disengage from digital environments when necessary.

The main discussion focused on several key issues. Excessive use of smartphones and social media was identified as a major concern, often leading to fatigue, reduced concentration, and lower engagement in school. Teachers also reported declining attention spans, linked to constant exposure to fast-paced digital content. While tools such as gamified platforms can increase motivation, they may also create stress or encourage superficial learning. Participants further discussed the mixed impact of digital communication, which can support interaction but also contribute to cyberbullying, social pressure, and emotional distress. Finally, teachers highlighted the need for more training and support to keep up with technological developments and to use digital tools in ways that protect students' well-being.

Analysis of Results

A. Impacts of digital technologies on student well-being across the six domains

Emotional Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mixed

Participants highlighted that digital technologies can enhance students' emotional engagement through interactive tools and gamification, which increase motivation and enjoyment in lessons. For example, teachers noted that students are highly enthusiastic when using tools such as Kahoot. However, emotional challenges were also frequently reported, particularly related to competition, time pressure, and online interactions, which can lead to stress, frustration, or anxiety. These emotional effects were often linked to social experiences in digital environments (e.g. exclusion or conflict) and to patterns of excessive or unregulated use, showing connections with both social relationships and behavioral well-being.

Behavioral Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mainly negative without structure

Participants consistently reported that excessive and unstructured use of digital devices negatively affects students' behavior and self-regulation. Smartphones and notifications were described as constant sources of distraction, leading to impulsive checking and reduced focus during lessons. Teachers also observed irritability and low tolerance for effort, particularly among students who spend extended time online. These behaviors were often linked to fatigue caused by late-night device use (physical health) and to reduced concentration (cognitive functioning). However, when digital tools are used in structured and supervised ways, they were seen to support engagement and positive participation.

Mental Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative when technology use is excessive

Participants expressed concerns about the psychological impact of prolonged digital use, particularly in relation to anxiety, emotional instability, and sleep deprivation. Late-night use of devices was frequently mentioned as a contributing factor, linking mental health with physical health (sleep disruption) and cognitive functioning (reduced attention and learning capacity). In addition, online environments were associated with cyberbullying, social comparison, and pressure related to online identities, which negatively affect self-esteem. These issues demonstrate strong connections between mental health, emotional well-being, and social relationships, particularly in unregulated digital contexts.

Social Relationships

Perceived impact: Mixed

Participants noted that digital technologies can both facilitate and hinder students' social relationships. Online platforms can support communication, collaboration, and participation, especially for students who are less confident in face-to-face settings. However, they can also contribute to exclusion, cyberbullying, and reduced interpersonal skills. Teachers highlighted that students often prefer interacting through devices rather than in person, which may weaken social development. These social dynamics were closely linked to emotional well-being (e.g. stress, anxiety) and mental health (e.g. self-esteem and social pressure), as well as influencing classroom behavior.

Physical Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative when screen time is excessive

Participants frequently reported negative physical effects associated with prolonged screen use, including eye strain, fatigue, poor posture, and reduced physical activity. Late-night device use was strongly linked to sleep deprivation, which in turn affects mental health (emotional stability), behavioral well-being (irritability), and cognitive functioning (reduced concentration and engagement). Teachers also noted a decline in outdoor play, highlighting the broader impact of sedentary digital habits on students' overall well-being.

Cognitive Functioning

Perceived impact: Mixed

Participants highlighted that digital technologies can support learning through access to information, visual resources, and interactive tools that enhance understanding. However, repeated exposure to fast-paced digital content, such as short-form videos, was seen to reduce students' attention span and ability to engage in deep thinking. Students were reported to prefer quick answers rather than sustained effort in reading or analysis. These cognitive challenges were often linked to behavioral patterns of distraction, as well as to fatigue resulting from excessive screen time (physical health), demonstrating the interconnected nature of digital technology impacts.

Domains	Positive (AOIs)	Negative (AOCs)	Examples (+ -)
Emotional Well-Being	- Gamification tools (e.g. Kahoot) increase excitement and motivation for learning (“They love Kahoot, it’s the only thing they are looking forward to” (Teacher, FG1) - Interactive tools make lessons more engaging and enjoyable - Digital projects (e.g. collaborative tools or eTwinning activities) enhance student confidence and creativity - Anxiety and FOMO (Feeling Of Missing Out) “They have increased anxiety and FOMO that comes through gamifications” (Teacher, FG5)	- Competitive or time-limited games may create pressure or superficial learning (“They don’t really learn from Kahoot, they just like to play so they will not to a normal lesson” (Teacher, FG3) - Online gaming can lead to frustration, aggression, or emotional distress (“They play Roblox all night long and they are so tired during the lesson they become aggressive” (Teacher, FG3) - Loss of gaming accounts or online conflicts can strongly affect students emotionally	- Students are “on cloud nine” when using Kahoot - Digital projects increase enthusiasm and engagement - Students become upset when gaming accounts are hacked or lost - Competition in games sometimes leads to stress or frustration

Behavioral Well-Being	• Structured use of digital tools during lessons can increase engagement • Device restrictions can improve focus and classroom behavior • Guided digital activities help students remain engaged with learning tasks (“I, as an IT teacher, prefer to use the electronic devices as much as possible and from my experience, with the correct guidance it benefits them the most” (Teacher, FG2)	• Smartphone addiction+ Students engage when and constant devices are used for notifications triggers specific learning tasks automatic phone— Students stay up late checking “They get playing games and arrive distracted the moment tired at school their phone rings or— Teachers must when they have a constantly monitor student message. They want tons to prevent misuse of check it the moment phones the notification comes, it doesn’t matter what we are doing at the time for them” (Teacher, FG4) • Late-night gaming leads to fatigue and poor concentration at school	
Mental Health	• Digital tools can support creativity, communication, and learning when used responsibly • Access to information and online collaboration can	• Excessive screen time+ Technology supports linked to anxiety, sleep creativity and deprivation, and communication when emotional instability used positively • Cyberbullying and online harassment affect students’ psychological well-being “They have so	– Students experience anxiety, insomnia, and digital dependency – Cyberbullying and

	support personal development “They can collaborate afterschool via Google Classroom. They use it for group projects all the time” (Teacher, FG1)	many group chats and they talk all the time. Bullying is out of our control” (Teacher, FG3)	online harassment affect student well-being
Social Relationship s	• Online platforms can help shy students ask questions or communicate more comfortably • Digital collaboration tools support teamwork and communication in learning contexts	• Pressure from social media validation affects self-esteem • Social media and messaging platforms may enable cyberbullying or exclusion • Excessive online interaction may reduce face-to-face communication skills “During break time they are all on their phones rather than talking to each other” (Teacher, FG2) • Online trends and behaviors influence classroom interactions and language	+ Some students ask questions more easily through digital platforms + Digital collaboration tools help students work together – Online messaging groups sometimes enable bullying or exclusion
Physical Health	• Some digital tools (e.g. VR or multimedia)	• Prolonged screen time causes eye strain,	+ VR can allow virtual visits to museums or

	can enrich learning experiences when used occasionally “I have used VR in the past. The students loved it and they were very engaged in the topic” (Teacher, FG2) Technology can support access to educational resources that are otherwise unavailable	fatigue, and poor posture “They have under eye cirled, red eyes, and they cannot sit straight” (Teacher, FG3) - Reduced physical activity due to increased digital entertainment “They cannot run. They are out of shape. Only the students that go into afterschool activities are in shape” (Teacher, FG2) - Late-night device use leads to sleep deprivation and physical exhaustion	cultural sites – Students show poor posture, eye strain, and fatigue – Lack of outdoor play and increased sedentary behavior
Cognitive Functioning	- Digital tools provide access to information and support creative learning activities - Interactive visual tools and videos can improve understanding of complex topics - Gamification and multimedia increase	- Short-form content+ Videos help students (e.g. TikTok) reduce attention span and concentration “Behavior + Interactive tools ally, students show reduced attention span and multitasking issues” (Teacher, FG5) - Students prefer quick answers instead of	– Students struggle with reading comprehension and sustained attention

	engagement and attention in some learning tasks	deeper research and critical thinking	
		• Heavy reliance on audiovisual content weakens reading and writing skills	

Table 2 Summary of Findings by Domain (Educators' Perspective)

B. Digital Skills Competence as identified from both Focus Groups and SELFIE tool

The focus group discussions highlighted that digital competence plays a significant role in shaping both students' and teachers' experiences with digital technologies.

Participants emphasized that students often appear comfortable using digital devices, particularly for entertainment or social communication, as a teacher mentioned "They act like they know everything. They do know a lot of things, not everything, but some of them are even into coding" (Teacher, FG2). However, this familiarity does not necessarily translate into strong digital literacy skills. Teachers reported that many students struggle with tasks such as evaluating online information, conducting structured research, or using digital tools for meaningful learning purposes.

Differences in digital competence among students can also affect their academic engagement and confidence, more specifically a teacher highlighted that "Some students don't have laptops and the cap sometimes show" (Teacher, FG1). Students who are more skilled in using digital tools may participate more actively in technology-based learning activities, while those with limited digital skills may feel frustrated or excluded.

Educators also reflected on their own digital competence. Many teachers expressed confidence in basic digital tools but reported difficulty keeping up with rapidly evolving technologies, a teacher stressed that "I cannot keep up with them. There always is something new that I don't know. I believe that, we as teachers, need more seminars or any kind of information given to us more often" (Teacher, FG3).

Participants emphasized that learning to use new platforms or applications often requires significant time and effort, which can be challenging alongside existing teaching responsibilities.

Overall, teachers highlighted the need for ongoing professional development that combines technical training with guidance on managing students' digital behavior, supporting digital well-being, and integrating technology into teaching in a balanced and pedagogically meaningful way.

C. School policies or classroom tools

Participants proposed several strategies that could help promote digital well-being among students.

As the teachers now are slowly starting to include technology into their teaching by using interactive boards, gamification, presentation and even group activities, one of the most frequently mentioned approaches was the importance of setting clear boundaries regarding device use, both at school and at home ("We cannot control them if their parents allow them to use their phones uncontrollably or play games all night" – FG3). Teachers emphasized that limiting screen time and encouraging responsible use of digital devices can help students develop healthier habits and better self-regulation.

Participants also suggested that schools should provide structured guidance for students and parents on responsible technology use. Educating families about digital risks, screen time management, and parental control tools was seen as an important step toward supporting students' well-being outside the classroom, while education session could take place during parent-teachers meetings, taking advantage of both of the groups will be at the same place at the same time ("Maybe if we come together with the parents then the students will actually pay more attention and we will all have the same guidelines for them" – FG2).

Another recommendation involved integrating digital tools in a purposeful and balanced way. Teachers noted that technology works best when used selectively to support learning objectives rather than as a constant presence in the classroom. Activities such as collaborative projects, interactive presentations, or creative digital tasks were viewed as more beneficial than excessive reliance on games or passive media consumption.

Participants also highlighted the need for teacher training and institutional support. Professional development opportunities focused on digital pedagogy, digital safety, and emerging technologies would help educators feel more confident in guiding students toward responsible technology use.

Finally, teachers emphasized the importance of combining digital learning with activities that promote social interaction, creativity, and physical movement. Encouraging sports, arts, and collaborative projects was seen as essential for maintaining a healthy balance between digital and real-world experiences.

Conclusions and recommendations

Overall Patterns and Key Messages Across the Focus Groups

The findings from the focus group discussions confirm that digital technologies are deeply embedded in students' everyday lives and educational experiences, with impacts that are largely shaped by how these technologies are used rather than by the technologies themselves. Participants consistently emphasised that digital tools can support learning, creativity, and engagement when used in a structured and purposeful way. However, when use becomes excessive or unregulated—particularly in relation to smartphones, social media, and online gaming—negative effects emerge across multiple aspects of student well-being.

A key pattern identified across all domains was the influence of prolonged and uncontrolled screen time. Teachers reported that many students engage in late-night digital activities, leading to sleep deprivation, fatigue, and reduced concentration during school hours. These effects were interconnected, as lack of sleep was found to impact not only cognitive functioning but also emotional regulation, mental health, and classroom behavior. At the same time, participants acknowledged the positive potential of digital tools, such as gamified platforms and collaborative applications, which can enhance motivation, participation, and understanding when integrated effectively into teaching practices.

Another important theme was the broader influence of digital culture, including social media, online validation, and fast-paced content. These environments were linked to increased social comparison, emotional pressure, and shortened attention spans, affecting both students' well-being and learning processes. Participants also highlighted that many of these challenges originate outside the school context, reinforcing the need for stronger collaboration between schools and families. In addition, both

student and teacher digital competence emerged as a critical factor, with participants noting that while students are confident users of technology, they often lack deeper digital literacy skills, and teachers require ongoing support to keep pace with technological developments.

Summary of Digital Technology Impacts Across the Six Well-Being Domains

The findings indicate that digital technologies influence multiple dimensions of student well-being simultaneously, often through interconnected mechanisms. Emotional well-being was perceived as mixed, as digital tools can increase motivation and enjoyment but may also lead to stress, frustration, and emotional distress, particularly in competitive or socially pressured environments. Behavioral well-being was largely negatively affected in cases of unstructured use, with students showing signs of dependency, distraction, and reduced self-regulation, although structured use was seen to support engagement.

Mental health concerns were strongly associated with excessive technology use, including anxiety, sleep deprivation, and exposure to cyberbullying or social pressure related to online identities. Social relationships were also described as mixed, with digital tools supporting communication and collaboration in some contexts while contributing to exclusion, conflict, and reduced face-to-face interaction in others. Physical health was mainly negatively impacted due to prolonged screen use, leading to fatigue, eye strain, poor posture, and reduced physical activity, often linked to late-night device use. Cognitive functioning showed both positive and negative effects, as digital tools can enhance understanding and engagement, but constant exposure to fast-paced content may reduce attention span, deep thinking, and reading skills.

Cross-Cutting Issues Affecting Multiple Well-Being Domains

Several cross-cutting issues were identified as influencing multiple domains of student well-being. Excessive screen time emerged as one of the most significant factors, with participants linking it to negative outcomes across emotional, behavioral, mental, physical, and cognitive domains. Late-night use of digital devices was particularly concerning, as it contributes to sleep deprivation, which in turn affects concentration, emotional stability, and overall functioning at school.

The influence of social media and online gaming was also highlighted as a key factor shaping students' experiences, often contributing to emotional pressure, social comparison, and patterns of dependency. In

addition, the lack of clear boundaries and consistent rules regarding technology use was identified as a central issue, determining whether digital technologies have positive or negative effects. Finally, gaps in digital competence among both students and teachers were seen to limit the effective and responsible use of technology, reinforcing the need for ongoing support and guidance. Overall, the findings emphasise that digital well-being is a shared responsibility requiring coordinated efforts across schools, families, and broader educational systems.

Recommendations

Emotional Well-Being

Participants emphasised that digital tools can support students' motivation and enjoyment, but also warned that competitive and time-pressured activities may create stress. Based on this, teachers suggested that digital activities should be used more carefully, with a stronger focus on collaboration rather than competition. Several participants highlighted the importance of helping students recognise how digital environments affect their emotions, particularly in relation to gaming and social media. They stressed that students need guidance in managing emotional reactions such as frustration, anxiety, or disappointment that may arise during online interactions. That guidance could come from the teachers themselves but not before they go through specific training sessions where they would be educated and informed correctly on how to handle such circumstances. They, as they mentioned, want to support their students emotionally, but they don't feel as confident to do so.

Behavioral Well-Being

Teachers consistently highlighted the need for clearer rules and boundaries around device use, particularly in relation to smartphones and notifications. Many participants stressed that without structure, students become easily distracted and struggle to regulate their behavior. As a result, they suggested that schools should establish consistent guidelines for device use during lessons, while also supporting students in gradually developing self-control. Participants also noted that structured use of digital tools within lessons can improve engagement, indicating that the issue is not the technology itself, but how it is managed.

Mental Health

Participants expressed strong concerns about the impact of excessive digital use on students' mental health, particularly in relation to anxiety, sleep deprivation, and online pressure. Teachers repeatedly referred to late-night gaming and constant social media use as key issues, suggesting that greater awareness is needed among both students and parents. Several participants highlighted the importance of discussing topics such as cyberbullying, online identity, and digital stress within the school context. They also emphasised that schools alone cannot address these challenges, and that stronger collaboration with parents is necessary to support healthier routines at home.

Social Relationships

Teachers noted that while digital platforms can support communication, they also create risks related to exclusion and cyberbullying. Participants suggested that students need clearer guidance on how to behave respectfully in online environments, as many conflicts originate or escalate through digital communication. At the same time, several teachers observed that students are increasingly relying on digital interaction instead of face-to-face communication. For this reason, they emphasised the importance of maintaining opportunities for in-person collaboration and social interaction within the school environment.

Physical Health

Participants frequently raised concerns about the physical effects of prolonged screen use, particularly fatigue, poor posture, and lack of physical activity. Teachers strongly linked these issues to late-night device use and highlighted that many students come to school tired and unable to concentrate. As a result, they suggested encouraging more balanced routines that include physical activity and reduced screen time, especially outside school hours. Some participants also noted the importance of reminding students about basic habits such as taking breaks and maintaining proper posture when using devices.

Cognitive Functioning

Teachers observed that while digital tools can support understanding and engagement, they are also contributing to reduced attention spans and superficial learning. Participants specifically referred to the influence of short-form content, which they believe affects students' ability to focus and think deeply. As a result, they suggested that digital tools should be used more selectively, supporting

learning objectives rather than replacing them. Several teachers emphasised the importance of combining digital activities with more traditional approaches, such as reading and discussion, to help students develop concentration and critical thinking skills.

Appendix 4: Focus Group Educators Report: Finland

Introduction

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational settings by equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. WP2 focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on digital technology impacts (T2.1), SELFIE customization (T2.3), informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6-T2.10). Focus groups are selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction among participants. They will follow SELFIE assessments in 5 schools per country, referencing results to ground discussions.

The design is semi-structured: core questions with flexible probes to adapt to group dynamics, aligned with the research template's domains and findings (e.g., positive effects like enhanced engagement via gamification; negative effects like screen addiction). This in-person approach is recommended for building social presence and addressing sensitive topics like digital isolation. Outputs will contribute to policy recommendations and dissemination activities.

This report presents the results of a national focus group conducted within the implementation process of the **DWELL project**, aiming to explore educators' and/or parents' perceptions of the impact of digital technologies on students' digital well-being across six well-being domains. The focus group contributes to **WP2 research outputs** and informs the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

Focus Group Details

Participants were recruited through the following channels:

- A total of 645 lower secondary schools were contacted directly via email (headmasters, principals, and vice-principals), covering all grades 7–9 schools in Finland—excluding special needs, hospital, and Swedish-speaking schools—to organize informative visits, SELFIE testing, and focus groups.
- An email invitation to SELFIE testing and focus groups was sent directly to 1,657 lower secondary school teachers.

As a result, four online focus groups were conducted via Teams meetings in Finland. In total, 157 educators, including teachers and principals from six lower secondary / comprehensive schools participated in the focus groups. Lower secondary school in Finland refers to the final stage of compulsory basic education (grades 7–9), typically attended by students aged 13–15, where subject-based teaching prepares pupils for upper secondary education or vocational pathways. See Table 1 for further details on the focus groups.

Table 1 Focus Groups Details

No	School	Number of participants	Format	Duration
1	Open online event for teachers (included participants from three schools: Saunalahti Comprehensive School, Puistopolku Comprehensive School, and Central Uusimaa Christian Comprehensive School)	3	Online	1 h
2	Merenkurkku Comprehensive School	34	Online	30 min
3	Mustasaari Central Comprehensive School	40	Online	20 min
4	Juhani Aho Lower Secondary School	80	Online	30 min

Executive Summary

Icebreaker Insights

In response to the icebreaker question, teachers described digital technologies as an established but carefully regulated part of everyday school life. They reported that tools such as computers and Google Classroom are regularly used. Digitalization was not viewed as an end in itself, but as a pedagogical tool applied when it clearly supports learning objectives. Teachers emphasized deliberate balancing: for

example, game-based digital applications are used in mathematics to support basic skills practice, while pen-and-paper methods are preferred in subjects such as mother tongue to strengthen thinking and assessment.

