



## METACOGNITION IN EUROPEAN TEACHING: ACTIVATING MINDS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES



### THE PARTNERSHIP

**Duration:** 3 years (2015 - 2018)

**Coordinating organisation:**

ICS Giorgio Perlasca, Rome, Italy

**Participating organisations:**

Langelineskolen (Denmark),

3o Gymnasio Edessa (Greece),

Agrup. de Escolas n°1 de Serpa (Portugal)

INS Aubenç (Cat-Spain)

Hillview School for Girls (England)

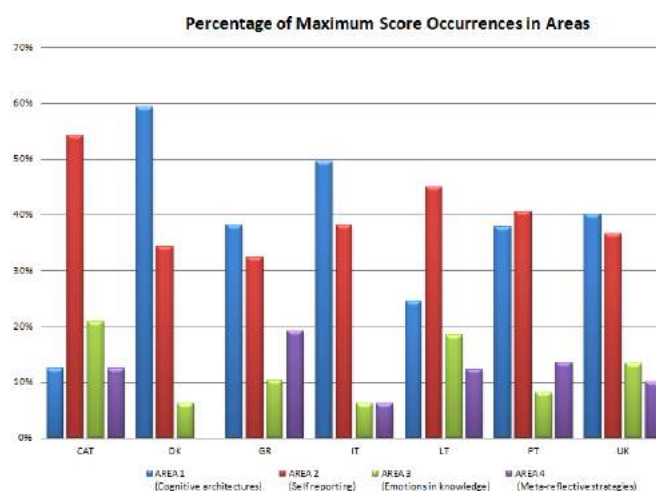
Viltis progymnasium (Lithuania)

### ABOUT THE PROJECT

The main project idea is to develop new teaching strategies to boost “learning to learn” competence in pupils through integrated action involving teachers and pupils together. METAMINDS aims to help teachers assess outcomes, modify methods and adapt to the needs and challenges of today’s classrooms, as well as increase teacher awareness of how their personal resources, professional tools, and teaching approaches can be especially useful to tackle difficult situations. At the same time, learners need to become subjects of their learning, discover their strengths and weaknesses, and learn how to be successful learners. METAMINDS will develop strategies for teachers and pupils (10-14 years of age) simultaneously, with the aim of introducing or enhancing metacognitive strategies. A **teacher training course on metacognition (O1)** and a **pupil learning-to-learn module (O2)** are being devised, pilot tested, assessed and disseminated inside the partner institutions initially and will be available online for wider use after the end of the project.

### PRELIMINARY RESULTS

As one of the aims of the METAMINDS partnership is to create a teacher training protocol on metacognitive competences, an important preliminary activity was to prepare questionnaires to be administered to as many teachers of the partner schools as possible. From December 2015 to February 2016, more than 270 teachers of the partner schools were asked to grade a set of 20 statements concerning their teaching experience. In particular, the statements investigated the teachers’ attitudes about **4 main areas: Cognitive architectures, Self-reporting, Emotions in knowledge and Meta-reflective strategies.** Furthermore, between April 2016 and July 2017 over 1260 pupils from the partner schools were asked to grade a different questionnaire based on the same 4 areas. Conclusions were made for both studies.



## THE DEVELOPMENT

METAMINDS is an ERASMUS+ project involving activities at three different levels, each with an important role within the project. At the first level, the **Scientific Committee (SC)** looks after the organisation of the research activities and designing of the main two intellectual products, the teacher training on metacognition (O1) and the pupil learning-to-learn module (O2). Besides collaborating at distance, the committee meets three times a year at **transnational project meetings**.

The second and third levels are the application of the findings of the project in the field, resulting in a resource for teachers. Groups of teachers and pupils from the partner schools interact at distance and take part in two types of mobilities: **short-term joint staff training events** and **short-term exchanges of groups of pupils**. During the first half of the project, 5 short-term joint staff training events (80 teachers) were held in Copenhagen (DK), Tonbridge (UK), Oliana (CAT-SP), Edessa (GR), Panevėžys (LT) and 3 short-term pupil exchanges (102 pupils) in Tonbridge (UK), Oliana (CAT-SP), and Panevėžys (LT).



### SHORT-TERM JOINT STAFF TRAINING EVENTS

Teachers from primary and lower secondary schools taking part have been involved in variety of activities: group work for the testing of METAMINDS tools developed by the scientific committee; job shadowing activities within their own specialism, gaining first-hand experience of teaching and learning in different European countries; conferences presenting examples of best classroom practice in host schools; high-level conferences and presentations in the field of metacognition led by researchers in the subject area, such as **Dr. Claudia Sabatano**, researcher in Pedagogy, who is part of the METAMINDS scientific committee, and **Prof. Anastasia Efklides** (Educational Psychology, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki), who specialises in metacognition.

A selected group of teachers have been invited to test the teacher training materials (O1) from the METAMINDS learning platform. After this pilot is completed, feedback of their experiences with the training materials and how these have influenced their teaching strategies will allow the research team to optimise the final training resources.

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**JOB SHADOWING  
 ACTIVITIES INSIDE  
 A REAL CLASSROOM**  
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## PUPILS' EXCHANGE

Initial work towards the second intellectual product, the pupils' learning-to-learn module (O2), has begun during the transnational meetings which included a pupils' exchange, involving a total number of 102 students. The main activities for the pupils during the exchanges have been going to classes in the host school and joining workshops to test and practice their own metacognitive strategies (for example, self-reporting the way they learn better and expressing their emotions in the learning process).

Students have also been working on expanding their awareness of metacognition in practice between mobilities, including using the eTwinning online forum to discuss their likes and dislikes about learning with students from other countries. The UK students have formed a weekly club to review their metacognitive experiences and have recently been making videos that explore the different ways to deal with conflict in education.



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THE SCHOOL OF  
MY DREAMS IS....  
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## USED TOOLS

Some tools have been created or used in the project to support and help the development of the two METAMINDS final products (Official website, E-learning platform, Blog, Twinspace)

### METAMINDS

The METAMINDS project (*Metacognition in European Teaching: Activating Minds Through the Implementation of New Development Strategies*) involves 7 Primary/ Lower secondary schools from 7 different European countries (IT, DK, GR, LT, PT, SP, UK) in a strategic partnership within the framework of the Erasmus + KA2 action.

It focuses on a series of relevant issues affecting education institutions today and is meant to address them by creating a training opportunity for both teachers and pupils.

What are today's major challenges in Education? Are teachers and learners always aware of all the methods and ingredients they have at hand to create educational success? Some of them are natural master chefs and they just know, almost instinctively, the right recipe. However, in such an increasingly complex and challenging context like today's, lots of teachers and learners experience frustration and a sense of failure.

Fostering metacognitive teaching/learning strategies to help teachers become more flexible, make pupils aware of their role of learners and improving transversal skills such as learning-to learn can tackle the root cause of problems such as: teachers' difficulties to adapt their teaching styles to pupils' changed attitudes, to the introduction of ITC classroom and to mixed abilities classes; pupils' lacking motivation and self confidence, and experiencing repeated school failure.

➔ Read more: METAMINDS

[HTTP://WWW.METAMINDSERASMUSPLUS.EU/](http://www.metamindserasmusplus.eu/)