What is it about?

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

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

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

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

MECHANISM
FOR JOINT EVALUATION
Of children’s transferable skills outside of the classroom context.

TOOLBOX

https://www.facebook.com/SOULSkillsProject
The Soul Skills project continues its development. During the last months, the partners worked on the final version of the joint Analytical report “Child after the social isolation due to Covid-19” which analyzes the effects of the pandemic on the soft skills of children between 6-12 years old based on National Reports which were conducted by all partners in the country context.

Some of the main conclusions of the report are:

- **Distance teaching and learning did not cover the expectations for effective schooling**: A significant gap in academic knowledge and soft skills development was identified, concluding that no one (educators, families, or pupils) was prepared for online education at these levels.

- **Great loss of soft skills during online learning**: Back in school, pupils seemed distracted, bored and stressed, with communication problems, insecure in decision-making, passive and unmotivated to study. Though, in Iceland, were no systematic school closures, revealing other nuances.

- **Educators faced difficulties to transfer materials from in-class teaching into online teaching**: Educators identified the lack of mechanisms for evaluating pupils’ acquired knowledge and skills development as the most difficult element of online teaching as they had no knowledge or methods available for online evaluation.

On October 10th and 11th SOUL partnership implemented the Transnational Partners Meeting in Athens and had the opportunity to discuss the progress of the project activities, set a plan for the next steps and evaluated the work done during the first quarter of the second year of the implementation.

The consortium has developed a manual presenting a methodology to identify and evaluate where on the continuum a child is in developing these soft skills. It is based on a holistic approach as well as the theory of Multiple Intelligence and aims to support educators in the formal and non-formal sectors to monitor and evaluate the student’s soft skills.

The manual will be available in English as well as in Bulgarian, Greek, Spanish, Italian, French and Icelandic.
Partners are currently implementing pilot activities of the manual together with educators from the local networks aiming to test the suggested methodology and receive feedback from educators in the field. Feedback and suggestions will be included in the updated format of the manual. Additionally, partners are working on an innovative toolbox that will offer exercises and educational methods that can be implemented during cultural activities organized after school. The toolbox will be presented as a matrix that educators and parents can use in order to support the development of students’ soft skills. The toolbox, together with all deliverables of the project, will be presented in a digital format in English and all partner languages (Bulgarian, Greek, Spanish, Italian, French and Icelandic) at the multiplier events which will take place in all partner countries in March 2023.

What is next?

- Training Course for Staff and Educators in February 2023 in Spain.
- Multiplier Events in all countries to disseminate and present all materials in March 2023.
- Final partners meeting in Italy in April 2023.

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SOULSKILLSPROJECT

WHO WE ARE

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