Newsletter 2

DWELL
DIGITAL WELL BEING

April, 2026

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



Dear Readers,

We are happy to share the process of our Focus Group Implementation across partner countries!

Between November 2025 and March 2026, focus groups with teachers and parents were successfully conducted in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Finland, Greece and Romania as part of the DWELL project. These sessions explored how digital technologies influence students' well-being and daily learning experiences and extracted information from the adults that observe most closely the children's development - their parents and teachers.

Partners gathered valuable insights on both the benefits and challenges of digital tools, as well as the support needed by families and educators.

How were the Focus Groups conducted?

They were held in person and online, bringing together teachers and parents in guided discussions lasting 60-90 minutes, following an established focus group methodology for precise data gathering. All sessions were documented with photos and transcribed to ensure effective data consolidation and trustworthy national reports.

Why Focus Groups?

The focus groups aimed to collect real-life experiences from educators and parents regarding the use of digital technologies in learning and everyday life. Discussions examined how digital tools affect students' well-being and what skills adults need to support healthy digital habits.

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COUNTRY SNAPSHOTS

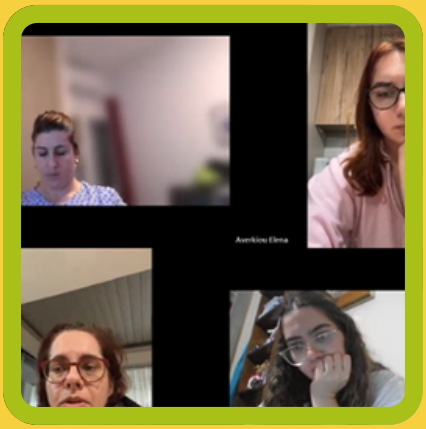
Focus Groups in Bulgaria

Conducted between November 2025 and January 2026 with 32 teachers from 18 schools in five face-to-face focus groups and 17 parents of children aged 10-7 in face-to-face and online format.

Across discussions, participants emphasized that digital technologies offer significant benefits for learning, engagement, and communication when used purposefully. At the same time, they highlighted concerns related to excessive screen time, attention difficulties, emotional regulation, and the need for stronger collaboration between schools and families to support healthy digital habits.



> Digital technologies can enhance motivation and learning, but their positive impact depends on structured use, clear guidance, and strong cooperation between schools and families.



> Effective management, parental supervision, and clear household or school rules are crucial to help children develop healthy digital habits, regulate screen time, and maintain emotional and cognitive balance.

Focus Groups in Cyprus

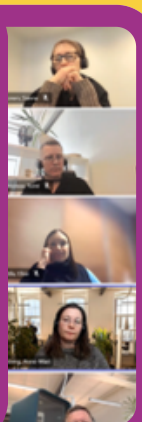
Focus groups with educators and parents were conducted between November 2025 and March 2026. In total, 19 educators from secondary schools participated in five online focus groups. Additionally, 20 parents of children aged 10-16 took part in three online focus groups.

Parents reported both positive and negative effects of technology at home, highlighting benefits like learning support, entertainment, and social connection, alongside concerns about excessive screen time, social media pressure, and difficulty regulating device use.

For educators, digital tools can enhance engagement and collaboration in school, but also reduces attention spans, strengthens dependence on quick online answers, and causes physical strain - eye fatigue and poor posture. Participants stressed the importance of structured use, parental supervision, digital skills development, and home-school collaboration to support children's digital well-being.

Focus Groups in Finland

In Finland, four online focus groups with 157 educators from six lower secondary schools (grades 7-9, ages 13-15) and three online focus groups with 19 parents of children aged 12-15 were conducted online. Educators emphasized that digital tools like Google Classroom and game-based applications are valuable when used purposefully and combined with traditional methods, while school-wide phone-free policies improved concentration, classroom calm, and social interaction. Parents highlighted the challenges of regulating device use at home, noting that extensive or unclear digital practices can increase stress, reduce sustained attention, and affect social and emotional well-being. Both groups stressed that balance, clear boundaries, shared guidelines, and strong home–school collaboration are essential for supporting students' digital well-being.