Participants highlighted several positive aspects of digitalization, including the effective use of images and videos and the observation that some students produce better outcomes on digital platforms than with traditional methods. At the same time, concerns were raised about students' concentration, self-regulation, and sustained working habits in digital environments. While digital platforms may increase motivation, they can also weaken long-term focus, which has led teachers to combine digital and traditional approaches.

A strong theme in the discussion was the implementation of a phone-free policy. Teachers reported that collecting phones during lessons and restricting their use in shared spaces, such as the cafeteria, has significantly calmed the learning environment. Students have adapted well to the rules, concentration has improved, and social interaction has increased.

Teachers also addressed emerging challenges, including the impact of artificial intelligence on learning and assessment, which has increased the need to restrict digital tool use in certain situations. In addition, concerns were raised about students' free use of digital communication platforms, which was perceived as posing social risks and affecting classroom order, thus requiring clearer structural solutions and more consistent policies.

Main Discussion Points

Overall, the discussions consistently highlighted balance, pedagogical justification, realistic expectations, and structural clarity as essential conditions for sustainable digital well-being in schools. Across the semi-structured questions, participants returned to the need for coherence and moderation in digital practices rather than expansion by default. The main discussion themes were as follows:

1. Concentration, Time Management, and Behavior

- The perceived influence of artificial intelligence and digital tools on short-term thinking and reduced sustained attention.

- The role of school-wide phone-free policies in restoring concentration and classroom calm.
- The observation that students require time to regain focus after periods of high device use.
- The impact of intermittent phone retrieval on lesson flow and time management.

2. Learning and Cognitive Functioning

- The extent to which digital platforms enhance performance and motivation for some students.
- Frustration caused by technical problems and disruptions to instructional continuity.
- Students' growing ability to assess realistically what can be completed within a lesson.
- Situations in which students themselves prefer pen-and-paper work for deeper concentration.
- Perceived stress and time-management challenges associated with digital tools, particularly in arts subjects and assessment contexts.

3. Teacher's Role and Professional Competence

- The central importance of pedagogical expertise in ensuring that technology supports content rather than dominating it.
- The need for flexibility and individualized approaches in digital teaching.
- Concerns regarding variability in students' ICT skills and the distribution of responsibility for digital competence development between schools and other actors.
- Teachers' reflections on their own digital competence, particularly in relation to emerging technologies such as AI.

4. Mental Health and Digital Strain

- The shift of bullying to social media platforms and its psychological impact on students.
- Increased workload and emotional strain for teachers due to online harassment cases.
- Stress linked to digital assessment practices and extended digital demands beyond school hours.

- The role of support services (e.g., Someturva) and professional development in addressing digital safety risks.

5. Social Relationships and the School Day as a Whole

- The positive effects of phone-free policies on peer interaction and community building.
- The risks associated with student messaging groups and online communication platforms.
- Recognition that the school day supports social presence and shared activity, not solely academic performance.

6. Structural Guidelines and Digital Well-Being

- The need for clear, jointly agreed school- and municipal-level guidelines for digital tool use.
- The importance of balancing digital and non-digital working methods.
- The view that digitalization should function as a support for teaching rather than an end in itself.
- The conclusion that digital well-being is strengthened when the role of technology is clarified and, where necessary, limited—through practices such as returning to printed materials and implementing consistent phone policies.

Analysis of Results

A. Impacts of Digital Technologies on Student Well-Being Across the Six Domains

Across all six domains, educators described the impact of digital technologies on student well-being as conditional and highly dependent on structure, boundaries, and pedagogical justification. Digital tools were not viewed as inherently positive or negative. Instead, their effects were shaped by how consistently and purposefully they were implemented.

A strong and recurring theme was the importance of restriction and balance. In many domains, well-being improved when digital use was limited, clarified, or combined with traditional methods such as printed materials and pen-and-paper work. Excessive or unregulated digitalization, by contrast, was associated with strain, distraction, and stress.

1. Emotional Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mixed

Participants consistently described a dual emotional impact of digital technologies. On the positive side, digital tools—particularly game-based applications and visual materials—were experienced as motivating and engaging. Some students achieved better results digitally than with traditional methods, and being able to choose between digital and pen-and-paper work supported students’ sense of autonomy and security.

However, frustration emerged as a recurring theme. Technical problems, unclear task purposes, and digital submission platforms were said to increase stress and dissatisfaction. In arts subjects especially, digital submission systems were perceived to create pressure toward perfectionism and reduce satisfaction with one’s own work. Teachers also noted that excessive digitalization and unclear boundaries regarding artificial intelligence contributed to uncertainty and emotional strain.

A repeated example across groups was the calming effect of phone-free policies. Restricting devices during lessons and the school day reduced restlessness and created a clearer, more predictable emotional climate. Stepping back from the “digital leap” was described as increasing clarity and reducing frustration.

Link to other domains: Emotional strain was closely connected to mental health (stress, frustration), behavioral regulation (restlessness), and cognitive overload—especially when digital demands extended into home time.

2. Behavioral Well-Being

Perceived impact: Mainly negative without restrictions; positive when structured

Behavioral concerns were strongly emphasized. Teachers reported that unrestricted digital access—particularly mobile phones and communication platforms—disrupted concentration and classroom order. Artificial intelligence and certain digital practices were perceived to encourage short-term thinking, especially among some student groups.

Phone-free policies were repeatedly identified as a key solution. Collecting phones at the beginning of the school day improved concentration, reduced disruptions, and strengthened classroom routines. Teachers

noted that restoring focus after holidays took time, highlighting the influence of digital habits on self-regulation.

Game-based digital tools supported engagement in short, clearly defined exercises, but sustained concentration was described as better supported by pen-and-paper methods. Occasional retrieval of phones for specific tasks disrupted lesson flow and delayed work initiation.

Link to other domains: Behavioral disruptions were closely connected to cognitive functioning (weakened deep concentration) and emotional well-being (increased restlessness and frustration).

3. Mental Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative without boundaries; protective when limited

Mental health impacts were discussed particularly in relation to online bullying and digital overload. The shift of bullying to social media was described as a significant disadvantage, causing psychological harm to students and increasing teachers' workload. Phone-free school days reduced exposure to online harassment and gave students relief from constant digital pressure.

Participants linked digital assessment and remote feedback to increased stress, especially when tasks extended into home time. Immediate digital feedback systems were useful but could also trigger emotional reactions among students and guardians. Students' rapid boredom and frustration with digital tasks were connected to psychological strain.

At the same time, restrictions—such as limiting artificial intelligence use, favoring traditional working methods, and clarifying communication boundaries—were perceived as protective. Reducing digitalization made the school day more predictable and manageable.

Link to other domains: Mental health concerns overlapped with emotional strain, social safety (bullying), and cognitive overload (time-consuming digital assessment).

4. Social Relationships

Perceived impact: Mixed

Digital technologies were seen as both enabling and undermining social relationships. On one hand, shared digital platforms supported unified practices across schools and municipalities, and digital systems facilitated communication between home and school.

On the other hand, digital communication channels (e.g., student messaging groups) were associated with risks such as inappropriate communication and bullying. Participants highlighted that unrestricted digital interaction could undermine social safety. Device-free lessons and phone-free policies increased face-to-face interaction, strengthened group cohesion, and reduced social comparison and “constant visibility” pressures.

Teachers emphasized that the school day is about more than academic learning; social presence and shared activities are central to well-being. Removing devices, especially in cafeterias, increased discussion and interaction among students.

Link to other domains: Social risks (e.g., bullying) directly affected mental health. Reduced face-to-face interaction also influenced emotional well-being and classroom behavior.

5. Physical Health

Perceived impact: Mainly negative if excessive; positive when balanced

Physical health was primarily discussed in relation to screen time and ergonomics. Teachers reported addressing ergonomic issues in lessons and deliberately avoiding continuous computer use. Printed textbooks and pen-and-paper work were seen as reducing eye strain and static sitting.

Reduced screen time during the school day improved alertness and stamina. The absence of phones during breaks supported recovery and more meaningful pauses. Participants also noted that most screen time accumulated at home, positioning school as a balancing environment.

Link to other domains: Increased screen time was linked to reduced concentration (cognitive functioning) and fatigue (mental and emotional strain), demonstrating how physical and cognitive well-being were intertwined.

6. Cognitive Functioning

Perceived impact: Mixed

Digital tools supported visualization, access to varied materials, and practice of basic skills. Game-based tools were considered effective for structured exercises, and some students benefited from digital formats. When planned and pedagogically justified, digital tools enhanced goal-oriented learning.

However, teachers consistently argued that deeper thinking, text production, and comprehension were better supported through pen-and-paper methods. Constant digital presence weakened sustained concentration. Digital assessment platforms were useful for teachers but cognitively demanding and time-consuming for students. The assumption that students were uniformly digitally competent (“digital natives”) was challenged; ICT skills varied widely.

Participants emphasized that digitalization is “not suitable for all learning situations” and functions best as support rather than as the default environment.

Link to other domains: Reduced concentration linked cognitive functioning with behavioral regulation, emotional frustration, and physical fatigue related to screen exposure.

Summary of Key Findings

Table 2 synthesizes educators’ perceptions of how digital technologies influence student well-being across the six domains discussed in the focus groups. The table organizes findings into three elements for each domain: positive areas of impact (AOIs), negative areas of concern (AOCs), and illustrative examples drawn from participants’ experiences.

The purpose of the table is to provide a concise overview of how educators assessed the benefits and risks associated with digital technologies in everyday school life. Importantly, the findings reflect a consistent pattern across discussions: digital technologies were not viewed as inherently beneficial or harmful. Instead, their impact depended strongly on how, when, and under what structural conditions they were used.

Across domains, positive impacts were most often associated with pedagogically justified, limited, and clearly structured use of digital tools. These included enhanced visualization, support for basic skill

development, increased motivation through gamification, improved equality of access, and strengthened classroom order through phone-free policies.

Negative impacts were primarily linked to excessive, unregulated, or unclear use of digital technologies. Recurrent concerns included weakened deep concentration, emotional strain caused by technical problems and digital submissions, social media bullying, increased stress from digital assessment practices, and physical fatigue due to continuous screen exposure.

The examples included in the table illustrate how these dynamics manifested in practice—such as improvements in classroom order following school-wide phone policies, or increased frustration and pressure related to digital assessment and artificial intelligence. In several cases, the same digital tool could appear in both the positive and negative columns, depending on whether its use was structured and purposeful.

Overall, Table 2 highlights a central conclusion emerging from the focus groups: digital well-being is shaped less by the presence of technology itself and more by the clarity of boundaries, shared guidelines, and balance between digital and traditional teaching methods

Domains	Positive (AOIs)	Negative (AOCs)	Examples
Emotional Well-Being	- Gamified tools (e.g. Ville) increase motivation - Some students perform better digitally - Choice of working mode supports autonomy	- Technical problems increase frustration - Unclear AI boundaries create uncertainty - Digital submissions (arts) increase perfectionism and pressure - Constant device presence burdensome	+ Phone-free policy reduced restlessness + Stepping back from digital leap increased clarity – Digital platforms increase frustration – Digital homework increased pressure

	• Equal access to devices increases sense of fairness • Phone-free practices calm atmosphere		
Behavioral Well-Being	• Phone-free policies improve classroom order • Printed materials reduce distractions • Gamified short tasks increase engagement	• AI and digital tools linked to short-term thinking • Free use of Teams/messaging disrupts order • Retrieving phones delays lesson start • Excessive device use reduces engagement	+ School-wide phone policy improved classroom order – Teams messaging created classroom disruption – Restoring focus takes time after breaks
Mental Health	• Phone-free days reduce exposure to online bullying • Clear digital boundaries reduce stress • Limiting AI reduces performance pressure	• Shift of bullying to social media • Digital assessment increases stress • Remote feedback extends school pressure • Teachers' digital competence	+ Restricting AI reduces performance pressure + Phone-free days reduce online harassment exposure – Social media bullying harms students – Wilma feedback triggers emotional reactions

	• Reduced digitalization makes school day more predictable	uncertainty increases strain	
Social Relationships	• Phone-free policies increase face-to-face interaction • Device-free lessons strengthen group cohesion • Structural restrictions improve safety • Unified device provision supports equality	• Digital bullying undermines safety • Teams groups create social risks • Constant visibility increases comparison • Digital devices reduce spontaneous interaction	+ Cafeteria phone ban increased interaction + Device-free lessons improved group cohesion – Online harassment increases teacher workload – Messaging platforms create conflict risks
Physical Health	• Ergonomics addressed in teaching • Reduced screen time improves stamina • Printed books reduce strain • Device-free breaks support recovery	• Excessive digital use reduces stamina • Continuous exposure strains students • Screen time accumulates heavily outside school	+ Printed materials reduce eye strain + Phone-free days support meaningful breaks – Continuous device presence strains alertness

Cognitive Functioning	• Images and videos support visualization and understanding • Game-based tools support basic skills (e.g. calculation strategies) • Parallel use of printed and digital materials supports diverse learners • Pedagogically justified digital use supports goal-oriented learning	• Weakening deep thinking if overused • Digital assessment cognitively demanding for students • AI complicates assessment and authenticity • Overestimation of students' digital competence	+ Game-based tools effective in arithmetic practice + Students sometimes choose pen and paper – AI challenges fairness – Constant device presence weakens concentration
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B. Digital Skills Competence as Identified from both Focus Groups and SELFIE Tool

Across the focus group discussions, digital skills competence emerged as a key factor shaping students' and teachers' well-being. Participants emphasized that digital competence is not only a technical issue but closely connected to engagement, stress, equality, classroom management, and professional confidence. Both student and educator competence levels were described as uneven, and increasing digital demands were seen as creating new challenges

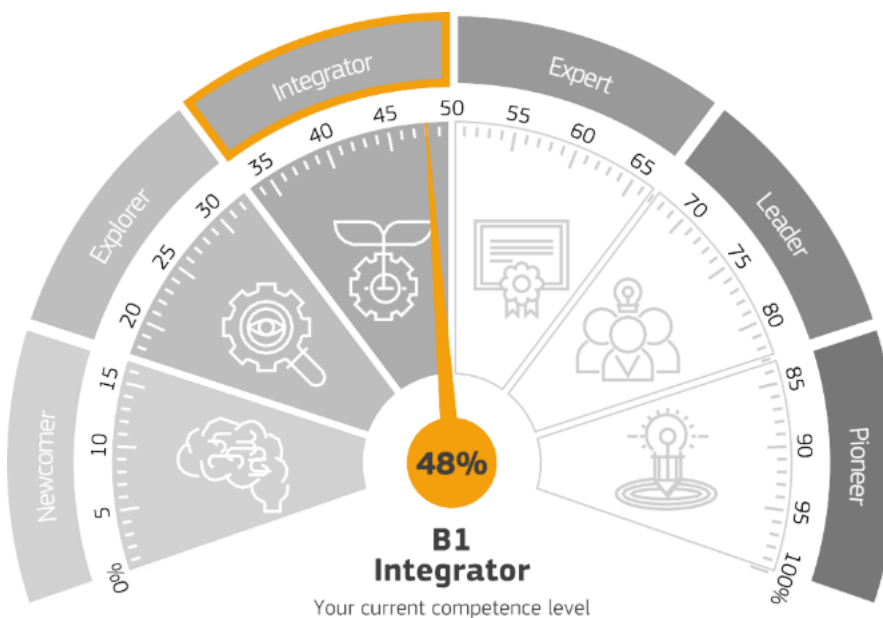
Educators' Digital Competence

Based on the focus group discussions, educators' digital competence was closely linked to their own sense of confidence and well-being at work. Teachers highlighted their strong pedagogical awareness of when digital tools support learning and when they undermine concentration. Many emphasized that technology

should serve content, not dominate it, and described deliberate efforts to balance digital and traditional methods.

At the same time, several educators expressed uncertainty about their own digital skills, particularly in relation to artificial intelligence and digital assessment. Rapid technological developments, managing communication platforms, and maintaining authenticity in assessment increased workload and professional strain. Some teachers felt that expectations related to the “digital leap” did not fully align with classroom realities.

The SELFIEforTEACHERS group results indicate that teachers are at an **Integrator (B1)** level overall, meaning they regularly use and integrate digital technologies in different contexts and for various purposes. They are developing their practice through experimentation and creativity but would benefit from a deeper understanding of how to select appropriate tools for specific pedagogical situations.



Teachers' digital competence is positioned between **Integrator (B1)** and **Expert (B2)** across all seven areas. Stronger competence in professional engagement and digital resources (B2) contrasts with more developing areas related to teaching, assessment, learner empowerment, digital competence, and well-being (B1):

- **Area 1 Professional Engagement (56% – B2):** Strongest area. Teachers use digital technologies confidently and consistently for communication, collaboration, and professional development.
- **Area 2 Digital Resources (51% – B2):** Teachers demonstrate secure and purposeful use of digital resources, with a growing ability to select and critically evaluate tools.
- **Area 3 Teaching and Learning (47% – B1):** Digital technologies are integrated but not yet fully consistent. Teachers are still experimenting with and developing their pedagogical use.
- **Area 4 Assessment (43% – B1):** Digital assessment is used at a basic level, with a need for greater variety and more strategic, systematic application.
- **Area 5 Empowering Learners (40% – B1):** One of the weaker areas. Technology supports learners, but personalisation, differentiation, and learner autonomy are not yet fully developed.
- **Area 6 Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence (43% – B1):** Teachers support students' digital skills, but practices are not yet structured or consistently embedded.
- **Area 7 Digital Wellbeing (42% – B1):** Digital well-being is emerging as a focus, but approaches remain developmental rather than systematic.

Students' Digital Competence

Participants challenged the assumption that students are inherently digitally competent. While many students are comfortable with devices socially, their academic ICT skills and self-regulation vary considerably.

Students with stronger digital skills often benefited from digital platforms and gamified tools. However, those with weaker skills experienced frustration, slower task completion, and increased cognitive load—

particularly in digital assessment contexts. Overestimating students' competence sometimes led to unrealistic expectations and stress.

Competence differences also affected inclusion and equality. Although providing devices to all students supported fairness, gaps in skills and digital responsibility could still create challenges, including behavioral disruptions and social risks in online communication spaces.

Summary of Key Findings

The discussions indicate that digital competence—among both students and educators—significantly shapes digital well-being. Variability in students' skills influences engagement, stress, and concentration, while teachers' confidence in managing digital tools affects professional well-being and classroom dynamics.

Participants stressed the need for realistic expectations, structured support, and clear guidelines. Digital competence was understood as including not only technical skills but also self-regulation, responsible use, and critical awareness. Strengthening both student and educator competence was seen as essential to ensuring that digital technologies support, rather than undermine, well-being.

C. School Policies or Classroom Tools

The following synthesis presents solutions, strategies, and good practices proposed by focus group participants. These reflect participant-generated ideas and experiences, including practices already implemented as well as desired improvements. They are not evaluated interventions, but suggestions emerging from the discussions.

1. Clear and Consistent Phone Policies

The most frequently highlighted strategy was the implementation of clear, school-wide phone policies. Collecting mobile phones at the beginning of the school day—or at least during lessons—was described as significantly improving concentration, classroom order, and social interaction. Restricting phone use in shared spaces such as cafeterias increased face-to-face communication and strengthened group cohesion.

Participants emphasized that consistency is essential. When policies are applied school-wide rather than left to individual teachers, expectations become clearer for students and guardians, and conflicts decrease. In this sense, structural solutions were viewed as supportive for both students and staff.

2. Balanced Use of Digital and Traditional Methods

Another central recommendation was maintaining a balanced approach between digital and non-digital practices. Participants stressed that digital tools should be used purposefully and only when they provide clear pedagogical added value. Suggested practices included:

- Parallel use of printed textbooks and digital platforms.
- Offering pen-and-paper options, especially in assessment situations.
- Increasing device-free lessons to support concentration and well-being.

Stepping back from excessive digitalization and returning to printed materials in certain contexts was described as calming the school day and reducing cognitive and emotional strain.

3. Structured Use of Digital Platforms and AI

Participants suggested that digital communication platforms should be structurally restricted, particularly regarding student messaging groups and access rights. Limiting communication channels was seen as improving classroom order and reducing social risks such as inappropriate communication and bullying.

The growing presence of artificial intelligence was also discussed. Teachers proposed clearer guidelines for AI use in learning and assessment to reduce uncertainty, performance pressure, and concerns about authenticity. Preventing or limiting AI use in certain assessment contexts was seen as supportive of fairness and well-being.

