

Policy Recommendations for Scaling the Project “*Positive Discipline in European Schools*”

*Based on the Impact Study of the LifeComp Lessons (KA220-SCH, 2023–2025)

1. Executive Summary

The Positive Discipline in European Schools programme, piloted in six countries (Hungary, France, Portugal, Poland, Bulgaria, North Macedonia) during 2023–2025, demonstrates strong and consistent evidence of impact on students, teachers, and classroom climate. Implemented through LifeComp lessons—45-minute weekly sessions led by trained teachers—the programme improved socio-emotional skills, enhanced classroom relationships, and fostered teacher professional reflection.

Key findings:

- *Students* reported increased self-regulation, empathy, cooperation, and growth mindset. They also demonstrated improved social confidence, reduced negative self-perceptions, and greater persistence when facing challenges compared to the control student group.
- *Teachers* adopted more collaborative, encouragement-focused practices, moving away from punitive approaches. Many reported renewed professional motivation and stronger collegiality.
- *Classroom climate* shifted towards greater mutual respect, participatory problem-solving, and stronger student voice.
- *Transferability* was evident, as students applied tools learned in LifeComp sessions to peer relations, family contexts, and extracurricular settings.

Challenges:

- Limited implementation time (45 minutes weekly proved insufficient for embedding deeper change).
- Uneven institutional commitment and competing curricular demands.
- Resistance from a minority of students and teachers.
- The requirement that only trained teachers can implement PD limits rapid scaling, but whole-school adoption is possible.

Policy Implication: The programme provides a tested, evidence-based model for embedding Positive Discipline principles (through LifeComp lessons) within EU schools. Scaling requires structural support, expanded teacher training, and institutional adoption to ensure sustainability and equity.

2. Rationale for EU-Level Action

The findings of the Impact Study align closely with key EU Education and Social Policy priorities:

- *European LifeComp Framework:* The program strengthens self-regulation, empathy, critical thinking, and cooperation.
- *Inclusion and Equity:* The program fosters belonging, resilience, and respect, supporting disadvantaged learners.
- *EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child & European Pillar of Social Rights:* The program promotes safe, respectful, and supportive learning environments.
- *Key indicator - Reducing early school leaving:* The program strengthens motivation and attachment to school.
- *Teacher professional development:* The program equips teachers with reflective and collaborative practices.

Scaling Positive Discipline in European Schools program is therefore a strategic investment in social cohesion, equity, and resilience.

3. Policy Recommendations

3.1. Structural Integration

- Expand LifeComp lessons beyond pilot schools by including them in Erasmus+ and national education strategies.
- Encourage whole-school PD programmes where multiple teachers are trained.
- Promote inter-school dissemination and regional capacity-building.

3.2. Teacher Training and Professional Development

- Establish EU-level certification pathways for PD training within the EU Teacher Academy.
- Provide sustained in-service training opportunities.
- Support teacher learning communities and peer mentoring networks.

3.3. Institutional Embedding

- Encourage ministries to adopt whole-school PD programmes.
- Provide structural support: timetable space, reduced overload, leadership commitment.

3.4. Equity and Inclusion

- Prioritise dissemination in disadvantaged schools.
- Ensure access for all students within participating schools.

3.5. Student Participation

- Scale up joint rule-making, peer mediation, and student government collaboration.
- Promote intercultural exchanges.

3.6. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Develop a common EU framework for measuring socio-emotional impact.
- Require structured monitoring and knowledge-sharing.

4. Implementation Roadmap

Short-Term (1–2 years):

- Expand pilot projects through Erasmus+ funding.
- Develop EU Teacher Academy modules.
- Disseminate evidence via European platforms.

Medium-Term (3–5 years):

- Support national rollouts of whole-school PD programmes.
- Promote cross-border partnerships and exchanges.
- Build national and EU teacher networks.

Long-Term (5–10 years):

- Institutionalise LifeComp/PD in national education frameworks.
- Embed PD in EU policy agendas on dropout prevention, mental health, and equity.
- Ensure EU-wide access to trained teachers delivering LifeComp lessons.

5. Conclusion

The Positive Discipline in European Schools programme demonstrates that trained teachers can transform classrooms into safe, collaborative, and empowering spaces. LifeComp lessons improve student well-being, foster resilience, and strengthen teacher identity, with benefits extending beyond school walls.

EU-level action is needed to:

1. Expand access across schools and countries.
2. Invest in teacher training and professional communities.
3. Embed PD into institutional and policy frameworks.

By doing so, the EU can equip the next generation with the life competencies they need to learn, collaborate, and thrive in a diverse and changing world.