FINAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

LET'S MAINSTREAM WELL-BEING IN EDUCATION

Paredes de Coura, Portugal
5 September 2026



> *"Well-being becomes sustainable when it is visible, practised and shared."*

A short publication capturing the main conversations, practical workshops and lasting messages from the WINS final conference.

THE CONFERENCE IN CONTEXT

A shared European journey

The final conference brought the WINS partnership together in Paredes de Coura around a deceptively simple question: how do we make well-being part of the everyday culture of education? The answer was not presented as a single model. Instead, the day moved between evidence, policy, personal experience and practical experimentation.

> *"WINS starts with educators. When professionals have stronger resources for their own well-being and emotional regulation, the benefits can flow into teams, classrooms and the wider school community."*



MORNING SESSION

From project results to conversation

The morning placed the project’s results in a wider conversation about what needs to change in schools and education systems. A panel brought together perspectives on impact, policy recommendations and the WINS App, while partner contributions reflected on what had been learned through training, cascade activities and local experimentation.

Impact

Evidence from training, piloting and national activities helped the partnership identify what participants valued and what is needed for lasting change.

Policy

Recommendations moved the discussion beyond individual initiatives towards school culture, professional development, networks, services and sustainability.

WINS App

The project’s digital tools provide a practical route into WINS resources and well-being strategies beyond the lifetime of the funded project.

> *“The goal is not to add one more initiative to overloaded schools. It is to make well-being part of how schools work.”*

KEYNOTE: MARK SPARVELL

Well-being in the age of AI



The keynote “Well-being and AI” opened a timely conversation: as technology becomes more present in education, what must remain unmistakably human?

Across the day, one idea kept returning: innovation is useful only when it strengthens rather than displaces the conditions in which people flourish - connection, agency, emotional awareness, trust and meaningful relationships.

> *“Technology may change the tools of education. It does not remove the need for people to feel seen, connected and supported.”*

The conference also challenged the assumption that well-being is “soft”. In a profession built on attention, relationships and constant decision-making, well-being shapes how educators can show up for others.

AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

Well-being becomes real through practice

After the presentations, the conference deliberately changed pace. Participants were invited to feel, move, notice, connect and reflect. The workshop sequence turned well-being from an abstract idea into something concrete and memorable.

Mood Meter

Notice and name how you feel.

Breathing

Use the breath as a simple regulating tool.

Kindness

Explore small actions that shape group climate.

Touch & gratitude

Reconnect through appreciation and human contact.

Movement

Use physical activity to shift energy and attention.

Social connection

Treat relationships as a well-being resource.

> *“The strength of WINS lies in combining reflection with experience: people are more likely to use a strategy when they have first felt what it does for them.”*

FRANCE

Sleep: the underrated well-being strategy



The French contribution focused on something universal, free and often neglected: sleep. The session used humour to make a serious point - recovery is not separate from professional well-being; it supports attention, patience, empathy, mood and decision-making.

ENOUGH	REGULAR	LIGHT
COOL	CALM	SHORT

> *"Strategic rest beats heroic exhaustion."*

SHARED REFLECTIONS

What the day made visible

The sessions were different, but several messages converged. Well-being cannot be left to chance, and it cannot depend on one enthusiastic teacher. It has to be made visible, discussed openly and supported by routines, leadership and relationships.

Emotional climate is contagious

The way a team relates, regulates stress and communicates affects the wider school environment.

Connection protects

Combating loneliness and creating real human connection are part of mental health and well-being.



Metrics are not the whole story

Too much measurement can add pressure if it is not balanced by trust, purpose and professional autonomy.

Strategies must be practised

Awareness matters, but well-being improves when people have concrete ways to respond to stress and challenge.

> *“Every organisation can put well-being on the agenda. The first step is to make it visible.”*

PORTUGAL

Savouring, food and culture

The final part of the day reminded participants that well-being is not only something to analyse. It is also something to notice and enjoy. Planning, doing what we value, savouring food and sharing culture all featured in the closing sequence.



> *"Well-being is strengthened not only by coping with difficulty, but also by learning to notice what is already good."*

The conference closed with a Happiness and Culture Walk and an Arraial Minhoto - a traditional Portuguese celebration at the Regional Museum. It was an appropriate ending: connection, place, food and shared experience brought the day's ideas to life.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

From a conference to lasting change

A final conference can easily become a conclusion. WINS treated it as a handover point: from project activity to local ownership, continued training, school experimentation and stronger links between practice and policy.

1 Train
Give educators opportunities to experience well-being strategies themselves.

→

2 Experiment
Adapt the tools to real schools, teams and learners.

3 Share
Use ambassadors, networks and national hubs to spread practice.

→

4 Sustain
Connect practice with leadership, policy, funding and long-term structures.

> *“Well-being should not depend on a temporary project. It should become part of the way schools organise learning, relationships and support.”*

RESOURCES AND NEXT STEPS

The WINS legacy

The conference brought together the project's central message: educator well-being, emotional intelligence and supportive school cultures belong together. The work continues through the resources, training pathways and networks created by WINS.

Project website

wins.eprami.pt

News, project outputs and partnership information.

WINS App

wins.lusoinfo.com

Practical access to WINS well-being resources.

Policy recommendations

WINS final recommendations

Practical actions for schools and school authorities.

Impact & sustainability

Evidence, ambassadors and hubs

Keeping the work visible and active beyond the project.

> *"Well-being in education is not one activity, one training or one project. It is a culture we build together."*

WINS - Well-being In Networking Schools
Erasmus+ KA220-SCH | Project No. 2024-1-PT01-KA220-SCH-000257628

This booklet summarises the main themes of the WINS Final International Conference and associated WINS conference materials. It is not a verbatim transcript of individual interventions.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.