4. Educational Support and Teacher Training

Participants identified the need for continued teacher training in digital competence, particularly in managing online harassment and understanding evolving technologies. Services such as Someturva were mentioned as supportive tools in addressing digital safety concerns.

Teachers emphasized that strengthening educators' confidence in using digital tools appropriately would reduce professional strain and improve their capacity to support students' digital well-being.

5. Home–School Collaboration and Shared Guidelines

Several suggestions focused on improving alignment between school and home. Clear communication about why digital tools are used or restricted was seen as increasing trust and reducing misunderstandings with guardians. Participants noted that consistent school- or city-level guidelines make it easier for families to support everyday routines.

Digital systems such as Wilma were viewed as useful for rapid feedback and communication, but participants stressed the importance of agreed boundaries regarding tone, frequency, and expectations to prevent unnecessary stress.

Structural solutions—such as not requiring personal devices or limiting digital textbooks—were also seen as reducing inequality between families.

6. Realistic Approach to Digitalization

A recurring theme across discussions was the importance of a realistic and critical approach to digitalization. Participants emphasized that not everything needs—or should—be digitalized. Digital technologies were seen as most beneficial when they function as support for teaching rather than as default learning environments.

Returning to a balanced model—combining digital innovation with traditional pedagogical methods—was described as a practical way to safeguard students' emotional, cognitive, social, and physical well-being.

Summary of Key Findings

Focus group participants consistently proposed structural clarity, balanced pedagogical choices, and shared guidelines as central conditions for digital well-being. The most prominent strategies included school-wide phone policies, limited and purposeful digital use, structured communication platforms, teacher training, and strengthened home–school collaboration.

These suggestions reflect educators' lived experiences and highlight a common conclusion: digital well-being is best supported not by expanding technology use, but by clearly defining its role within a predictable, balanced, and pedagogically grounded school environment.

Conclusions

Overall Patterns and Key Messages Across the Focus Groups

The overarching message from the focus groups is that digital well-being is built on balance, clarity, and shared responsibility. Clear school-wide policies, realistic expectations, and pedagogically justified use of digital tools are essential conditions for ensuring that digital technologies enhance rather than undermine student well-being. Rather than advocating for more or less technology in absolute terms, educators called for structured, moderate, and intentional digital practices that prioritize concentration, social interaction, and psychological safety within the school day.

Across the focus groups, several consistent patterns emerged regarding digital technologies and student well-being. These patterns reflect educators' shared experiences and highlight common concerns, practical responses, and underlying principles shaping digital well-being in schools:

1. Digital Impact Is Conditional, Not Inherent

A central message across discussions was that digital technologies are neither inherently beneficial nor inherently harmful. Their impact depends on structure, boundaries, and pedagogical justification. When digital tools are used purposefully and selectively, they can support motivation, visualization, equality, and skill development. When overused or insufficiently regulated, they are associated with stress, distraction, and reduced concentration.

Digital well-being was therefore described as something that must be actively constructed through thoughtful implementation rather than assumed as a natural outcome of digitalization.

2. Restriction and Balance Improve Well-Being

One of the strongest recurring themes was the importance of restriction and balance. Across emotional, behavioral, mental, social, physical, and cognitive domains, well-being improved when:

- Phone use was limited or prohibited during the school day.
- Communication platforms were structurally restricted.
- Digital tools were combined with printed materials and pen-and-paper work.
- Artificial intelligence use was clarified or limited in assessment contexts.

Excessive or unregulated digitalization, by contrast, was linked to frustration, weakened deep thinking, social risks, and increased workload for both students and teachers.

3. Concentration and Predictability Are Central to Well-Being

Across domains, concentration and predictability emerged as key protective factors. Phone-free policies, device-free lessons, and reduced digital interruptions were repeatedly described as restoring calm classroom environments, improving engagement, and strengthening social interaction.

Participants highlighted that digital overload—especially when extending into home time—undermines both cognitive functioning and mental well-being. Predictable structures and clear expectations were seen as essential for sustaining focus and reducing stress.

4. Digital Competence Gaps Create Strain

The discussions revealed significant variability in both student and teacher digital competence. The assumption that students are automatically digitally competent was challenged. Differences in skills and self-regulation influenced engagement, inclusion, and stress levels.

At the same time, educators expressed uncertainty about their own digital competence, particularly in relation to rapidly evolving technologies such as artificial intelligence. This contributed to professional strain and increased workload.

Thus, digital well-being was closely linked to realistic expectations, ongoing support, and recognition of competence gaps.

5. Social and Mental Health Risks Require Structural Responses

The shift of bullying to social media was identified as a major concern. Digital communication platforms introduced new social risks and extended pressures beyond school hours. Participants consistently argued that structural solutions—rather than individual responsibility alone—are necessary to address these risks.

Phone-free school days, restricted messaging platforms, and shared guidelines were seen as protective measures that support safer social environments and reduce mental strain.

6. Digitalization Functions Best as Support, Not as Default

A key conclusion across all focus groups was that digitalization functions most effectively when it supports teaching rather than replaces traditional pedagogical practices. Deeper thinking, sustained attention, and reflective work were consistently associated with pen-and-paper methods.

Participants emphasized that stepping back from the “digital leap” in certain areas was not regression, but a deliberate recalibration aimed at protecting well-being.

Summary of Digital Technology Impacts Across Six Well-Being Domains

The focus group discussions indicate that the impact of digital technologies on student well-being is largely conditional and context-dependent. Across all six domains, effects were most positive when digital tools were used purposefully, in moderation, and within clear structural boundaries. Unregulated or excessive use was consistently linked to strain.

- **Emotional well-being** was described as mixed. Digital tools can enhance motivation and engagement, particularly through gamified and visually rich platforms. However, technical problems, unclear expectations around artificial intelligence, and pressure linked to digital submissions increased frustration and stress. Emotional climate improved when device use was limited and structured.

- **Behavioral well-being** was mainly negative when device use lacked structure but positive when restrictions were in place. Unregulated phone and platform use weakened self-regulation and classroom order. In contrast, consistent phone-free policies significantly improved concentration, engagement, and overall calm.
- **Mental health** was perceived as vulnerable in digitally saturated environments. Social media–related bullying, digital overload, and assessment-related stress were identified as risks. Clear boundaries, reduced device use, and structured routines were seen as protective factors supporting psychological well-being.
- **Social relationships** showed mixed effects. Digital tools supported communication and shared practices, yet also introduced risks such as online harassment and social comparison. Device-free lessons and phone-free policies strengthened face-to-face interaction, social presence, and group cohesion.
- **Physical health** impacts were mainly negative when screen exposure was excessive, contributing to eye strain, fatigue, and reduced stamina. Balanced use, printed materials, and restricted screen time during the school day supported recovery and physical alertness.
- **Cognitive functioning** was mixed. Digital tools supported visualization, access to materials, and practice of basic skills. However, constant or excessive digital use was associated with weakened deep thinking, reduced sustained attention, and increased cognitive load, particularly in assessment contexts.

Overall, digital well-being was constructed not by increasing technology use, but by clarifying its purpose, limiting unnecessary exposure, and embedding digital tools within clear pedagogical and structural frameworks.

Cross-Cutting Issues Affecting Multiple Well-Being Domains

Across domains, educators’ reflections indicate that digital well-being is shaped less by individual tools and more by systemic conditions—including levels of screen exposure, phone policies, AI guidelines, communication practices, and the balance between digital and traditional teaching. The focus group data

suggest that the effects of digital technologies are interconnected rather than domain-specific: changes in one area often produced simultaneous consequences across emotional, cognitive, behavioral, social, physical, and mental domains. Several cross-cutting issues were identified:

- **Excessive or Constant Screen Time.** High levels of digital exposure were associated with impacts across multiple domains. Excessive screen use weakened sustained concentration (cognitive), increased restlessness and reduced self-regulation (behavioral), contributed to frustration and psychological strain (emotional and mental), and was linked to reduced physical stamina and eye strain (physical). Accumulated screen time outside school further intensified these effects, positioning the school as a potential balancing environment.
- **Phone Use and Digital Availability During the School Day.** The constant presence of mobile phones influenced multiple domains simultaneously. Without restrictions, phones were associated with distraction (cognitive), classroom disruption (behavioral), digital pressure and social comparison (social and emotional), and exposure to online bullying (mental health). Conversely, phone-free policies were consistently described as strengthening concentration, improving classroom order, increasing face-to-face interaction, supporting recovery during breaks, and reducing overall psychological strain.
- **Clarity of Boundaries and Structural Guidelines.** Unclear rules regarding digital tools—particularly artificial intelligence and communication platforms—created uncertainty, stress, and inconsistent practices across classrooms. Clear, shared school- or municipal-level guidelines enhanced predictability, reduced emotional and mental strain, improved behavioral stability, and strengthened trust between home and school.
- **Artificial Intelligence and Digital Assessment Practices.** The growing presence of AI and digital assessment tools affected cognitive, emotional, and mental domains. Concerns about academic integrity, performance pressure, and unclear expectations increased stress, while digitally mediated assessment was experienced as cognitively demanding and, in some cases, emotionally burdensome.

To conclude, a consistent cross-cutting pattern emerged: excessive, unclear, or unstructured digital use tends to generate strain across multiple domains simultaneously, whereas clear boundaries, balanced integration with traditional methods, predictable routines, and coherent school-wide guidelines create protective effects across emotional, cognitive, behavioral, social, and physical well-being. These findings reinforce the conclusion that digital well-being is systemic rather than domain-specific and is shaped primarily by structural and policy-level conditions within schools.

Recommendations

Based on the educators' focus group discussions, the overarching recommendation is clear: digital well-being in schools should be strengthened through balance, clear boundaries, and structural consistency—not through expanding digitalization. Participants consistently emphasized that digital tools should remain pedagogically justified, limited, and purposefully integrated into teaching. The goal is neither to increase nor eliminate technology categorically, but to ensure that digital practices support concentration, learning, safety, and balanced development across all domains of student well-being.

Across the six domains—emotional, behavioral, mental, social, physical, and cognitive—educators highlighted that many of the challenges associated with digital technology arise not from the tools themselves, but from unclear expectations, inconsistent implementation, and cumulative digital load. Emotional strain, reduced sustained attention, behavioral disruption, social risks in communication platforms, performance pressure in digital assessment, and physical fatigue were all described as consequences of insufficiently defined boundaries. Strengthening digital well-being therefore requires coherence, predictability, and intentional limitation.

Cross-Cutting Priorities

Educators' discussions identified several structural priorities that influence all domains of well-being. These themes form the foundation for the domain-specific recommendations presented in Table 3.

1. **Prioritize Pedagogical Justification.** Every instance of digital tool use should be grounded in clearly defined learning objectives. Technology should support teaching—not shape it by default.

Digital tools were viewed as beneficial when they enhanced visualization, practice, or differentiation, but counterproductive when used without clear added value.

2. **Maintain Balance Between Digital and Non-Digital Methods.** Pen-and-paper work, printed materials, and device-free lessons were repeatedly described as supportive of deep concentration, sustained thinking, and calm classroom environments. Maintaining parallel options—digital and non-digital—was seen as essential, particularly in assessment contexts and tasks requiring extended reading, writing, or reflection.
3. **Ensure Consistent School-Wide Structures.** Clear and consistently implemented phone-free practices were identified as one of the most effective measures for improving concentration, classroom order, and social interaction. Similarly, regulated access to digital communication platforms reduces ambiguity, prevents social risks, and strengthens predictability in everyday school life.
4. **Clarify Boundaries for Artificial Intelligence and Digital Assessment.** Uncertainty regarding AI use and digital evaluation practices was linked to stress, performance pressure, and concerns about academic integrity. Participants emphasized the need for clear guidelines that define when and how AI and digital tools may be used, particularly in assessment situations.
5. **Adopt System-Level Digital Strategies.** Inconsistent practices between classrooms or schools were seen as undermining coherence and equality. Shared municipal- or system-level strategies can reduce ambiguity, align expectations, and prevent uneven implementation of digital policies.

Across discussions, educators stressed that predictability, psychological safety, and sustained concentration are strengthened when digital practices are coherent, limited, and consistently applied. Schools were described as important balancing environments within students' broader digital lives—places where calm pacing, face-to-face interaction, and focused work can be intentionally protected.

Shared Responsibility Across Stakeholders

The focus groups highlight that digital well-being depends on coordinated action across stakeholders rather than isolated classroom decisions. Responsibility is distributed across multiple levels of the education system.

- **Policymakers** and municipalities are responsible for providing coherent frameworks, particularly regarding AI use, assessment standards, and digital conduct policies. Clear, system-level guidance reduces ambiguity, prevents unequal practices between schools, and supports educators in implementing consistent boundaries.
- **At the school level**, structural clarity is central. Consistent phone policies, clearly regulated communication platforms, defined AI guidelines, and a balanced integration of digital and traditional methods were identified as protective factors. Schools function as stabilizing environments within students' wider digital ecosystems.
- **At the classroom level**, educators are responsible for ensuring that digital tools are proportionate and pedagogically justified. Offering non-digital alternatives, structuring digital tasks carefully, and monitoring the cognitive and emotional demands of digital assessment were viewed as essential professional practices.
- **Families** play a complementary role in supporting students' self-regulation and managing cumulative screen exposure. Alignment between home and school expectations strengthens predictability and reduces conflicting messages regarding device use and online conduct.

In sum, educators' discussions indicate that digital well-being is best supported through intentional limitation, shared structures, and coordinated action. Digital tools should serve learning and well-being—never define or dominate them.

Appendix 5: Focus Group Educators Report: Greece

INTRODUCTION

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational settings by equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. WP2 focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on digital technology impacts (T2.1), SELFIE customization (T2.3),

informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6-T2.10). Focus groups are selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction among participants. They will follow SELFIE assessments in 5 schools per country, referencing results to ground discussions.

The design is semi-structured: core questions with flexible probes to adapt to group dynamics, aligned with the research template's domains and findings (e.g., positive effects like enhanced engagement via gamification; negative effects like screen addiction). This in-person approach is recommended for building social presence and addressing sensitive topics like digital isolation. Outputs will contribute to policy recommendations and dissemination activities.

This report presents the results of a national focus group conducted within the implementation process of the **DWELL project**, aiming to explore educators' and/or parents' perceptions of the impact of digital technologies on students' digital well-being across six well-being domains. The focus group contributes to **WP2 research outputs** and informs the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

Introduction of the Greek focus Groups

This section presents an overview of the organisation and implementation of the **educator focus groups** conducted in Greece within the DWELL project. To ensure broad participation and gather diverse perspectives, DIMITRA implemented a targeted outreach strategy, connecting with **150 schools across Greece** through an open call disseminated via **email campaigns**. The objective of this outreach was to invite educators to participate in the project's research activities and to ensure that feedback was gathered from different geographical regions, school contexts, and educational settings.

The aim was to obtain a representative sample of schools, both from different regions of Greece and from different types of schools, such as general education schools, experimental schools, music schools, and so on.

Prior to the focus group discussions, educators were informed and sensitised about the project and its objectives through activities carried out under **Task T2.4: Informative Visits to Schools, Attendance of Parents' Associations Meetings & Formation of Networks**. In this task, partners organised **informative**

visits to schools and participated in **meetings with educators** to explain the importance of digital well-being, outline the objectives of the DWELL project, introduce the **SELFIE tool**, and clarify the purpose of the focus groups. These sessions helped to build awareness and provided context for the discussions that followed.

This combined approach, initial awareness-raising through T2.4 activities, followed by targeted outreach via email campaigns—served to strengthen participation and ensure a high level of engagement.

As a result, **educators from 7 schools across Greece** responded to the invitation and actively participated in the focus groups. This diverse representation ensured that the findings captured a wide range of experiences and perspectives, particularly concerning the integration of digital technologies into education.

The following section outlines the **structure, format, and participant profile** of the focus groups, providing essential context to understand the scope and quality of the qualitative data collected from educators.

Focus Group Details

Focus Group Details – Educators

This section provides a comprehensive overview of the organisation and execution of the educator focus groups conducted as part of the DWELL project in Greece. The goal is to offer a clear and detailed understanding of the scope and scale of the qualitative data collected, and to ensure transparency regarding the methodology used in gathering insights from educators.

Number of Focus Groups Conducted

A total of **four (4) focus groups** were organised with **educators** across Greece. These focus groups aimed to explore educators' perspectives on the impact of digital technologies on students' well-being, the challenges of integrating technology in educational settings, and the digital competences of both students and teachers.

Number of Participants

A total of **32 educators** participated in the focus groups, with the following distribution of participants across the groups:

- **Focus Group 1:** 7 participants
- **Focus Group 2:** 9 participants
- **Focus Group 3:** 6 participants
- **Focus Group 4:** 10 participants

The gender distribution of participants was predominantly **female**, with **25 female participants** and **7 male participants**, reflecting the gender composition typically observed in the teaching profession.

Format of the Focus Groups

Given the geographical diversity and wide geographical dispersion of participants across Greece, as well as the logistical constraints associated with travel, all four focus groups were conducted online. This format allowed for the participation of educators from across Greece, including rural and remote areas, and ensured that those with scheduling difficulties could still engage in the discussions. The online format was chosen to maximize accessibility and facilitate broader participation, providing flexibility for educators to join without the need for travel.

Duration and Timeframe

Each focus group session lasted between **75 and 90 minutes**, offering ample time for in-depth discussion on the key topics related to digital well-being, digital competence, and the challenges of integrating technology into educational practice. The sessions were conducted over a period from **December 1, 2025, to February 15, 2026**, ensuring that the discussions were timely and relevant to the ongoing objectives of the DWELL project.

Participating Schools

Educators from a total of **7 schools across Greece** participated in the focus groups. These schools were selected to represent a **diverse mix of urban and rural educational contexts**, ensuring that the perspectives gathered were comprehensive and reflective of different teaching environments and technological practices. The schools varied in size and socio-economic backgrounds, adding depth to the insights gathered.

Recruitment Strategy

To engage a wide and diverse pool of educators, invitations to participate in the focus groups were sent via **email to 150 schools across Greece**. This targeted outreach was designed to reach educators from a variety of regions and school types, ensuring a representative sample. Prior to the focus groups, **T2.4 information events** were conducted to introduce the DWELL project, explain the objectives of the focus groups, and provide educators with a clear understanding of the **SELFIE tool**. These sessions helped set the context for the discussions and ensured that educators were informed and prepared to contribute meaningfully.

Summary of Focus Group Approach and Key Details:

- **Number of focus groups:** 4 (all conducted online)
- **Number of participants:** 32 (25 women, 7 men)
- **Focus group format:** Online (due to geographical constraints and scheduling flexibility)
- **Duration:** 75–90 minutes per session
- **Timeframe:** **December 1, 2025 – February 15, 2026**
- **Schools involved:** 7 schools across Greece
 - Lower Secondary School of Proastio, Karditsa
 - Larisa Experimental Lower Secondary School
 - 1st Lower Secondary School of Stavroupoli, Thessaloniki
 - 2nd Lower Secondary School of Alexandroupoli

- Lower Secondary School of Neapoli, Kozani
- 12th Lower Secondary School of Larisa
- **Outreach method:** Invitations sent to 150 schools via email
- **Pre-focus group activities:** T2.4 information events and support for using the SELFIE tool

Executive summary

Icebreaker Insights

During the icebreaker activity, educators were invited to reflect on the concept of *digital well-being* and share their initial thoughts. The majority of educators associated digital well-being with the **balanced use of technology** to enhance learning while also addressing **emotional and physical health** concerns. Key responses included the importance of **online safety**, the need for **self-regulation** in digital tool usage, and how technology should be integrated in a way that **supports both academic and personal well-being**. Educators emphasized the importance of developing **digital literacy skills** in students to ensure they use technology responsibly and effectively.