> Digital well-being is best supported through balance, clear boundaries, and shared responsibility. Purposeful and limited use of digital tools, consistent phone policies, and strong home–school collaboration help protect students' concentration, social interaction, and mental health, while unregulated or excessive digital use increases stress, cognitive overload, and social risks.

COUNTRY SNAPSHOTS



Focus Groups in Greece

> While digital tools offer great potential for enhancing learning, both educators and parents emphasized the need for clear guidelines, ongoing support, and collaboration between schools and families to ensure a balanced and responsible approach to technology use, promoting students' academic success and emotional well-being

Between November 2025 and February 2026, focus groups were conducted with 32 educators from 7 schools and 37 parents from 12 schools across Greece to explore the impact of digital technologies on students' well-being. Educators discussed the challenges of integrating digital tools into lesson planning, noting that traditional curricula often require adjustments to better incorporate digital resources. They emphasized the need for ongoing professional development to stay updated with evolving digital tools and the importance of adequate resources and reliable internet to enhance the learning experience. Parents raised concerns about the emotional impact of excessive screen time, social media pressures, and cyberbullying. They also mentioned that students' increasing reliance on smartphones and AI tools like ChatGPT may affect their critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Both groups stressed the importance of clear digital guidelines, support for digital literacy education, and stronger collaboration between schools and families to ensure a healthy balance between digital engagement and well-being, fostering both academic growth and emotional resilience.



In Romania, between November and December 2025, a total of 11 focus groups were conducted with 103 teachers and 98 parents across mostly rural schools (10 rural, 1 urban). All sessions were face-to-face, with one mixed-format session for teachers, and each lasting 2-4 hours depending on the group. Participants highlighted that digital well-being depends on structured, purposeful, and balanced use of technology. Both teachers and parents noted the positive potential of digital tools for motivation, engagement, learning support, and inclusion, but also identified risks such as stress, cognitive overload, distraction, social isolation, and physical strain when technology use is excessive or unregulated. Clear rules, adult guidance, and school-family collaboration were consistently seen as critical for maximizing benefits and minimizing harms.



> Digital well-being is not just about limiting screen time; it requires clear rules, adult guidance, teacher training, and collaboration between school and family to mediate emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and social effects. Technology alone is not inherently good or harmful - it is the quality of use, context, and oversight that determines its impact on student well-being.

Focus Groups in Romania

What else are we up to?

1

As part of the **DWELL** project, partners have administered more than 30 SELFIE self-assessments for teachers across participating countries. SELFIE is a free online tool developed by the European Commission that helps educators reflect on their use of digital technologies in professional practice. It supports teachers at all levels to assess their digital skills, identify areas for improvement, and receive personalized feedback.

Within **DWELL**, the SELFIE assessment has been customized to include additional questions on digital well-being, helping educators examine their level of digital preparedness and their readiness to address digital well-being in their pedagogical practice. SELFIE provides a structured approach for understanding and enhancing the use of digital technologies while supporting students' learning, social interactions, and overall well-being.

More than 30 teachers across partner countries have already received personalized reports, showing where they stand in utilizing digital technologies in their teaching and how effectively they address digital well-being in the classroom.



2

Currently, we are in the process of compiling 2 Cross-country Summary reports on the focus group findings which will be released soon. They will summarize the outcomes from teachers and parents, highlighting shared patterns, and identifying emerging needs such as:

- Clear guidance for digital use at home and in school
- Support for routines and screen-time management
- Development of students' digital competence and responsible online behavior

The upcoming reports will provide practical recommendations for schools, families, and policymakers for the support of digital wellbeing and healthy digital habits.

Check out the DWELL Website here!

https://dwell.projectsgallery.eu/



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MMC Mediterranean Management Centre

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