



POLICIES AND RESOURCES FOR SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SCHOOLS

TSI 2024 Flagship: Mental health - fostering well-being and mental health

The *Safe and Supportive Schools* Project aims to improve the institutional capacity of the education system to foster a healthy school environment in which social and emotional learning, psychosocial support, well-being and mental health is entirely part of a whole-school approach.

CONTEXT

A variety of factors have an impact on the social and emotional skills of children and their mental health: family environment, relationships with parents and friends, socio-economic situation, or the risk of violence to which they are exposed in different settings, including at school. As the suicide rate for those under the age of 15 is 2.3 times higher in Romania than the EU average, this project aims to improve mental health and well-being among students aged 10-15 by enhancing social and emotional support systems.

Implemented by the Ministry of Education, with the technical support from UNICEF and in cooperation with the European Commission, the project addresses the lack of preventive measures and cooperation between services in Romania, as well as the need for socio and emotional learning programs in schools, ensuring a secure and nurturing learning environment for all students.

SUPPORT DELIVERED

This project will provide customised tools, such as guidelines and training for educational staff to integrate social and emotional learning into teaching and classroom management, aligned with the national curriculum. Additionally, efforts will focus on promoting responsible use of technology, the internet,

and social media within both curricular and extra-curricular activities. The project will also develop tools to identify and refer students who require specialised psychosocial support to psychologists and other health professionals.

Key activities include a comprehensive analysis of students' well-being, social and emotional skills, an assessment of European good practices, the development of tools, recommendations, and a capacity-building programme, leading up to the testing of elements of the programme in a selection of schools. The school community will be engaged and consulted in the design and implementation the project.

This project aligns with the European Commission's comprehensive approach to mental health, the new guidelines to support wellbeing at school and the EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child, promoting inclusive and child-friendly education systems.



EXPECTED RESULTS

The technical support is expected to provide the Romanian authorities with tools and recommendations to foster a healthier school environment in which social and emotional learning, psychosocial support, well-being and mental health is entirely part of a whole-school approach. An implementation roadmap and capacity-building programme will ensure the sustainability of the project results.