The focus group discussions revealed several key themes regarding the use of digital technologies in education and their impact on both **students' well-being** and **teachers' practices**:

- **The Challenges of Integrating Digital Tools into Lesson Planning**
*Many educators highlighted that it is **challenging and time-consuming** to incorporate digital tools into their lessons, especially when traditional textbooks are not designed for digital integration. One educator remarked, "It takes a lot of time to prepare lessons with digital tools because the curriculum is based on traditional textbooks, and they're not made for digital use." This challenge is compounded by the **lack of training** in digital lesson planning, making it difficult for educators to keep up with rapidly evolving technologies while adhering to curriculum standards.*
- **Use of Digital Tools in the Classroom**
*Educators reported that they primarily use **interactive whiteboards (διαδραστικοί πίνακες)** to display **videos, movies, and other educational resources**. This practice was praised for making lessons more engaging and enhancing student interest. One educator explained, "Using videos or*

relevant movies makes the lesson more interesting and accessible for students." However, despite the advantages of interactive digital tools, they noted that the use of digital technologies often **depends on the availability of resources and teacher familiarity with the tools.**

- Limitations Due to Lack of Devices and School Infrastructure**

Several educators pointed out that using digital tools to make lessons more **interactive** is difficult due to limitations in school infrastructure. **Smartphones are prohibited**, and the school only has a **limited number of tablets**, making it challenging to use tools like **Kahoot** effectively. One teacher remarked, "It's hard to engage students using digital tools when they're not allowed to use their phones, and we only have a few tablets to share." The lack of **digital devices and reliable infrastructure** in schools hinders the ability to create a fully interactive learning environment.
- Classroom Logistics and Time Constraints**

Educators mentioned that using **digital tools often requires changing classrooms**, especially when they need access to computers or other technology-specific spaces. This process is not only time-consuming but can also be problematic when the technology room is already in use. "It takes a lot of time to move students to a different classroom for a digital lesson, and sometimes the room is already occupied," said one educator. These logistical challenges further complicate the process of integrating technology seamlessly into teaching, particularly when the **limited availability of resources** makes it hard to schedule technology-based lessons efficiently.
- Difficulty in Maintaining Student Focus**

A recurring issue raised by educators was the growing difficulty students face in maintaining focus, especially when using digital technologies. Teachers observed that **digital distractions** are increasing, and students struggle to stay engaged with lesson content. One educator noted, "Students are getting more distracted, especially when they have their phones or other devices available. It's harder to get them to focus on the task at hand." This difficulty in maintaining focus was seen as a barrier to effective learning, with educators calling for strategies to help students **engage more deeply** in digital-based learning activities.

Analysis of Results

A. Impacts of digital technologies on student well-being across the six domains

In this section, partners should synthesise the views and experiences expressed by focus group participants regarding how digital technologies affect students' well-being. The analysis should be organised around the six domains and focus on key themes (e.g. Use of AI, gamification etc) that emerged repeatedly in the discussions. For each domain, partners should indicate whether participants perceived the impact as mainly positive, negative, or mixed, and briefly explain why. Illustrative examples or quotations may be included were helpful. Links between domains (e.g. increased screen time affecting both physical health and concentration) should be noted where these were raised by participants.

Domains	Positive (AOIs)	Negative (AOCs)	Examples (+ / -)
Cognitive	- Enhanced access to information: Digital tools provide immediate access to vast learning resources, supporting students' independent learning.- Digital literacy development: Students are acquiring important skills for the future digital workforce.- Engaging digital tools: Interactive resources such as educational videos and apps make lessons more engaging and interactive.	- Reduced concentration: Digital distractions, such as switching between tasks and applications, make it difficult for students to stay focused on lessons.- Multitasking: Using digital tools for various activities can diminish cognitive focus and lead to superficial learning.- Over-reliance on AI tools: The use of tools like ChatGPT for quick answers undermines critical thinking and problem-solving skills.	(+) "Students can quickly access relevant information online, helping them understand difficult concepts." (Focus Group 1)(-) "Students get distracted by their phones or other apps, which makes it difficult for them to focus on the lesson content." (Focus Group 3)

Emotional	- Increased confidence: Digital tools empower students to engage in self-directed learning and solve problems independently, which boosts their confidence.- Relaxation through educational content: Educational videos, games, and interactive media help students unwind while learning.	- Emotional stress: Exposure to social media and online platforms increases social comparison, leading to stress, anxiety, and reduced self-esteem.- Dependency on validation: Students often seek likes and comments for emotional validation, impacting their emotional well-being.- Anxiety and cyberbullying: Peer pressure and negative online interactions can lead to stress and emotional distress.	(+) "Using digital tools and solving problems with them boosts students' confidence." (Focus Group 2)(-) "Social media pressure makes them anxious and feel inadequate compared to peers." (Focus Group 4)
Social	- Improved communication: Digital tools enable students to stay connected with peers and engage in collaborative work.- Global connectivity: Students can connect with peers from different cultures, enriching their social and cultural understanding.	- Reduced face-to-face interaction: Excessive digital communication limits direct social interactions, reducing the development of interpersonal skills.- Social isolation: Overuse of digital tools may contribute to students' social isolation despite constant	(+) "Students can use digital platforms to collaborate on projects and stay connected with friends." (Focus Group 1)(-) "Students spend more time texting than talking to each other in person,

		online interaction.- Peer pressure and cyberbullying: Increased vulnerability to negative online behaviours.	even when they're sitting next to each other." (Focus Group 2)
Physical	- Limited positive references: Some digital apps encourage physical movement or interactive games, but these are less frequently used.	- Sedentary behaviour: Prolonged screen time leads to lack of physical activity , contributing to an overall sedentary lifestyle.- Sleep disturbances: Late-night screen use affects students' sleep patterns , leading to fatigue and reduced attention during school hours.	(-) "Students often prefer staying inside on their devices rather than engaging in physical play." (Focus Group 1)(-) "They often stay up late on screens, which affects their ability to focus the next day." (Focus Group 3)
Mental	- Exposure to diverse content: Digital tools allow students to explore new topics and broaden their horizons through educational platforms.- Mental relaxation: Games and videos can help students decompress and manage stress.	- Digital fatigue: Constant exposure to screens results in mental exhaustion and overstimulation , reducing students' ability to focus and process information effectively.- Difficulty disconnecting: Students have trouble disengaging from the digital environment, even when they need a break.	(+) "Students enjoy exploring subjects like cooking or photography through online platforms." (Focus Group 4)(-) "After spending hours on screens, students often feel mentally drained and struggle to concentrate in class." (Focus Group 2)

Behavioural	- Increased responsibility: Digital tools support self-regulation by allowing students to manage their own learning processes.- Familiarity with digital habits: Students become accustomed to using technology responsibly when guided by teachers and parents.	- Dependence on devices: Excessive use of digital tools leads to addiction, with students resisting restrictions on screen time.- Disruption of routines: Digital tools can disrupt daily routines, particularly around meals, study time, and sleep.	(+) "Digital tools help students organize their learning and take responsibility for their assignments." (Focus Group 3)(-) "Students often resist screen time limits and complain when devices are taken away." (Focus Group 4)
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A key cross-cutting issue raised across all domains was the excessive and unregulated use of digital devices. This issue affects students' physical health, emotional well-being, cognitive performance, and social skills. The integration of digital tools into education, while beneficial for providing access to resources and engagement, also introduces challenges related to attention span, mental fatigue, and emotional distress.

Several key logistical challenges, such as limited access to digital devices, school infrastructure constraints, and time-consuming preparations for digital lessons, also affect the ability to integrate technology effectively into teaching. Additionally, student focus remains a growing concern, with educators reporting that students are often distracted by their phones and other digital distractions, which hinders their ability to remain engaged in academic tasks.

B. Digital Skills Competence as identified from both Focus Groups and SELFIE tool

1. Students' Digital Competence

From the focus group discussions, it is clear that **students' levels of digital competence** significantly affect both their **learning outcomes** and **overall well-being**. However, these competences are influenced by

multiple factors, including not only **students' ability to use digital tools** but also their **access to these tools** both at school and at home.

- **Students with high digital competence:**
 - **Confidence and independence:** These students are generally **confident** in using digital tools for educational purposes, such as conducting research, completing homework, and engaging in problem-solving activities. They are able to **navigate digital learning environments** and use **technology independently**, benefiting from **self-directed learning** and the development of **critical thinking** skills.
 - **Greater engagement:** Students with high digital competence tend to be more **engaged** in digital learning activities and often pursue additional learning opportunities through **interactive tools** and **online resources**.
 - **Exposure to risks:** However, these students are **more exposed** to potential **online risks** due to their extensive use of **social media** and **other digital platforms**. Concerns were raised about **cyberbullying**, **emotional stress** caused by online comparisons, and **addiction** to screen time. Additionally, **over-reliance on digital tools** for academic work—such as using **AI-based tools** like **ChatGPT** for quick answers—could undermine **critical thinking** and **problem-solving abilities**, as students may bypass engagement with the material in favour of quick fixes.
- **Students with lower digital competence:**
 - **Struggling with basic tasks:** These students often face difficulties with essential digital tasks such as **navigating educational platforms**, using **educational software**, or conducting **online research**. This leads to **stress**, **frustration**, and a **lack of confidence** in their academic abilities.
 - **Exclusion in digital-first environments:** These students may feel **excluded** in a **technology-driven classroom** environment, where technology is frequently used for learning and social interactions. Their **academic performance** and **self-esteem** can suffer as they fall behind their more digitally fluent peers.

- **Lower engagement:** Due to their **lack of digital skills**, these students are often **less engaged** in digital learning activities, which can affect their ability to fully participate in lessons that rely on digital tools.
- **Access to Digital Tools:**
 - A significant concern raised by educators was the **lack of access to digital devices** and **reliable internet connections** for many students. In particular, **students with limited access** to technology at home often have only **smartphones** available for their educational needs. While smartphones can be useful for **basic research** or **watching educational videos**, they are not ideal for engaging with **interactive learning platforms** or performing tasks that require larger screens or specialized software.
 - **Connectivity issues** were particularly noted in **rural areas** and economically disadvantaged regions, where many students **lack reliable internet access**, which prevents them from participating fully in **online learning activities**. This **digital divide** exacerbates the **inequality** in educational opportunities, leaving some students unable to access the same learning materials as their peers.
 - **Smartphones and their limitations:** While students are highly **familiar with smartphones** and often use them for **entertainment, social media, and communication**, they generally **lack experience** in using these devices for **academic purposes**. Educators observed that students primarily use **smartphones to search for information** or to **watch videos**, but they are not typically engaging with **educational apps** or platforms that foster deeper **critical thinking** and **academic engagement**.
- **Use of ChatGPT and AI-based Tools:**
 - **Increased reliance on AI tools** such as **ChatGPT** has become a growing trend among students. Many students turn to these tools for **homework assistance**, seeking quick answers to academic questions. While these tools can be helpful for **accessing information** quickly, educators expressed concern that students may become **over-reliant** on AI, bypassing **critical analysis** and **problem-solving** processes. This could negatively impact their **critical thinking** skills,

as they may rely on AI-generated responses without fully engaging with the learning material themselves.

2. Educators' Digital Competence

The focus group findings also revealed **significant gaps** in the **digital competences of educators**, which directly impact their ability to integrate technology into their teaching practices effectively.

- **Self-assessment of educators' digital skills:**
 - According to the **SELFIE tool results**, many educators in Greece are at a **B1 (Integrator)** level of digital competence. This indicates that they can integrate digital tools into their teaching but often **struggle** to apply them systematically across their curricula. The **overall proficiency** of educators was about **42% in Teaching and Learning** and **47% in Digital Resources**, which reflects **moderate proficiency** in using digital tools for both teaching and administrative tasks.
 - While many educators are comfortable using **interactive whiteboards** and **presentation software**, they feel **less confident** in using **advanced digital tools** such as **AI-based resources, gamification platforms, or virtual collaboration tools** to engage students in more interactive and dynamic learning experiences.
- **Challenges faced by educators:**
 - The **lack of digital resources** was identified as a major barrier, with many schools having **insufficient access to digital devices**, such as **tablets, laptops, and interactive devices**. This limitation hinders educators from providing **interactive, personalized learning experiences** to students and prevents them from fully integrating technology into their lessons.
 - Additionally, **internet connectivity issues** in schools, particularly in **rural and economically disadvantaged areas**, were highlighted as a barrier to using **cloud-based platforms** or **interactive digital tools** that require reliable and fast internet connections.

3. Gaps Between Students' and Educators' Digital Competences

A significant **gap** exists between the digital competences of **students** and **educators**. While students are **digitally fluent** in their personal use of technology, such as **social media** and **smartphones**, they are **less proficient** when it comes to using digital tools for **academic purposes**. Educators, on the other hand, are generally proficient with **basic digital tools** for administrative tasks and presentations, but they often lack the skills to **integrate advanced digital tools** into their teaching and encourage **critical engagement** from students.

- **Students** are typically more proficient with **smartphones** and **social media apps**, but their digital competence for **learning purposes** is often **underdeveloped**. They rely on digital tools for quick access to information but may not engage in deeper **critical thinking** or **problem-solving** tasks.
- **Educators**, while proficient in basic digital tasks, are often **unprepared** to use **more sophisticated tools** such as **AI, gamification**, and **virtual collaboration platforms**. They struggle to create **interactive, engaging digital learning environments**, and there is a clear need for **professional development** to build these advanced digital skills.

4. Inconsistencies Between Home and School Expectations

The **disconnect between home and school expectations** regarding digital technology use emerged as a key challenge. Many **parents** are **unaware** of the **educational tools** their children use at school and often lack the **digital competence** to guide their children in using these tools effectively at home.

- **Parents**, particularly those with **limited digital literacy**, often struggle to **manage screen time, monitor digital safety**, and support their children's **educational use of technology**. This results in a **misalignment between school and home expectations**, where parents may allow **unstructured screen time**, while schools may impose **strict guidelines** on technology use during lessons.
- **Educators** emphasized the need for **greater collaboration with parents** to ensure **consistent expectations** and **support** for digital well-being, both at school and at home. They also highlighted the importance of **parental training** on **digital tools, privacy settings**, and **safe online practices** to help bridge the gap.

The findings from both the **focus groups** and the **SELFIE tool** underscore the need for a **comprehensive strategy** to improve **digital competences** across both **students** and **educators**. While students are generally more **digitally fluent** in personal use, they struggle with using technology for **educational purposes**. Educators, although proficient in **basic digital tools**, face significant challenges in integrating **advanced technologies** into their teaching practices. The **digital divide**, **limited access to devices**, and **internet connectivity issues** exacerbate the challenges faced by students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

A **holistic approach** involving **professional development for educators**, **digital literacy initiatives for parents**, and **improved access to digital resources** is necessary to create a **healthy digital environment** for students and support their **overall well-being**.

C. School policies or classroom tools

1. Digital Well-being Education and Awareness Programs

- Integrating digital well-being into the curriculum: A recurring suggestion was the need to incorporate digital well-being education into the formal curriculum. Educators recommended introducing specific lessons on digital literacy, responsible digital use, and the emotional impact of technology. Many participants suggested creating workshops or dedicated time during lessons to teach students how to use technology in a healthy and balanced way, addressing topics like cyberbullying, online privacy, and screen time management.
- Example: One educator suggested, “We should introduce a unit on digital resilience to help students understand how to manage online risks and deal with the emotional pressures of social media.”

2. Digital Citizenship and Responsible Technology Use

- Promoting digital citizenship: Another common recommendation was to foster digital citizenship among students. This includes teaching students not only how to navigate digital tools but also how to behave responsibly online. Rules on appropriate online conduct, such as the importance

of respecting others in digital environments, were seen as essential for improving students' social well-being.

- Example: An educator noted, “We need to teach students that being responsible online means treating others with respect, protecting privacy, and being mindful of what they share.”

3. Setting Clear Guidelines on Screen Time and Technology Use

- Implementing school-wide policies on screen time: Educators suggested that schools should implement clear, school-wide policies to regulate the use of technology and set boundaries on screen time. Many educators stressed the importance of balancing digital and offline activities. For example, some suggested setting rules to ensure that students have breaks from screens during school hours and that screen time is limited to academic-related tasks.
- Example: "We have introduced a no-phone policy during class, and students are only allowed to use tablets for academic purposes, which has helped minimize distractions." (Focus Group 2)

4. Use of Interactive and Engaging Digital Tools

- Incorporating interactive digital tools: Educators emphasized the use of interactive and engaging digital tools such as interactive whiteboards (διαδραστικοί πίνακες), gamification platforms (e.g., Kahoot), and educational apps to make lessons more engaging and stimulating for students. The idea is to make learning more dynamic and student-centered, helping students remain focused and motivated. However, many educators also pointed out the need for training in advanced tools and innovative digital resources.
- Example: One educator shared, “Kahoot and similar platforms work well to engage students and make the lesson fun. However, it's challenging because not all students have access to smartphones or tablets at school, so we need more equitable access to technology.”

5. Parent and Family Guidance on Digital Well-being

- Providing guidance for parents: Several educators stressed the need for family support in managing digital well-being. They suggested that schools should offer parental workshops or information sessions on how to help children use technology responsibly at home. This includes

setting screen time limits, monitoring social media use, and encouraging offline activities. Additionally, they highlighted the importance of coordinating school policies with parental expectations to ensure consistency between home and school environments.

- Example: “We’ve started sending out newsletters with digital well-being tips for parents, including how to have conversations about screen time and how to monitor their child’s online activity without being intrusive.” (Focus Group 4)

6. Professional Development and Support for Educators

- Training educators in digital well-being: Educators pointed out the importance of ongoing professional development to help teachers stay up-to-date with digital tools and best practices in digital well-being. Many educators felt that they lacked the knowledge and skills to fully integrate technology into their lessons while maintaining a focus on student well-being. They requested more structured training and resources on how to use digital tools effectively, manage online classrooms, and balance screen time.
- Example: “We need more workshops that help us learn how to use digital tools creatively to engage students and teach them digital responsibility. We also need guidance on how to keep them from becoming too dependent on digital resources.”

7. Peer-to-Peer Learning and Collaboration

- Promoting collaborative learning through technology: Some educators suggested creating peer learning opportunities where students collaborate digitally on projects, share resources, and discuss topics related to digital well-being. This not only enhances digital skills but also fosters a sense of community and responsibility among students.
- Example: “In our school, we have set up digital collaboration spaces where students can work together on projects. This not only improves their digital competence but also helps them support each other in developing positive digital habits.”

8. School Infrastructure and Resource Allocation

- Improving access to devices: A significant number of educators pointed out that the lack of access to digital devices and reliable internet hinders their ability to fully integrate digital tools into the classroom. Suggestions included investing in more devices, creating technology hubs, and ensuring stable internet access for all students to ensure equitable access to digital learning opportunities.
- Example: “Our school is planning to allocate funds specifically for acquiring more tablets and laptops, ensuring every student has access to the technology they need to participate in digital lessons.”

9. Emotional and Psychological Support for Students

- Creating spaces for emotional well-being: Some educators emphasized the need for schools to create safe digital spaces where students can discuss online issues like cyberbullying or stress related to digital life. These spaces could help students navigate emotional challenges they may face as a result of their online activities and digital engagement.
- Example: "We've set up a digital well-being club where students can talk about their experiences online, share concerns, and get support from counselors and teachers."

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

The focus group discussions provided valuable insights into the current state of digital technology use in Greek schools and its impact on students' well-being across six domains. Below are the overall patterns and key messages that emerged from these discussions:

1. Overall Patterns and Key Messages

- Digital technologies are increasingly integrated into education, offering both positive and negative impacts on students' well-being. While many educators and students recognize the engagement and learning benefits digital tools provide, there are growing concerns about overuse, emotional strain, and physical inactivity associated with excessive screen time.

- Student digital competence is divided: students with higher digital skills show greater confidence and engagement but are also more exposed to online risks. Meanwhile, students with lower digital competence often feel excluded and struggle with stress and academic challenges.
- Educators' digital competence is generally moderate, with many educators feeling confident in using basic tools but struggling with the systematic integration of more advanced technologies, such as AI, gamification, and collaborative platforms. The lack of professional development and limited resources were seen as barriers to enhancing their teaching practices.
- Access to digital tools is a key issue. Many students face inequitable access to devices and reliable internet at home, leading to a digital divide that limits some students' participation in digital learning activities.
- Home and school expectations about digital technology use are often misaligned, creating confusion for students, parents, and educators regarding appropriate screen time and digital safety practices.

2. Impact of Digital Technologies on Student Well-being Across the Six Domains

- Cognitive
Well-being:

The impact of digital technologies on students' cognitive well-being is mixed. While digital tools support access to information and enhance learning opportunities, they also lead to reduced attention and multitasking, which affects students' ability to focus and engage deeply with content. The use of AI-based tools like ChatGPT has raised concerns about students' over-reliance on these tools, which may undermine critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.
- Emotional
Well-being:

The emotional impact is predominantly negative, with increased exposure to online stressors such as cyberbullying, social media pressure, and emotional dependency on digital validation (likes, comments). While digital tools can enhance confidence when students master new technologies, the pressure to maintain an online image and constant connectivity can contribute to stress, anxiety, and low self-esteem.

- Social
Well-being:

The impact on social well-being is mixed. Digital tools foster communication and help students maintain social connections outside of school hours, yet they contribute to reduced face-to-face interaction. Preference for online communication over direct interaction limits the development of interpersonal communication skills, potentially leading to social isolation despite being constantly connected online.
- Physical
Well-being:

The physical impact of digital technology is mostly negative, as excessive screen time leads to sedentary behaviour, eye strain, and sleep disturbances. While some educators attempt to incorporate active learning tools, such as digital games or videos, the lack of physical activity and disrupted sleep patterns are growing concerns that affect students' overall health.
- Mental
Well-being:

The mental impact is largely negative, with digital fatigue, overstimulation, and difficulty disconnecting from digital devices becoming more prevalent. While digital content can offer relaxation and mental stimulation, prolonged exposure to screens has led to mental exhaustion and inability to focus for extended periods.
- Behavioural Well-being:

In terms of behaviour, the use of digital tools has both positive and negative effects. On the positive side, students develop digital habits and independence in learning. However, overuse of technology results in dependency on devices, and students often resist screen time limits. Additionally, disruptions to daily routines caused by constant digital engagement have been noted, with students frequently checking devices during family time or school hours.

Cross-cutting Issues

A significant cross-cutting issue identified across multiple domains was the excessive screen time. Excessive use of digital devices was found to influence emotional well-being, physical health, cognitive performance, and mental focus. Inadequate access to digital devices and internet connectivity issues were

further barriers, particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas, limiting equal participation in digital learning

Recommendations:

Based on the conclusions from the focus group discussions, the following practical and realistic recommendations are proposed to strengthen digital well-being across the six domains. These recommendations reflect participants' suggestions, needs, and concerns, with an emphasis on actionable strategies for schools, educators, parents, and policymakers.

1. Cognitive Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- **Promote critical thinking and problem-solving** through digital tools rather than relying on AI for quick answers.

Actions:

- Encourage **active learning** strategies that require **student engagement**, such as **collaborative digital projects** and **research-based tasks**.
- Limit the use of AI tools like **ChatGPT** for basic homework solutions and promote their use as **supplementary tools** rather than as primary resources.

Focus Areas:

- Schools should introduce **digital literacy workshops** to help students develop independent learning skills and avoid over-reliance on technology for answers.
- **Parents** should be provided with resources to **monitor digital tool usage** and support students in developing a **critical approach** to online information.

2. Emotional Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Address **emotional stress** caused by **social media pressure** and **cyberbullying**.

Actions:

- Schools should implement **digital well-being programs** that address emotional and mental health, focusing on topics like **online safety**, **managing screen time**, and **building resilience**.
- **Parental workshops** should be organized to **raise awareness** about the emotional impact of digital technology on students and teach strategies for managing **screen time** and fostering **emotional regulation**.

Focus Areas:

- Encourage **balanced use of digital tools** at home by setting **family screen time limits** and ensuring students have access to **offline activities** that promote emotional well-being.

3. Social Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Foster **face-to-face communication** while still utilizing **digital tools** for learning.

Actions:

- Schools should integrate **collaborative digital activities** that promote **peer-to-peer interaction** both online and offline.
- **Educators** should encourage **classroom discussions** and **group activities** that require **real-world social interactions** to complement digital communication.

Focus Areas:

- **Parents** can set expectations around **offline socialization** and encourage **in-person activities** like sports or social clubs.

4. Physical Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Combat **sedentary behaviour** caused by prolonged screen time.

Actions:

- Schools should introduce **active learning sessions** where digital tools are paired with **physical activity** (e.g., using educational apps that require movement).
- Encourage **breaks from screens** during lessons to reduce **eye strain** and promote **physical health**.

Focus Areas:

- **Parents** can encourage students to engage in **physical activities** outside school, balancing digital engagement with regular **outdoor play** and **sports**.

5. Mental Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Reduce **digital fatigue** and help students manage **screen time** effectively.

Actions:

- Introduce **mindfulness** and **mental health awareness programs** within the school curriculum, integrating lessons on managing **digital stress** and promoting **mindful digital engagement**.
- Schools can set **time limits** on continuous screen usage during lessons to prevent **overstimulation** and ensure breaks for mental rest.

Focus Areas:

- **Parents** should establish routines to limit **screen time** at home, encouraging students to **disconnect** after a set period.

6. Behavioural Well-being

Priority Areas for Improvement:

- Address **dependency on digital devices** and promote **self-regulation**.

Actions:

- Educators should **model positive digital habits** in the classroom, such as **taking breaks** and using technology in moderation.
- **Parental support** in setting **clear boundaries** around digital device usage at home is crucial in fostering responsible behaviour.

Focus Areas:

- **Parents and schools** should work together to establish **consistent rules** around technology use, reinforcing healthy **digital habits**.

Appendix 6: Focus Group Educators Report: Bulgaria

INTRODUCTION

The DWELL project addresses digital well-being in European educational settings by equipping educators, parents, and stakeholders with tools to promote healthy digital habits. Work Package 2 (WP2) focuses on research and data collection, including a literature review on digital technology impacts (T2.1), SELFIE customization (T2.3), informative visits to schools and parents' associations (T2.4), and focus groups (T2.6–T2.10).

Focus groups were selected as a qualitative method to explore perceptions, experiences, and concerns, allowing for dynamic interaction among participants. These sessions followed SELFIE assessments conducted in five schools per country, using the results to ground discussions.

The design of the focus groups was semi-structured, combining core questions with flexible probes to adapt to group dynamics. The discussions were aligned with the research template's domains and findings, including both positive effects (e.g. enhanced engagement through gamification) and negative effects (e.g. screen addiction). This approach supported meaningful dialogue on sensitive topics such as digital isolation while strengthening social presence among participants.

This report presents the results of five focus groups conducted in Bulgaria within the DWELL project. The aim was to explore educators' perceptions of the impact of digital technologies on students' digital well-being across six well-being domains. The findings contribute to WP2 research outputs and inform the development of the DWELL framework, capacity-building activities, and policy recommendations.

FOCUS GROUP DETAILS

#	Date	Number of participants	Format	Facilitator	Duration
1	27.11.2025	7	Face-to-face	Vassil Simeonov	2 hours
2	27.11.2025	6	Face-to-face	Bianka Ivanova	2 hours
3	27.11.2025	7	Face-to-face	Admira Boshnyaku	2 hours
4	27.11.2025	7	Face-to-face	Zlatka Ivanova	2 hours
5	02.12.2025	5	Face-to-face	Julia Arabadzhieva	1hr 45min

In total, 32 teachers from 18 schools participated. The participants included ICT teachers, language teachers, STEM teachers, school psychologists, principals, and representatives of Regional Educational Inspectorates.

Participating schools included a mix of public and private institutions in Sofia and surrounding areas, as well as national-level bodies such as the National Education Inspectorate.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across all five focus groups, educators consistently associated digital well-being with maintaining a healthy balance between screen time and offline life, protecting students' focus and emotional health, and fostering the ability to disconnect from digital tools without anxiety. They also emphasized the importance of helping students think critically about online content.

However, digital well-being was perceived as a broad and inconsistently defined concept, with many educators calling for clearer, more practical definitions aligned with classroom realities.

Teachers reported extensive use of digital tools, including learning management systems (Google Classroom, Moodle, Microsoft Teams), interactive whiteboards, tablets, and video-based platforms such as YouTube. Gamified tools such as Kahoot!, Quizizz, Quizlet, Mentimeter, Slido, and Edpuzzle were widely used to increase engagement.

Key discussion points included:

- Digital tools enhance lesson structure, engagement, differentiation, and learning continuity.
- Excessive and unstructured use leads to attention decline, emotional desensitisation, and exposure to risks such as cyberbullying.
- Constant digital stimulation affects students' expectations, behaviour, and communication styles.
- Differences in digital competence among students and teachers impact participation and outcomes.
- Digital well-being requires structured methodologies, training, and policies—not just access to devices.
- The focus should shift from restriction to developing self-regulation, critical thinking, and resilience.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

A. Impacts of Digital Technologies Across the Six Domains

Educators reported a **mixed impact** of digital technologies across all domains. Positive outcomes occur when technologies are used purposefully and pedagogically, while negative effects are associated with excessive or unstructured use.

Emotional Domain

Positive: increased motivation, engagement, self-expression, and healthy competition.

Negative: anxiety, emotional dependency, irritability, and rapid emotional shifts.

Behavioural Domain

Positive: improved routines, organisation, participation, and collaboration.

Negative: impulsivity, distraction, reduced attention span, and preference for simplified content.

Psychological Domain

Positive: improved self-assessment, sense of competence, and belonging.

Negative: addiction, social withdrawal, reduced empathy, and difficulty self-regulating.

Social Domain

Positive: enhanced communication, collaboration, and inclusion.

Negative: cyberbullying, reduced face-to-face skills, social withdrawal, and poor communication habits.

Physical Domain

Positive: increased awareness of health and use of fitness tools.

Negative: eye strain, poor posture, sleep disruption, and sedentary behaviour.

Cognitive Domain

Positive: improved problem-solving, creativity, and engagement.

Negative: reduced deep thinking, cognitive overload, and superficial learning.

A key finding was that **content quality and usage patterns**, rather than technology itself, determine outcomes.

Domains	Positive (AOIs)	Negative (AOCs)	Examples/Links with domains
Emotional	Increased motivation and engagement through gamified tasks, quizzes, and interactive tools; curiosity and enjoyment in learning; mentorship-style or inspirational videos boost self-esteem; healthy competition fosters excitement and achievement; greater ease of self-expression.	Anxiety and stress when separated from devices; emotional dependency on digital tools; irritability and mood swings; emotional acceleration (rapid shift from enthusiasm to frustration); reduced appreciation for effort; demotivation when activities are passive.	Gamified quizzes boost engagement, but excessive notifications and rapid content streams increase emotional overload and irritability (links to <i>behavioral and cognitive domains</i>).
Behavioural	Gamified tasks and organization apps support routine-building, homework completion, and strategic thinking; increased focus during interactive lessons; enhanced collaboration and group dynamics; imitation of positive examples online.	Impulsivity and frequent task-switching due to notifications; shortened attention span and impatience; preference for bite-sized content; hyperactivity and restlessness; reduced face-to-face communication.	Micro-interruptions reduce sustained concentration and focus, affecting <i>cognitive performance and social interactions</i> .

Psychological	Reflective portfolios and short form targeted videos enhance self-assessment, planning, problem-solving, and strategic thinking; stronger sense of competence and mastery of digital tools; feeling of belonging to online communities; exposure to inspirational content promotes self-improvement, empathy, and motivation.	Digital addiction (doomscrolling, gaming); social withdrawal; unrealistic self-perception from online gaming; reduced empathy and low emotional intelligence; heightened inner tension and fear of rejection; difficulty self-regulating and tolerating boredom.	Prolonged uncontrolled content consumption affects both mental health and emotional stability; online communities can foster belonging but also risk social anxiety (links to <i>social and emotional domains</i>).
Social	Digital collaboration tools enable equitable participation; increased confidence among socially anxious students; online groups and platforms allow peer connection and learning; teacher-student communication enhanced via messaging; formation of interest-based friendships; sustained connection during crises.	Cyberbullying, online shaming, disrespectful behavior; overuse of slang reducing vocabulary richness; decline in face-to-face interaction skills; social withdrawal if connections remain virtual only; over-competitiveness and poor netiquette; reduced group cohesion in class.	Online communication strengthens belonging but can weaken live interaction skills and verbal expression, affecting <i>cognitive and emotional domains</i> .

Physical	Movement-break apps, guided exercises, fitness content, video-led PE activities, and wearables encourage physical activity; motivation for healthy habits, diet, and self-care; improved awareness of posture and movement.	Sleep deprivation due to late-night screen use; eye strain, back pain, poor posture; sedentary lifestyle and body image concerns; chronic tiredness and decreased alertness.	Excessive evening screen use affects both physical health and concentration, linking to <i>cognitive and emotional well-being</i> .
Cognitive	Improved problem-solving, concept understanding, knowledge retention; creative stimulation through content creation; interdisciplinary thinking; opportunities for self-testing and active engagement rather than passive consumption; vocabulary enrichment (especially in foreign languages).	Shortened attention span; reduced deep reading and reasoning; weakened critical thinking; surface-level processing; cognitive overload from excessive visual stimuli or notifications; poor vocabulary and weak self-expression.	Microcontent, fast-paced digital media, and multi-tasking reduce sustained focus, <i>affecting cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains</i> .

B. Digital Skills Competence

Teachers generally reported strong digital competence, supported by SELFIE results indicating a **B2 (Expert) level**. They demonstrated confidence in using digital tools for teaching, assessment, and communication.

However, gaps remain:

- Lower scores in **digital well-being competence**
- Need for structured methodologies and guidance
- Variability in ability to support student digital competence

Students' outcomes were strongly linked to their level of digital literacy:

- High competence → better performance and engagement
- Low competence → risk of exclusion and lower well-being

C. School Policies and Classroom Practices

Educators highlighted several key needs:

- Balanced lesson design combining digital and offline activities
- Access to high-quality, subject-specific digital content
- Continuous professional development for teachers
- Algorithm literacy education for students
- Stronger school–parent collaboration
- Improved infrastructure and equal access to technology
- Establishment of digital wellbeing coordinators

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Digital technologies have a dual impact on student well-being. When used intentionally and with guidance, they enhance engagement, learning, and social connection. However, unstructured or excessive use negatively affects emotional, cognitive, social, and physical well-being.

Key conclusions:

- Technology is neutral; impact depends on use and guidance

- Content quality is a critical factor
- Teacher competence significantly influences outcomes
- Digital inequalities affect student well-being
- Structured support and policies are essential

Cross-cutting issues include:

- Excessive screen time affecting multiple domains
- Gaps in digital skills among students
- Negative effects of unstructured content
- Need for coordinated school-home strategies

Recommendations

Emotional Well-being

- Introduce balanced “digital rhythm” lessons
- Promote emotional self-regulation strategies
- Develop digital well-being curricula

Behavioural Well-being

- Encourage structured and purposeful technology use
- Promote healthy routines and reduce distractions

Psychological Well-being

- Introduce algorithm literacy education
- Provide teacher training on digital well-being
- Support parental guidance on content consumption

Social Well-being

- Promote digital etiquette and citizenship
- Prevent cyberbullying through awareness and education
- Strengthen parent-child communication

Physical Health

- Encourage movement breaks and offline activities
- Promote healthy sleep habits and ergonomic practices

Cognitive Well-being

- Use interactive and engaging digital tools
- Promote deep learning and critical thinking
- Support access to high-quality educational content

Cross-cutting Recommendations

- Provide continuous teacher training in digital pedagogy
- Address infrastructure inequalities between schools
- Appoint digital well-being coordinators
- Strengthen home–school collaboration
- Support participation in initiatives such as DWELL

Appendix 7: SELFIE REPORTS

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Group: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Bulgaria

Group description: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Education sector: School education (primary and secondary)

Group creator: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Group coordinators: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Zlatka Ivanova, Admira Boshnyaku, Myrianthi Karantona

Reflection date: 20/11/2025 - 17/02/2026

Number of participants: 10

Note: Participants will only be counted if they agreed to share their data

Thank you for using SELFIEforTEACHERS!

This report gives you the overall results from the group.

Based on this report you can plan the next steps and learning pathways for your group.

Group results

Overall results

(percentage of total score)



Results by area

(percentage of total score in each area)

Area 1 - Professional Engagement

B2



Area 2 - Digital Resources

B2



Area 3 - Teaching and Learning

B2



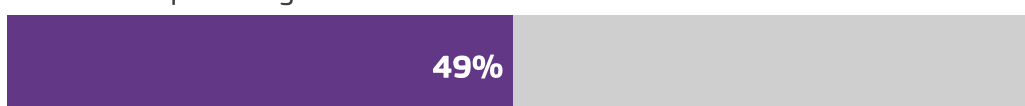
Area 4 - Assessment

B2



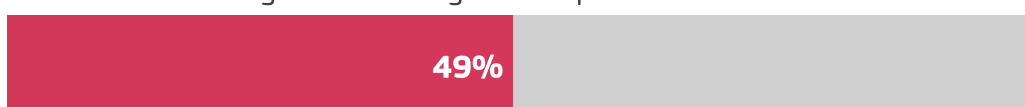
Area 5 - Empowering Learners

B1



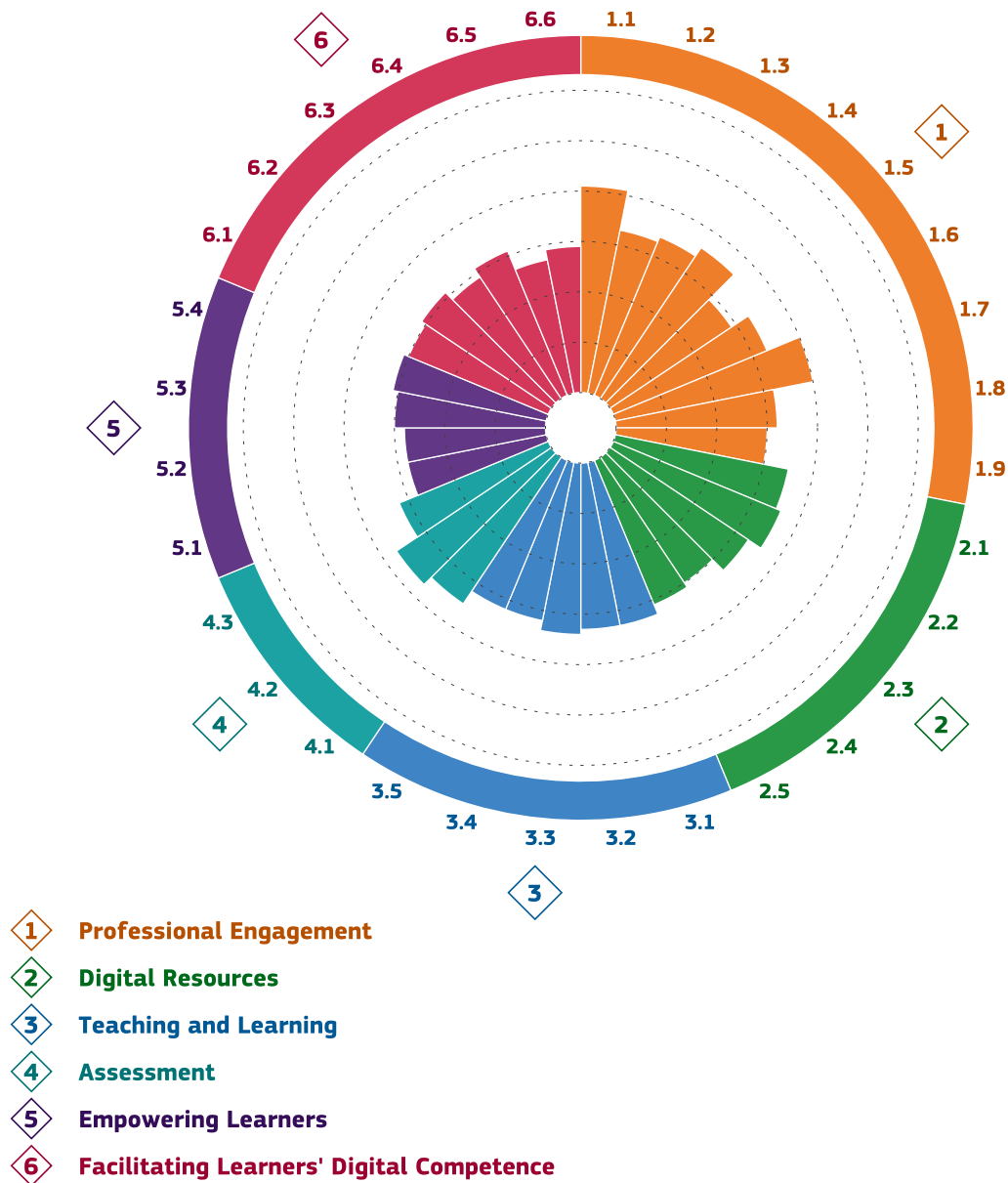
Area 6 - Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence

B1



Results by item

(points received out of a maximum 6 for each item)



Proficiency levels explained

Newcomer (A1)

You are aware of how digital technologies can support and enhance your professional practice. The feedback you get from this self-reflection has identified a number of actions you can try. Select one or two to plan your next learning pathway, focusing on meaningfully enhancing your teaching strategies. As you do so, you'll find yourself moving to the next step of digital competence, the Explorer level.

Explorer (A2)

You have started exploring the potential of digital technologies and are interested in using them in order to enhance pedagogical and professional practice. You have tried using digital technologies in some areas and will benefit from more consistent use. You can increase your competence by using digital technologies in various contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into many of your practices. This will move you to the next step of digital competence, the Integrator level.

Integrator (B1)

You experiment with digital technologies in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into your practices. You creatively use them to enhance diverse aspects of your professional engagement. You are eager to expand your repertoire of practices. You will benefit by increasing your understanding about which tools work best in which situations and on fitting digital technologies to pedagogic strategies and methods. Try to give yourself some more time for reflection and adaptation, complemented by collaborative encouragement and knowledge exchange, to reach the next step, Expert.

Expert (B2)

You use a range of digital technologies confidently, creatively and critically to enhance your professional activities. You purposefully select digital technologies for particular situations, and try to understand the benefits and drawbacks of different digital strategies. You are curious and open to new ideas, knowing that there are many things you have not tried out yet. You use experimentation and reflection as a means of redesigning, expanding, structuring and consolidating your repertoire of strategies. Share your expertise with other teachers and continue critically developing your digital strategies to reach the Leader level.

Leader (C1)

You have a consistent and comprehensive approach to using digital technologies to enhance pedagogic and professional practices. You rely on a broad repertoire of digital strategies from which you know how to choose the most appropriate for any given situation. You continuously reflect on and further develop your practices. Exchanging with peers, you keep updated on new developments and ideas and help other teachers seize the potential of digital technologies for enhancing teaching and learning. If you are ready to experiment a bit more, engaging students in expanding the potential of digital technologies at school level and beyond, you'll be able to reach an ultimate stage of competence, as a Pioneer.

Pioneer (C2)

You critically reflect on the adequacy of contemporary digital and pedagogical practices, in which you are a Leader. You are concerned about the constraints or drawbacks of these practices and driven by the impulse to innovate education even further. You experiment with highly innovative and complex digital technologies and/or develop novel pedagogical approaches. You lead innovation in your school and are a role model for other teachers. You expand your practices beyond the school community and engage stakeholders for further developments. Continue to be open to new ideas and keep up with the continuous technological and pedagogical advances to enhance your creative and innovative solutions.

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Group: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Cyprus

Group description: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Education sector: School education (primary and secondary)

Group creator: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Group coordinators: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Myrianthi Karantona

Reflection date: 24/11/2025 - 20/02/2026

Number of participants: 10

Note: Participants will only be counted if they agreed to share their data

Thank you for using SELFIEforTEACHERS!

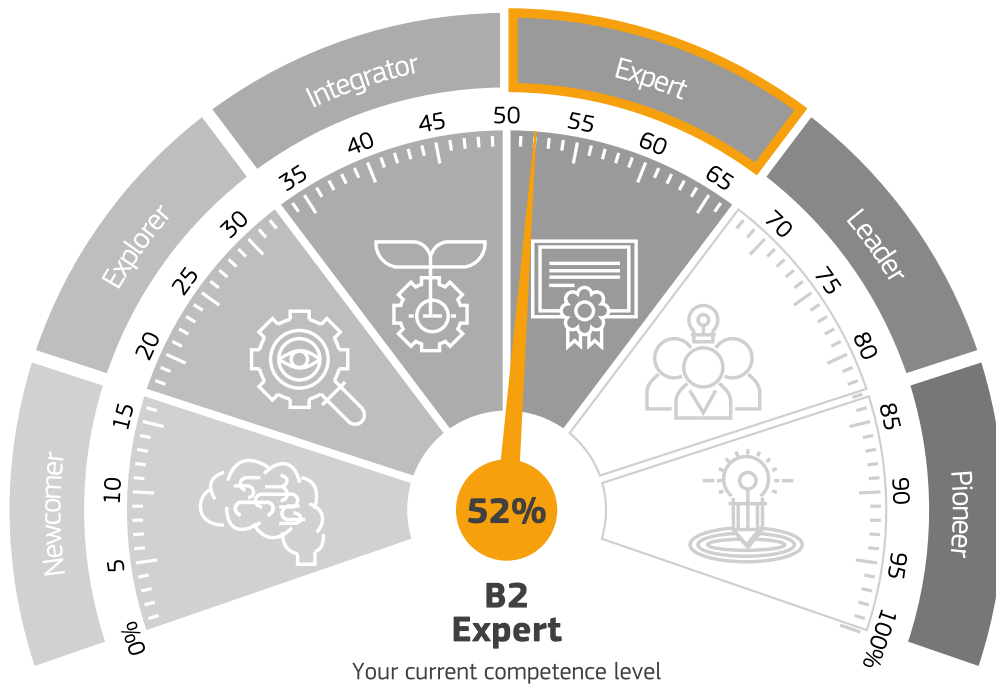
This report gives you the overall results from the group.

Based on this report you can plan the next steps and learning pathways for your group.

Group results

Overall results

(percentage of total score)



Results by area

(percentage of total score in each area)

Area 1 - Professional Engagement

B2



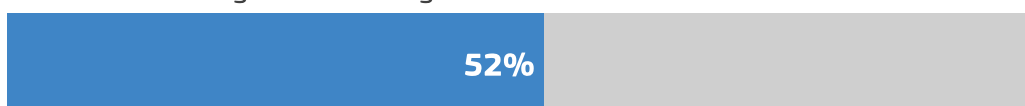
Area 2 - Digital Resources

B2



Area 3 - Teaching and Learning

B2



Area 4 - Assessment

B1



Area 5 - Empowering Learners

B1



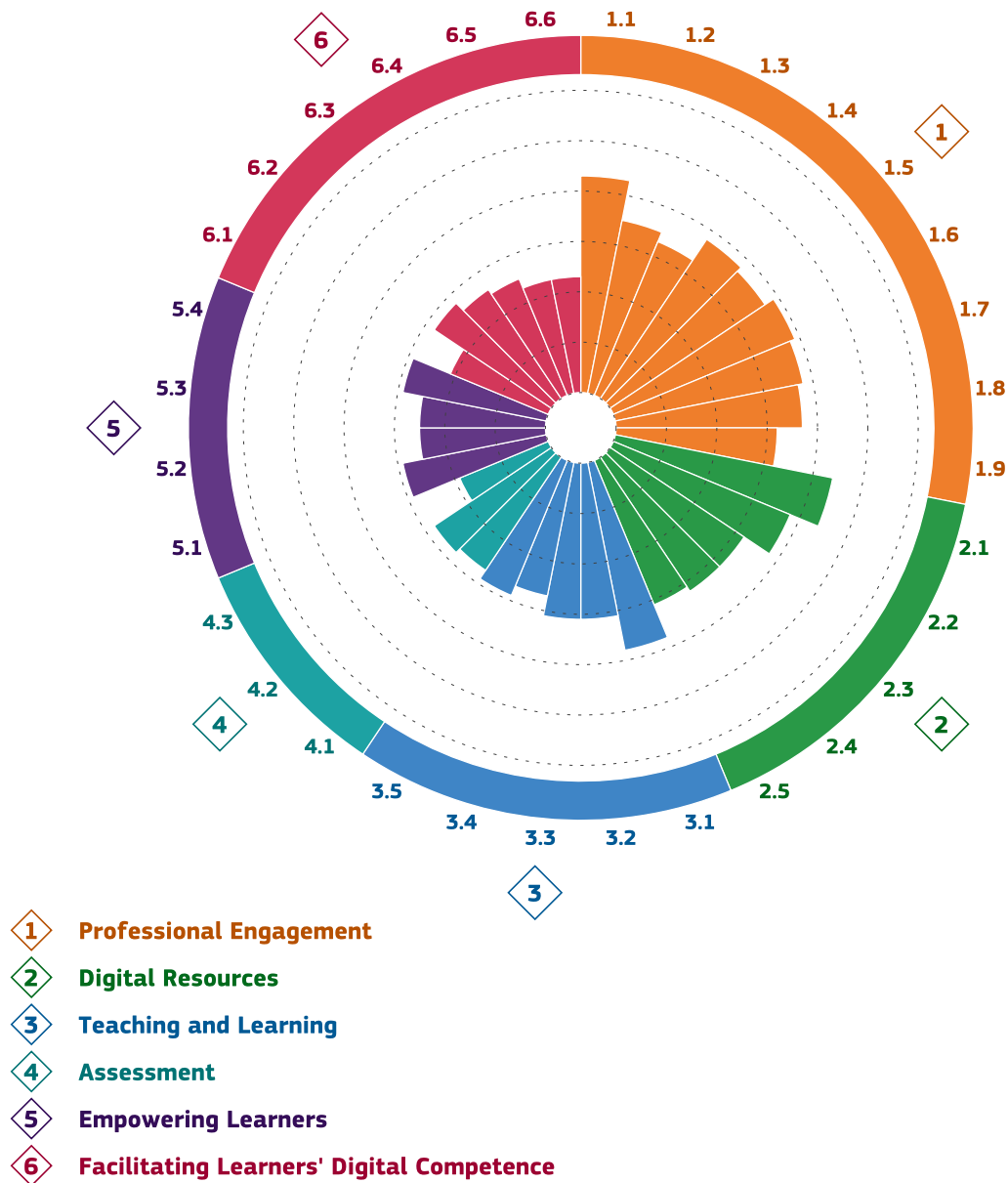
Area 6 - Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence

B1



Results by item

(points received out of a maximum 6 for each item)



Proficiency levels explained

Newcomer (A1)

You are aware of how digital technologies can support and enhance your professional practice. The feedback you get from this self-reflection has identified a number of actions you can try. Select one or two to plan your next learning pathway, focusing on meaningfully enhancing your teaching strategies. As you do so, you'll find yourself moving to the next step of digital competence, the Explorer level.

Explorer (A2)

You have started exploring the potential of digital technologies and are interested in using them in order to enhance pedagogical and professional practice. You have tried using digital technologies in some areas and will benefit from more consistent use. You can increase your competence by using digital technologies in various contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into many of your practices. This will move you to the next step of digital competence, the Integrator level.

Integrator (B1)

You experiment with digital technologies in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into your practices. You creatively use them to enhance diverse aspects of your professional engagement. You are eager to expand your repertoire of practices. You will benefit by increasing your understanding about which tools work best in which situations and on fitting digital technologies to pedagogic strategies and methods. Try to give yourself some more time for reflection and adaptation, complemented by collaborative encouragement and knowledge exchange, to reach the next step, Expert.

Expert (B2)

You use a range of digital technologies confidently, creatively and critically to enhance your professional activities. You purposefully select digital technologies for particular situations, and try to understand the benefits and drawbacks of different digital strategies. You are curious and open to new ideas, knowing that there are many things you have not tried out yet. You use experimentation and reflection as a means of redesigning, expanding, structuring and consolidating your repertoire of strategies. Share your expertise with other teachers and continue critically developing your digital strategies to reach the Leader level.

Leader (C1)

You have a consistent and comprehensive approach to using digital technologies to enhance pedagogic and professional practices. You rely on a broad repertoire of digital strategies from which you know how to choose the most appropriate for any given situation. You continuously reflect on and further develop your practices. Exchanging with peers, you keep updated on new developments and ideas and help other teachers seize the potential of digital technologies for enhancing teaching and learning. If you are ready to experiment a bit more, engaging students in expanding the potential of digital technologies at school level and beyond, you'll be able to reach an ultimate stage of competence, as a Pioneer.

Pioneer (C2)

You critically reflect on the adequacy of contemporary digital and pedagogical practices, in which you are a Leader. You are concerned about the constraints or drawbacks of these practices and driven by the impulse to innovate education even further. You experiment with highly innovative and complex digital technologies and/or develop novel pedagogical approaches. You lead innovation in your school and are a role model for other teachers. You expand your practices beyond the school community and engage stakeholders for further developments. Continue to be open to new ideas and keep up with the continuous technological and pedagogical advances to enhance your creative and innovative solutions.

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Group: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Finland '26

Group description: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Education sector: School education (primary and secondary)

Group creator: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Group coordinators: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Myrianthi Karantona, Marianne Laurila

Reflection date: 17/03/2026 - 31/05/2026

Number of participants: 10

Note: Participants will only be counted if they agreed to share their data

Thank you for using SELFIEforTEACHERS!

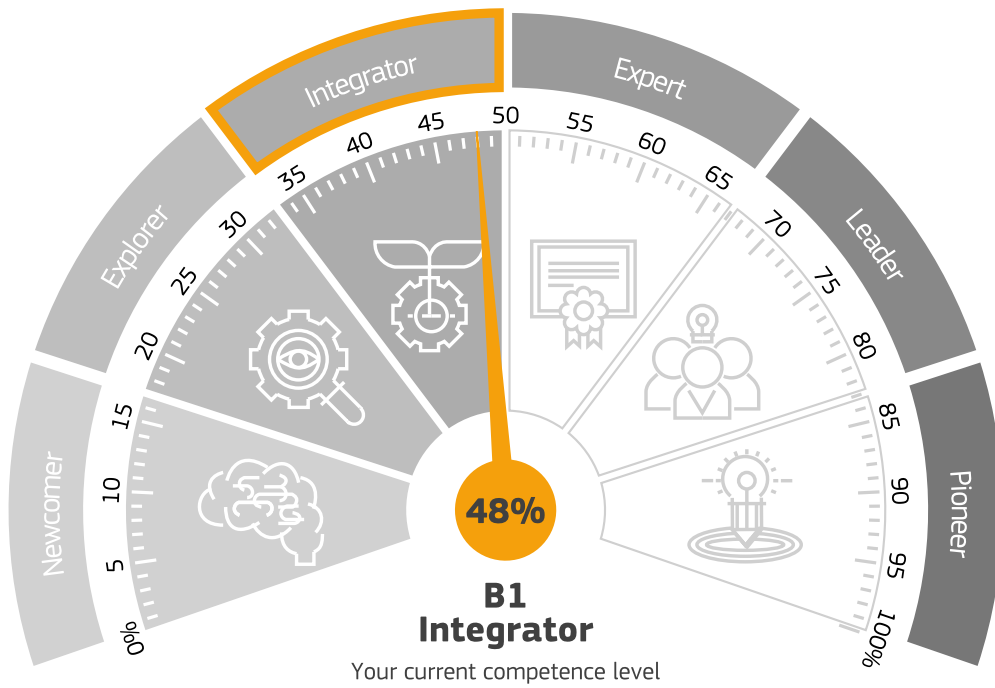
This report gives you the overall results from the group.

Based on this report you can plan the next steps and learning pathways for your group.

Group results

Overall results

(percentage of total score)



Results by area

(percentage of total score in each area)

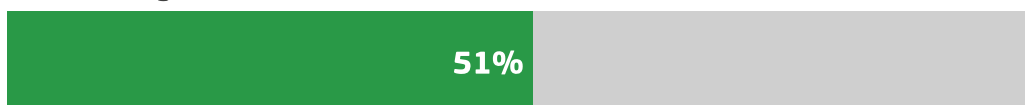
Area 1 - Professional Engagement



B2



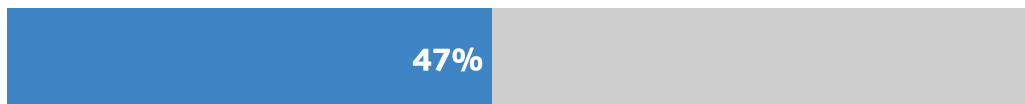
Area 2 - Digital Resources



B2



Area 3 - Teaching and Learning



B1



Area 4 - Assessment



B1



Area 5 - Empowering Learners



B1



Area 6 - Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence

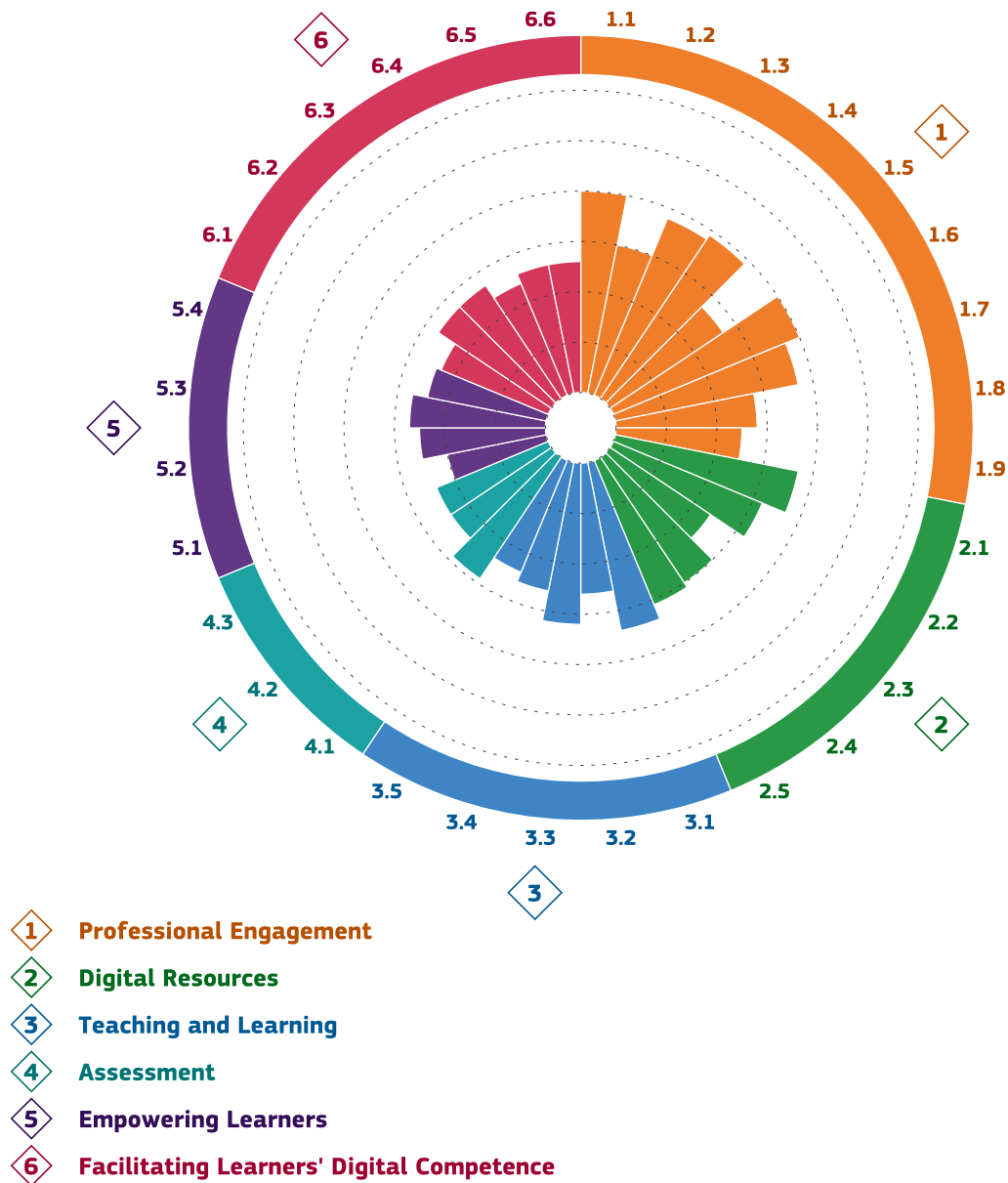


B1



Results by item

(points received out of a maximum 6 for each item)



Proficiency levels explained

Newcomer (A1)

You are aware of how digital technologies can support and enhance your professional practice. The feedback you get from this self-reflection has identified a number of actions you can try. Select one or two to plan your next learning pathway, focusing on meaningfully enhancing your teaching strategies. As you do so, you'll find yourself moving to the next step of digital competence, the Explorer level.

Explorer (A2)

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Integrator (B1)

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Expert (B2)

You use a range of digital technologies confidently, creatively and critically to enhance your professional activities. You purposefully select digital technologies for particular situations, and try to understand the benefits and drawbacks of different digital strategies. You are curious and open to new ideas, knowing that there are many things you have not tried out yet. You use experimentation and reflection as a means of redesigning, expanding, structuring and consolidating your repertoire of strategies. Share your expertise with other teachers and continue critically developing your digital strategies to reach the Leader level.

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Pioneer (C2)

You critically reflect on the adequacy of contemporary digital and pedagogical practices, in which you are a Leader. You are concerned about the constraints or drawbacks of these practices and driven by the impulse to innovate education even further. You experiment with highly innovative and complex digital technologies and/or develop novel pedagogical approaches. You lead innovation in your school and are a role model for other teachers. You expand your practices beyond the school community and engage stakeholders for further developments. Continue to be open to new ideas and keep up with the continuous technological and pedagogical advances to enhance your creative and innovative solutions.

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Ομάδα: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Greece

Περιγραφή ομάδας: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Τομέας εκπαίδευσης: Σχολική εκπαίδευση (πρωτοβάθμια και δευτεροβάθμια)

Δημιουργός ομάδας: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Συντονιστές ομάδας: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Areti Fourgkatsioti, Nikolaos Mandrekas

Ημερομηνία αναστοχασμού: 24/11/2025 - 20/02/2026

Αριθμός συμμετεχόντων: 10

Σημείωση: Οι συμμετέχοντες θα καταμετρηθούν μόνο εάν συμφώνησαν να κοινοποιήσουν τα δεδομένα τους.

Σας ευχαριστούμε που χρησιμοποιήσατε το SELFIEforTEACHERS!

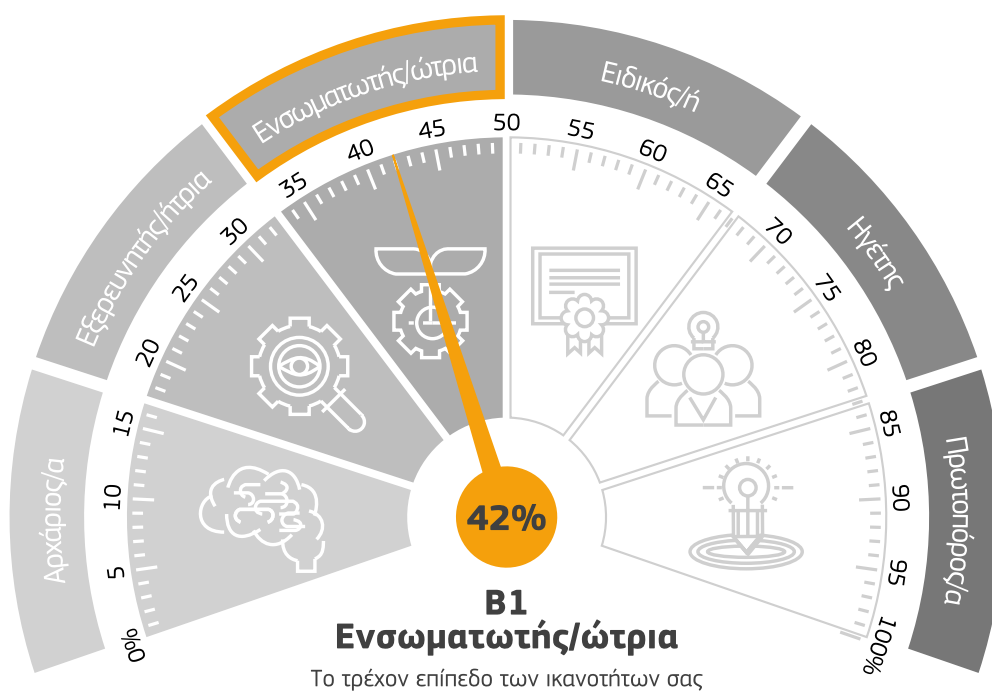
Αυτή η αναφορά σας παρέχει τα συνολικά αποτελέσματα της ομάδας.

Με βάση αυτήν την Αναφορά, μπορείτε να σχεδιάσετε τα επόμενα βήματα και τις μαθησιακές διαδρομές για την ομάδα σας.

Αποτελέσματα ομάδας

Συνολικά αποτελέσματα

(ποσοστό συνολικής βαθμολογίας)



Αποτελέσματα ανά περιοχή

(ποσοστό συνολικής βαθμολογίας σε κάθε τομέα)

Περιοχή 1 - Επαγγελματική ενασχόληση

B1



Περιοχή 2 - Ψηφιακοί πόροι

B1



Περιοχή 3 - Διδασκαλία και μάθηση

B1



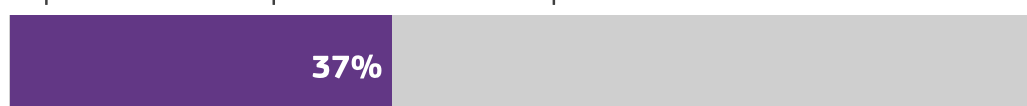
Περιοχή 4 - Αξιολόγηση

A2



Περιοχή 5 - Ενδυνάμωση των εκπαιδευομένων

B1



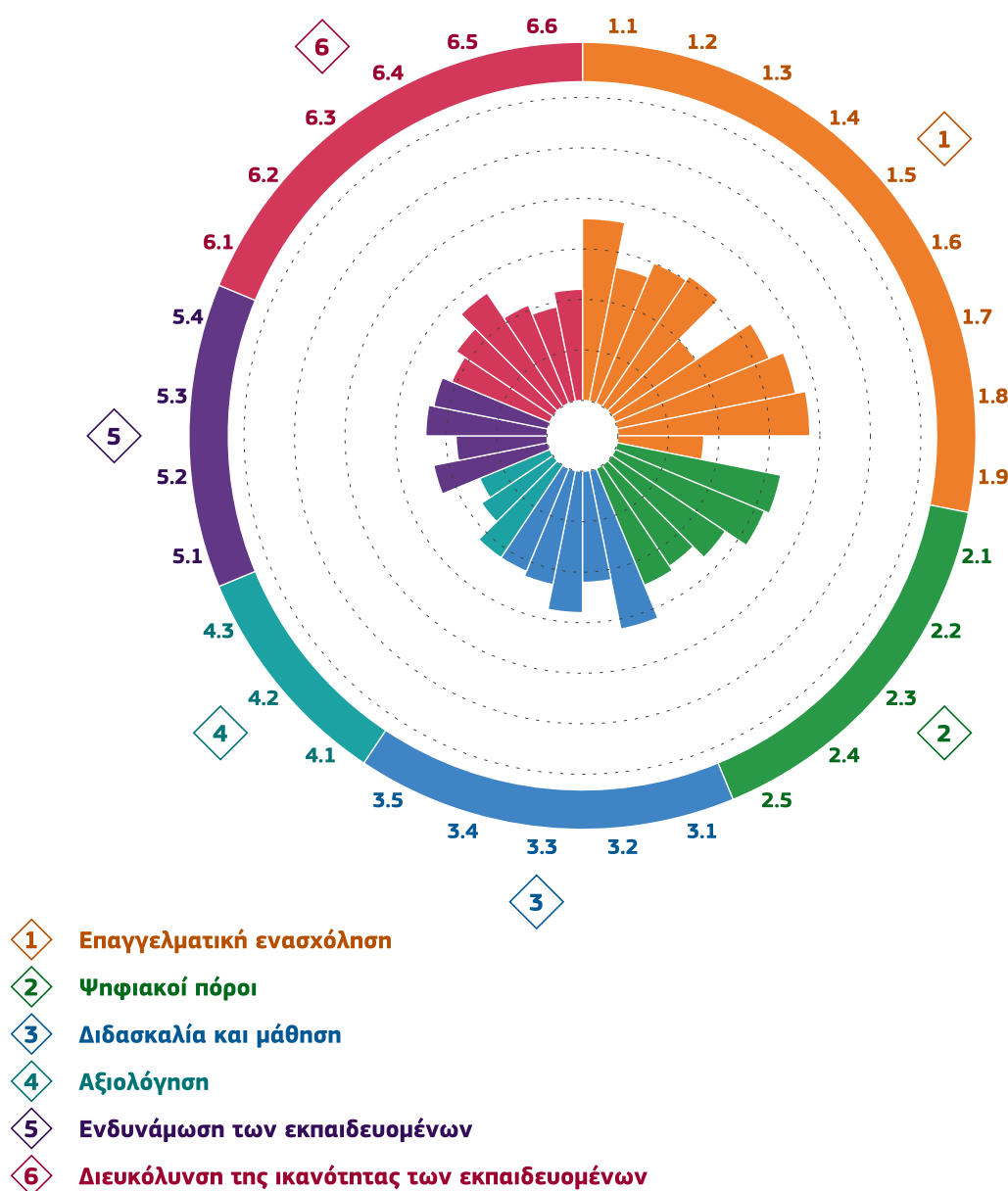
Περιοχή 6 - Διευκόλυνση της ικανότητας των εκπαιδευομένων

B1



Αποτελέσματα ανά στοιχείο

(βαθμοί που ελήφθησαν από μέγιστο αριθμό 6 για κάθε δήλωση)



Επεξήγηση των επιπέδων επάρκειας

Αρχάριος/α (A1)

Έχετε επίγνωση του τρόπου με τον οποίο οι ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες μπορούν να υποστηρίξουν και να βελτιώσουν την επαγγελματική σας πρακτική. Με βάση την αντροφοδότηση που προέκυψε από αυτήν τη διαδικασία αναστοχασμού προσδιορίστηκαν ορισμένες ενέργειες που μπορείτε να δοκιμάσετε. Επιλέξτε μία ή δύο για να σχεδιάσετε την επόμενη μαθησιακή σας διαδρομή, εστιάζοντας στην ουσιαστική βελτίωση των εκπαιδευτικών στρατηγικών σας. Στην πορεία, θα μεταφερθείτε στο επόμενο επίπεδο ψηφιακής ικανότητας, το επίπεδο του Εξερευνητή.

Εξερευνητής/ήτρια (A2)

Έχετε αρχίσει να εξερευνάτε τις δυνατότητες των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών και ενδιαφέρεστε να τις χρησιμοποιήσετε για να βελτιώσετε την παιδαγωγική και επαγγελματική σας πρακτική. Έχετε δοκιμάσει να χρησιμοποιήσετε τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες σε ορισμένους τομείς και θα επωφεληθείτε από μια πιο συστηματική χρήση. Μπορείτε να αυξήσετε τις ικανότητές σας χρησιμοποιώντας τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες σε διάφορα πλαίσια και για διάφορους σκοπούς, ενσωματώνοντάς τις σε πολλές από τις πρακτικές σας. Από το στάδιο αυτό θα μεταφερθείτε στο επόμενο επίπεδο ψηφιακής ικανότητας το επίπεδο του Ενσωματωτή.

Ενσωματωτής/ώτρια (B1)

Πειραματίζεστε με τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες σε διάφορα πλαίσια και για διάφορους σκοπούς, ενσωματώνοντάς τις στις πρακτικές σας. Τις χρησιμοποιείτε δημιουργικά για να βελτιώσετε διάφορες πτυχές της επαγγελματικής σας ενασχόλησης. Θέλετε να διευρύνετε το ρεπερτόριο των πρακτικών σας. Θα ωφεληθείτε αν κατανοήσετε καλύτερα ποια εργαλεία λειτουργούν καλύτερα σε κάθε περίπτωση και πώς μπορείτε να προσαρμόσετε τις ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες στις παιδαγωγικές στρατηγικές και μεθόδους. Προσπαθήστε να δώσετε στον εαυτό σας περισσότερο χρόνο για αναστοχασμό και προσαρμογή, σε συνδυασμό με συνεργατική ενθάρρυνση και ανταλλαγή γνώσεων, ώστε να φτάσετε στο επόμενο επίπεδο, το επίπεδο του Ειδικού.

Ειδικός/ή (B2)

Χρησιμοποιείτε ευρύ φάσμα ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών με αυτοπεποίθηση, δημιουργικότητα και κριτικό πνεύμα για να βελτιώσετε τις επαγγελματικές σας δραστηριότητες. Επιλέγετε συνειδητά ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες για συγκεκριμένες καταστάσεις και προσπαθείτε να κατανοήσετε τα οφέλη και τα μειονεκτήματα των διαφόρων ψηφιακών στρατηγικών. Είστε περίεργοι και ανοιχτοί σε νέες ιδέες, γνωρίζοντας ότι υπάρχουν πολλά που δεν έχετε ακόμη δοκιμάσει. Χρησιμοποιείτε τον πειραματισμό και τον αναστοχασμό ως μέσα επανασχεδιασμού, διεύρυνσης, διάρθρωσης και εδραίωσης του ρεπερτορίου των στρατηγικών σας. Μοιραστείτε την εμπειρογνωμοσύνη σας με άλλους εκπαιδευτικούς και συνεχίστε να αναπτύσσετε με κριτικό πνεύμα τις ψηφιακές στρατηγικές σας, ώστε να φτάσετε στο επίπεδο του Ηγέτη.

Ηγέτης (C1)

Ακολουθείτε συνεκτική και ολοκληρωμένη προσέγγιση όσον αφορά τη χρήση των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών για τη βελτίωση των παιδαγωγικών και επαγγελματικών πρακτικών. Βασίζεστε σε ευρύ φάσμα ψηφιακών στρατηγικών από τις οποίες γνωρίζετε ποια είναι η καταλληλότερη για κάθε συγκεκριμένη περίπτωση. Αναστοχάζεστε συνεχώς και αναπτύσσετε περαιτέρω τις πρακτικές σας. Μέσω της ανταλλαγής απόψεων με ομοτίμους, ενημερώνεστε διαρκώς για τις νέες εξελίξεις και ιδέες και βοηθάτε άλλους εκπαιδευτικούς να αξιοποιήσουν τις δυνατότητες των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών για τη βελτίωση της διδασκαλίας και της μάθησης. Εάν είστε έτοιμοι να πειραματιστείτε λίγο περισσότερο, ενθαρρύνοντας τους μαθητές να επεκτείνουν τις δυνατότητες των ψηφιακών τεχνολογιών σε σχολικό επίπεδο και πέρα από αυτό, θα μπορούσατε να φθάσετε στο τελικό επίπεδο ικανοτήτων, ως Πρωτοπόρος.

Πρωτοπόρος/α (C2)

Αναστοχάζεστε με κριτικό πνεύμα την επάρκεια των σύγχρονων ψηφιακών και παιδαγωγικών πρακτικών, στις οποίες είστε Ηγέτης. Ανησυχείτε για τους περιορισμούς ή τα μειονεκτήματα αυτών των πρακτικών και σας καθοδηγεί η παρόρμηση για ακόμη μεγαλύτερη καινοτομία στην εκπαίδευση. Πειραματίζεστε με εξαιρετικά καινοτόμες και σύνθετες ψηφιακές τεχνολογίες και/ή αναπτύσσετε καινοτόμες παιδαγωγικές προσεγγίσεις. Ηγείστε της καινοτομίας στο σχολείο σας και αποτελείτε υπόδειγμα για άλλους εκπαιδευτικούς. Επεκτείνετε τις πρακτικές σας πέρα από τη σχολική κοινότητα και ενθαρρύνετε τη συμμετοχή των ενδιαφερόμενων μερών, ώστε να επιτευχθούν περαιτέρω εξελίξεις. Συνεχίζετε να είστε ανοικτοί σε νέες ιδέες και να συμβαδίζετε με τη συνεχή τεχνολογική και παιδαγωγική πρόοδο για τη βελτίωση των δημιουργικών και καινοτόμων λύσεων που προτείνετε.

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Grupa: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Poland 2026

Opis grupy: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Sektor edukacji Edukacja szkolna (podstawowa i średnia)

Twórca grupy: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Koordynatorzy grup: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Aleksandra Tomasiak, Myrianthi Karantona

Data autorefleksji: 31/12/2025 - 28/02/2026

Liczba uczestników: 12

Uwaga: Uczestnicy będą liczeni tylko wtedy, gdy wyrażą zgodę na udostępnienie swoich danych

Dziękujemy za korzystanie z SELFIEforTEACHERS!

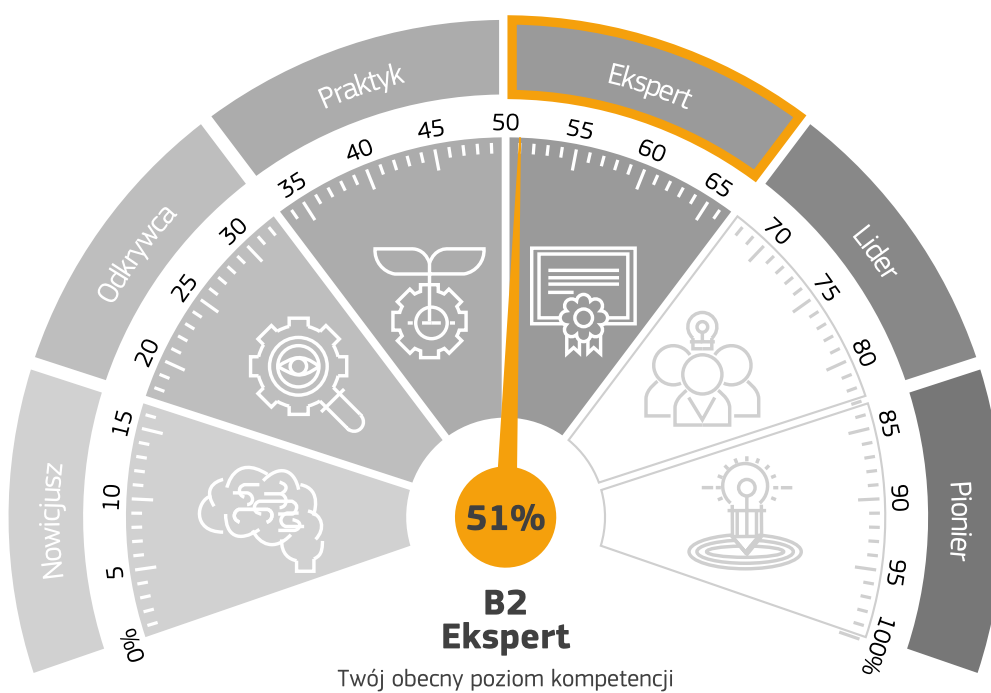
Ten raport przedstawia ogólne wyniki grupy.

Na podstawie tego raportu możesz zaplanować kolejne kroki i ścieżki edukacyjne dla swojej grupy.

Wyniki grupy

Ogólne wyniki

(odsetek całkowitego wyniku)

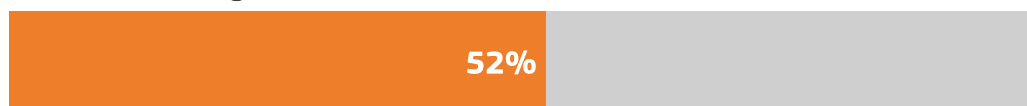


Wyniki według obszaru

(odsetek całkowitego wyniku w każdym obszarze)

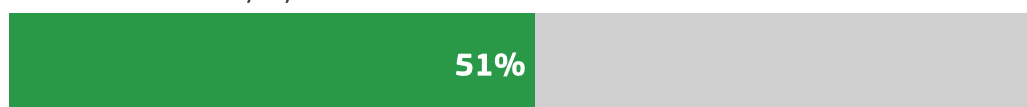
Obszar 1 - Zaangażowanie zawodowe

B2



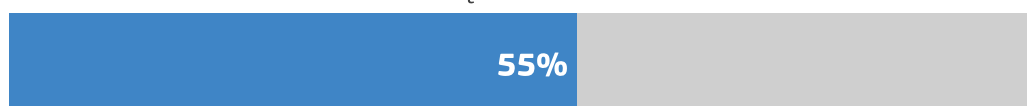
Obszar 2 - Zasoby cyfrowe

B2



Obszar 3 - Nauczanie i uczenie się

B2



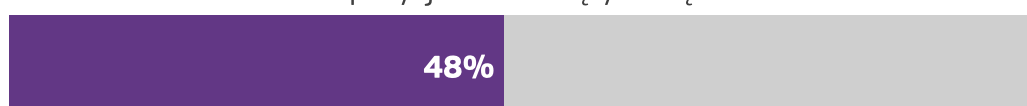
Obszar 4 - Ocena

B2



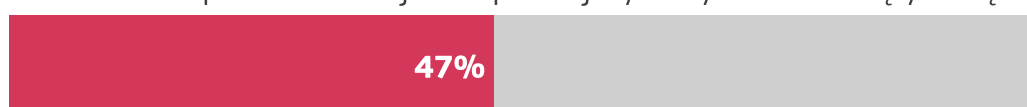
Obszar 5 - Wzmocnienie pozycji osób uczących się

B1



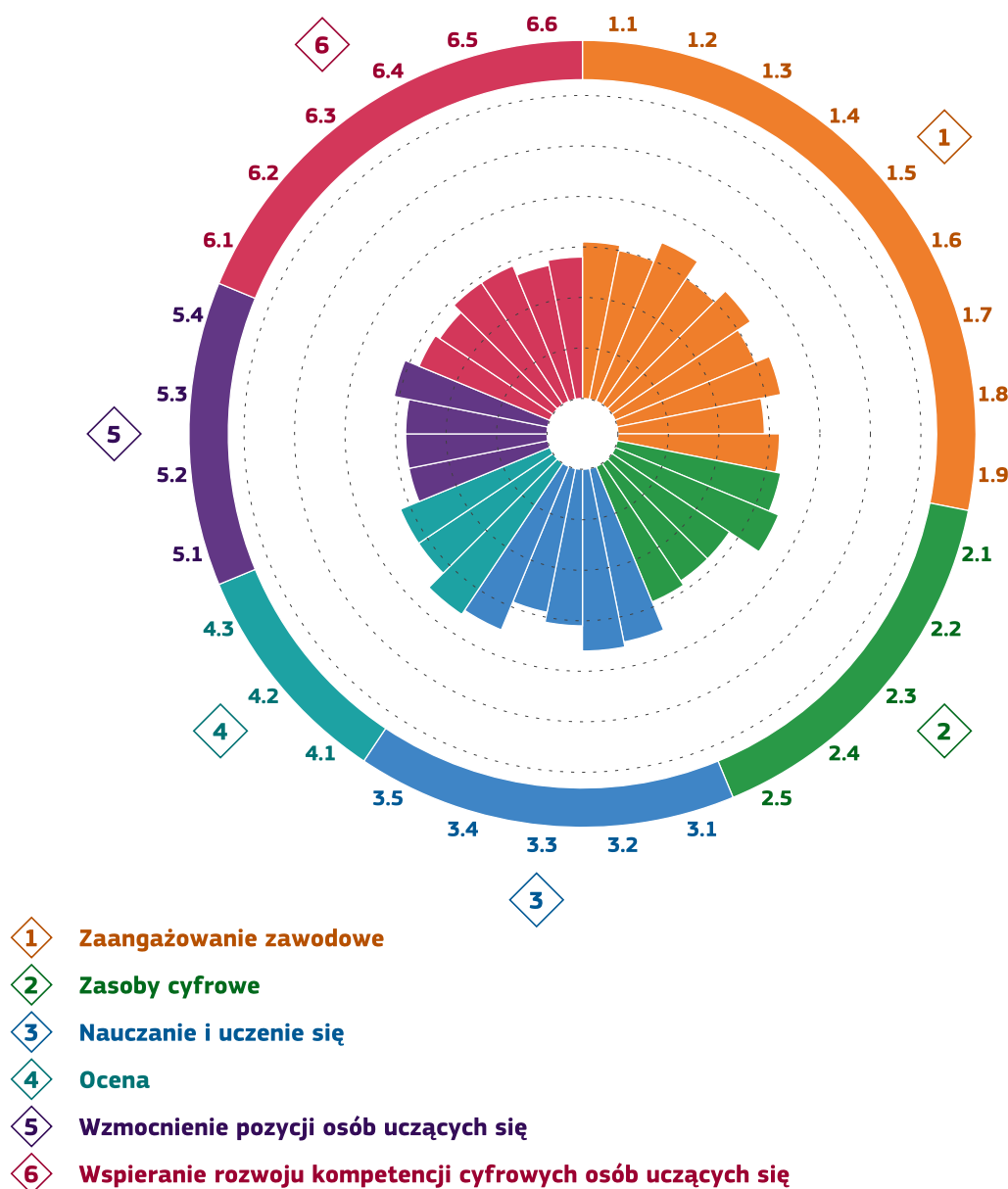
Obszar 6 - Wspieranie rozwoju kompetencji cyfrowych osób uczących się

B1



Wyniki w podziale na pozycje

(punkty otrzymane z maksymalnie 6 punktów za każdą pozycję)



Informacje o poziomach biegłości

Nowicjusz (A1)

Wiesz, jak technologie cyfrowe mogą wesprzeć i ulepszyć Twoją praktykę zawodową. Z informacji zwrotnych uzyskanych w wyniku autorefleksji wynika szereg działań, które możesz wypróbować. Wybierz jedno lub dwa, aby zaplanować dalszą ścieżkę uczenia się, skupiając się na znaczącym ulepszeniu swoich strategii nauczania. W ten sposób przejdziesz do następnego etapu nabywania kompetencji cyfrowych – na poziom Odkrywcy.

Odkrywca (A2)

Zacząłeś/zacząłaś odkrywać potencjał technologii cyfrowych i jesteś zainteresowany/zainteresowana ich wykorzystaniem, aby udoskonalić praktykę pedagogiczną i zawodową. Próbowałeś/próbowałaś wykorzystywać technologie cyfrowe w niektórych obszarach i stosowanie ich w bardziej systematyczny sposób będzie dla Ciebie korzystne. Możesz zwiększyć swoje kompetencje, korzystając z technologii cyfrowych w różnych kontekstach i do różnych celów, wprowadzając je do wielu swoich praktyk. Dzięki temu przejdziesz do następnego etapu nabywania kompetencji cyfrowych – na poziom Praktyka.

Praktyk (B1)

Eksperymentujesz z technologiami cyfrowymi w różnych kontekstach i do różnych celów, wprowadzając je do swoich praktyk. W kreatywny sposób wykorzystujesz je do ulepszania różnych aspektów swojego zaangażowania zawodowego. Chętnie rozszerzysz swoje zasoby praktyk. Korzystne będzie dla Ciebie lepsze zrozumienie, które narzędzia najlepiej sprawdzają się w jakich sytuacjach oraz dopasowanie technologii cyfrowych do strategii i metod pedagogicznych. Postaraj się dać sobie trochę więcej czasu na refleksję i przystosowanie się uzupełniane zachęcaniem do współpracy i wymianą wiedzy, aby przejść do następnego etapu, czyli na poziom Eksperta.

Ekspert (B2)

W pewny, kreatywny i krytyczny sposób wykorzystujesz szereg technologii cyfrowych, aby udoskonalić swoje aktywności zawodowe. Celowo wybierasz technologie cyfrowe w odniesieniu do poszczególnych sytuacji i starasz się zrozumieć zalety i wady różnych strategii cyfrowych. Cechuje Cię ciekawość i otwartość na nowe pomysły i wiesz, że jest wiele rzeczy, których jeszcze nie próbowałeś/próbowałaś. Wykorzystujesz eksperymenty i refleksję jako sposób na ponowne opracowanie, rozszerzenie, kształtowanie i konsolidację wachlarza strategii. Dziel się swoją wiedzą fachową z innymi nauczycielami i kontynuuj krytyczne opracowywanie strategii cyfrowych, aby osiągnąć poziom lidera.

Lider (C1)

Twoje podejście do korzystania z technologii cyfrowych w celu doskonalenia praktyk pedagogicznych i zawodowych jest spójne i kompleksowe. Polegasz na szerokim wachlarzu strategii cyfrowych i wiesz, jak wybrać spośród nich najodpowiedniejsze dla danej sytuacji. Nieustannie zastanawiasz się nad swoimi praktykami i dalej je rozwijasz. Dzięki wymianie wiedzy z rówieśnikami dysponujesz aktualnymi informacjami na temat nowych rozwiązań i pomysłów oraz pomagasz innym nauczycielom wykorzystać potencjał technologii cyfrowych do usprawnienia procesu nauczania i uczenia się. Jeżeli jesteś gotowy /gotowa na dalsze eksperymentowanie poprzez angażowanie uczniów w rozwijanie potencjału technologii cyfrowych na poziomie szkolnym i poza nim, będziesz mógł/mogła osiągnąć najwyższy poziom kompetencji jako pionier.

Pionier (C2)

Poddajesz krytycznej refleksji adekwatność współczesnych praktyk cyfrowych i pedagogicznych, w zakresie których jesteś liderem. Masz obawy dotyczące ograniczeń lub wad tych praktyk i kierujesz się impulsem do wprowadzania dalszych innowacji w zakresie kształcenia. Eksperymentujesz z wysoce innowacyjnymi i złożonymi technologiami cyfrowymi lub opracowujesz nowatorskie podejścia pedagogiczne. Wprowadzasz innowacje w swojej szkole i jesteś wzorem do naśladowania dla innych nauczycieli. Rozpowszechniasz swoje praktyki poza społecznością szkolną i angażujesz zainteresowane strony w celu zapewnienia dalszych postępów. Bądź nadal otwarty/otwarta na nowe pomysły i dotrzymuj kroku ciągłemu postępowi technologicznemu i pedagogicznemu, aby zwiększyć skuteczność swoich kreatywnych i innowacyjnych rozwiązań.

SELFIEforTEACHERS



Group: DWELL Selfie for Teachers - Romania

Group description: Promoting Digital Well-Being in European Schools This initiative empowers educators across Europe with strategies and resources to promote balanced technology use and build digital resilience among students. By combining research, practical tools, and collaborative learning, the project supports schools in fostering healthier digital habits and environments. Teachers support learners in developing balanced, healthy, and emotionally secure relationships with digital technologies. They promote students' physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being in digital environments by modelling positive habits, creating supportive spaces, and fostering critical awareness of digital use. By sharing outcomes, best practices, and policy recommendations widely, we aim to spark collaboration, strengthen stakeholder networks, and embed digital well-being as a core element of education across Europe.

Education sector: School education (primary and secondary)

Group creator: Toumazis TOUMAZI

Group coordinators: Toumazis TOUMAZI, Gabriela Stoiadin

Reflection date: 20/11/2025 - 17/02/2026

Number of participants: 47

Note: Participants will only be counted if they agreed to share their data

Thank you for using SELFIEforTEACHERS!

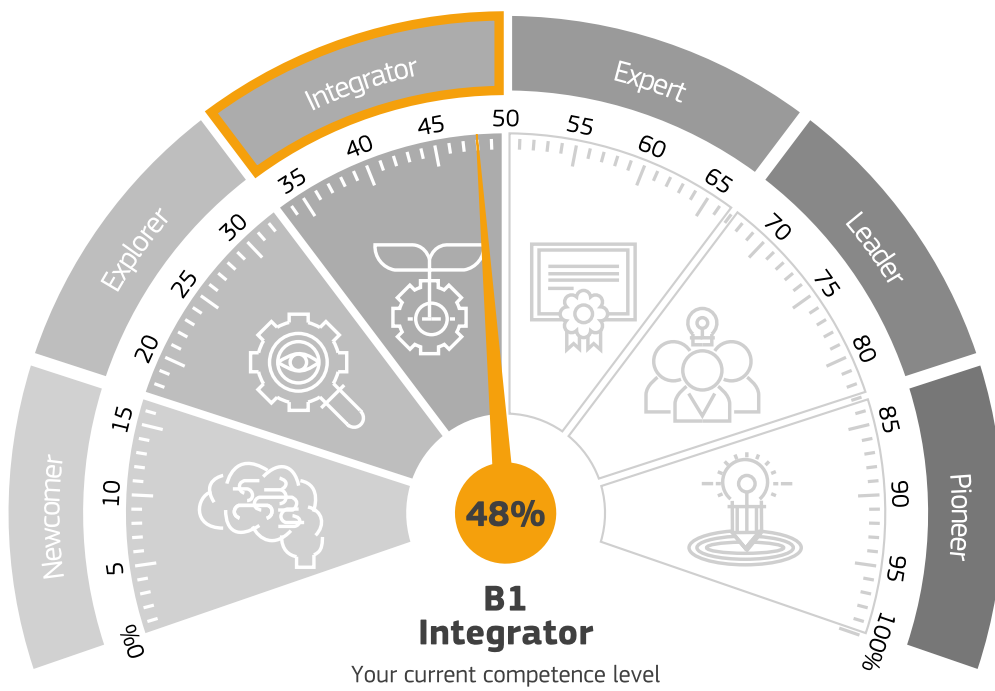
This report gives you the overall results from the group.

Based on this report you can plan the next steps and learning pathways for your group.

Group results

Overall results

(percentage of total score)

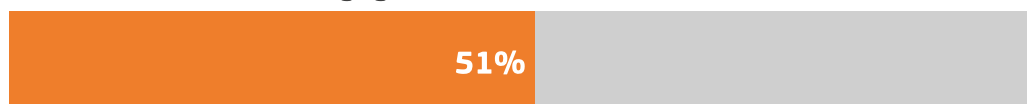


Results by area

(percentage of total score in each area)

Area 1 - Professional Engagement

B2



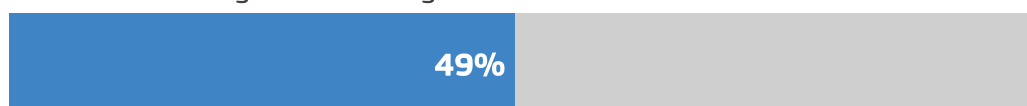
Area 2 - Digital Resources

B1



Area 3 - Teaching and Learning

B1



Area 4 - Assessment

B1



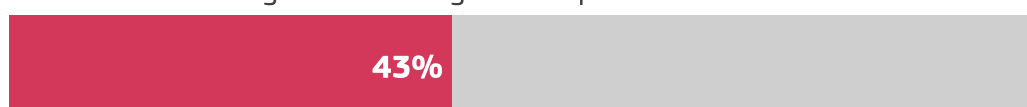
Area 5 - Empowering Learners

B1



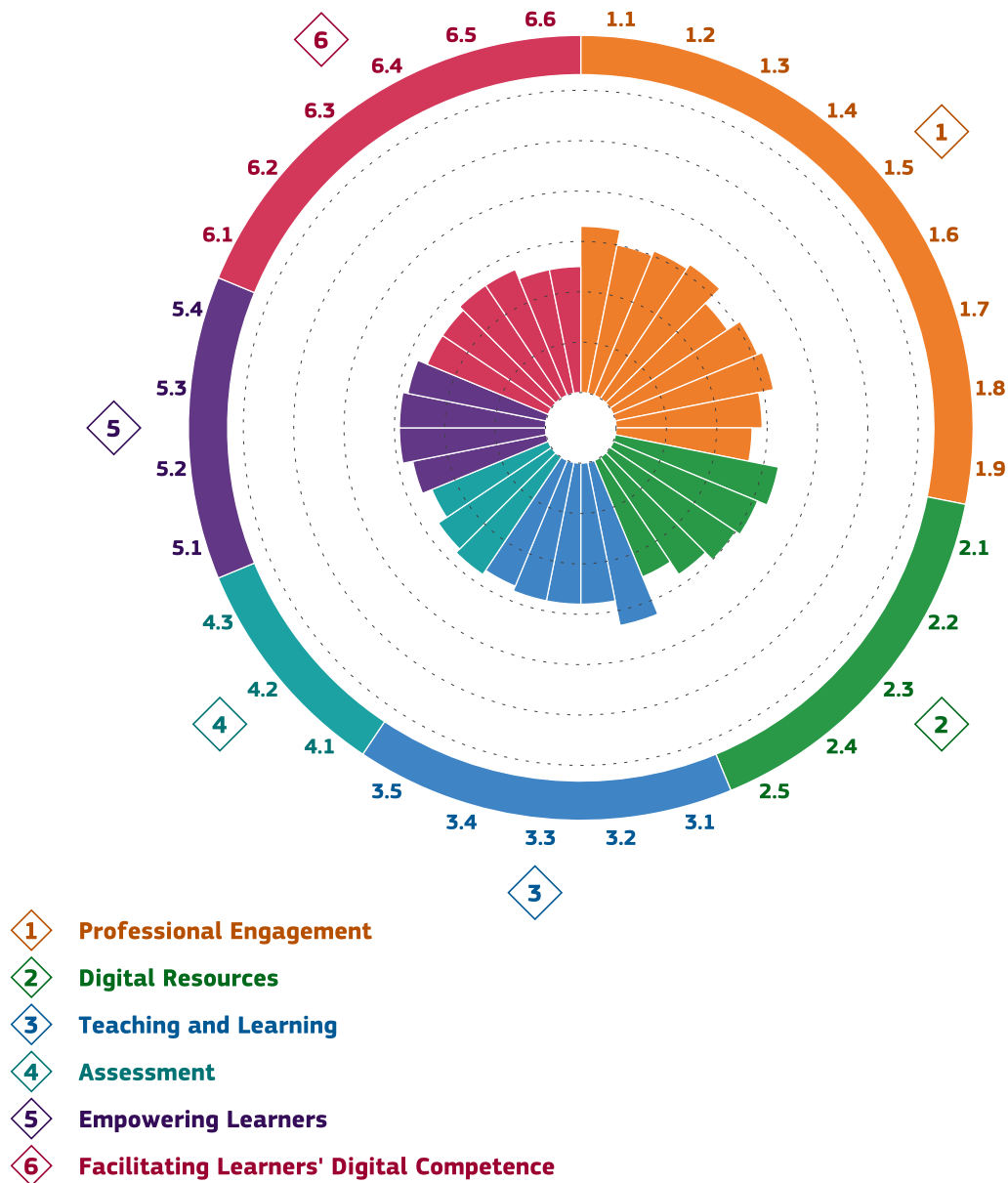
Area 6 - Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence

B1



Results by item

(points received out of a maximum 6 for each item)



Proficiency levels explained

Newcomer (A1)

You are aware of how digital technologies can support and enhance your professional practice. The feedback you get from this self-reflection has identified a number of actions you can try. Select one or two to plan your next learning pathway, focusing on meaningfully enhancing your teaching strategies. As you do so, you'll find yourself moving to the next step of digital competence, the Explorer level.

Explorer (A2)

You have started exploring the potential of digital technologies and are interested in using them in order to enhance pedagogical and professional practice. You have tried using digital technologies in some areas and will benefit from more consistent use. You can increase your competence by using digital technologies in various contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into many of your practices. This will move you to the next step of digital competence, the Integrator level.

Integrator (B1)

You experiment with digital technologies in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes, integrating them into your practices. You creatively use them to enhance diverse aspects of your professional engagement. You are eager to expand your repertoire of practices. You will benefit by increasing your understanding about which tools work best in which situations and on fitting digital technologies to pedagogic strategies and methods. Try to give yourself some more time for reflection and adaptation, complemented by collaborative encouragement and knowledge exchange, to reach the next step, Expert.

Expert (B2)

You use a range of digital technologies confidently, creatively and critically to enhance your professional activities. You purposefully select digital technologies for particular situations, and try to understand the benefits and drawbacks of different digital strategies. You are curious and open to new ideas, knowing that there are many things you have not tried out yet. You use experimentation and reflection as a means of redesigning, expanding, structuring and consolidating your repertoire of strategies. Share your expertise with other teachers and continue critically developing your digital strategies to reach the Leader level.

Leader (C1)

You have a consistent and comprehensive approach to using digital technologies to enhance pedagogic and professional practices. You rely on a broad repertoire of digital strategies from which you know how to choose the most appropriate for any given situation. You continuously reflect on and further develop your practices. Exchanging with peers, you keep updated on new developments and ideas and help other teachers seize the potential of digital technologies for enhancing teaching and learning. If you are ready to experiment a bit more, engaging students in expanding the potential of digital technologies at school level and beyond, you'll be able to reach an ultimate stage of competence, as a Pioneer.

Pioneer (C2)

You critically reflect on the adequacy of contemporary digital and pedagogical practices, in which you are a Leader. You are concerned about the constraints or drawbacks of these practices and driven by the impulse to innovate education even further. You experiment with highly innovative and complex digital technologies and/or develop novel pedagogical approaches. You lead innovation in your school and are a role model for other teachers. You expand your practices beyond the school community and engage stakeholders for further developments. Continue to be open to new ideas and keep up with the continuous technological and pedagogical advances to enhance your creative and innovative solutions.

Coordinator:



Partners:



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