ANNUAL REPORT 25/26

Emotional Compass

We help children to work with their emotions and build kind relationships. When they are not able to, the consequences are critical.

Co-funded by the European Union within the framework of the Impact Lab Accelerator of Slovak CSOs project. The views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). The European Union and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency cannot be held responsible for them.

WHY WE EXIST

Emocionálny Kompas is a social and emotional learning programme designed for class teachers. It helps children, teachers and families work with emotions in a healthy way and build kind relationships.

- More than half of 15-year-olds report problems with emotions and behaviour, and the trend is rising (HBSC 2021/2022)
- More than 95% of teachers experience stress at work, at varying levels of intensity (Teacher Well-being Index Slovakia 2021)
- Social and emotional skills rank among the most sought-after skills in the labour market (World Economic Forum 2025)

Emocionálny Kompas was built for the Slovak school environment, based on proven international practice, on research evidence, and on repeated rounds of feedback from the teachers who use it in their own classrooms. It requires no external specialist and no hours of preparation. It gives the teacher ready-made, grade-specific methodology guides with activities she can use in the morning circle, in the weekly homeroom period, or dedicated lessons across the whole school year.

Emotional literacy cannot be taught in a few lessons. It is built through repetition, through returning to the same themes at a new age, and through the child hearing the same language of emotions year after year and classroom after classroom.

What was special about this year?

2025/2026 was the first year in which Emocionálny Kompas covered the entire primary school, and the year in which we passed a major milestone of more than 1,000 participating classes. From preschool classes in kindergartens through grades 1 to 9, every grade now has its own ready-made programme. We also moved beyond the gates of primary schools and developed our first programme for secondary schools.

A child can now complete the whole path with Emocionálny Kompas from kindergarten onwards, and from September 2026 continue with it at secondary school. For the first time, schools have a tool for bringing these topics into every grade, week after week. And because the programme is free and available online, a school in a regional capital or a small rural multi-grade school have exactly the same access to it, regardless of budget.

After four years of operation, this fundamentally changes what we bring to schools and the scale of change we can achieve.

What does this mean for society?

When children don't learn to work with what they're experiencing, nothing dramatic happens right away. That's exactly what's most treacherous about it. The child simply blows up a little more often, concentrates a little less, withdraws from the group a little sooner. Each of those situations on its own is manageable. Together, they form a path that does not end at the school gate. A child who does not feel safe achieves less academically and loses their relationship to school.

Unnamed tension turns into anxiety that the child carries onwards. And a child who cannot work with their own fear and anger is more vulnerable to anyone who offers them a simple culprit — and then we read about the manosphere and about polarisation.

> Long-term research also shows that emotionality and relationships are not just an add-on or a matter of personal well-being. Children with higher social skills were **54% more likely** to graduate from high school and **twice as likely** to have a college degree for every additional point. The opposite trend is even more telling: each point less meant, for example, a 67% higher probability of being arrested or a **64% higher probability** of being in juvenile detention.

What a child learns about their own emotions in the first years of school is therefore a precondition for education, not a supplement to it.



Emotions and relationships surround us all the time. Our vision is for all children to learn about how to work with sadness and anger in a healthy way, about joy, kindness and cooperation, just as they learn math or literature. In this way, we can build a kinder society. Thank you for being with us.



Lenka Svoradova and Anna Vilchova
co-founders of the Emotional Compass

SCHOOL YEAR 2025/2026 IN NUMBERS

1 050+
classrooms

25 000+
children

372
schools

8/8
regions of Slovakia

73 %
schools from 2023 continue to this day



Growth in the number of classes involved since the pilot year 2022/2023.

Where was it like at the beginning of the year?

In the fall, teachers rated the most important skills as the worst:

- children's ability to name emotions at **2.9 out of 5**
- manage them healthily at **2.8 out of 5**

In schools with a majority of children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, **ratings were up to 50–61% lower.**

What we achieved

At the end of the year, teachers assessed the improvement in the classrooms:

	All classes in the program	Classes that used Kompas to the fullest
The ability to name emotions	87 %	93 %
The ability to express emotions in a safe way	84 %	89 %
Acts of kindness	77 %	98 %
Managing anger and conflict	67 %	86 %
Concentration of students	48 %	68 %

17 500+
children in 413 schools and organizations were impacted by our methodologies for managing difficult situations and for teams with children from Ukraine

25%
better results in emotion regulation among male and female students in the program compared to peers from the same school

488
parents registered for a webinar on help with working with emotions in themselves and their children.

AI in a new curriculum for high schools
167 teachers from 70 secondary schools registered before the start of the school year

Children in Slovakia are not able to express what they feel

And it affects the most vulnerable ones the most. We found that out at the beginning of the school year and built on that with other activities.

In autumn 2025, **422 teachers across Slovakia** and across grade levels completed the Emocionálny Kompas baseline questionnaire. They rated children's abilities, the classroom climate and their own mental health on a five-point scale. **The result was unambiguous. The very lowest ratings went to three things that form the absolute foundation of emotional literacy, and subsequently of kind relationships and of the ability to concentrate:**

2,89	2,77	2,76
ability to name what they feel	know how to deal with that feeling safely	and being able to actually do it

Average rating on a scale of 1–5 (N = 422).

In all three areas, teachers leaned towards the view that children in schools do not have these skills. In other words, **most teachers say at the start of the year that their children lack the vocabulary for what they are experiencing and lack the tools to deal with their emotions.**

Children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds are deprived of emotional skills too

The gap in the ability to name and safely express emotions was visible even among the schools already in our programme. **In schools where children from socially disadvantaged backgrounds make up 80% or more of pupils, teachers rated, compared with other schools:**

- children's ability to name their emotions **50% lower**
- their ability to name and demonstrate healthy ways of managing emotions **61% lower**

Comparably large gaps did not appear when comparing urban and rural schools, or across regions.

Just naming an emotion already helps children regulate

Naming an emotion is not merely a descriptive skill, it is itself a regulatory mechanism. In neuroscience the effect is known as affect labelling, and studies show that when a person assigns a word to what they are experiencing, activity in the amygdala — the "emotional" part of the brain that triggers the alarm response — decreases, while activity rises in the prefrontal cortex, the "reasoning" part that lets us gain control over our feelings and the situation.

This determines the order in which skills can be built. Without vocabulary for their own state, a child has nothing to regulate and cannot choose a strategy, because they do not know what they are choosing it for. Without the ability to recognise a state in themselves, they cannot recognise it in someone else, which removes the foundation of empathy. Naming emotions is therefore the gateway to all other social and emotional skills, not one skill among many.

That is why every Emocionálny Kompas methodology guide, for every grade, **opens with activities devoted to working with emotions and naming them.** With each age group the vocabulary of emotions widens and becomes more precise, and without it the rest of the methodology would have nothing to stand on. Only after naming do we build the further layers: safe expression of emotions and management of anger in the unit The World of Emotions; cooperation, kindness, conflict resolution and acceptance of diversity in the unit Living Together; and finally self-confidence, perseverance and character skills in the unit I Trust Myself and I Improve. At lower-secondary level a project-based component is added, in which pupils apply the skills they have learned in a real situation outside the classroom.

A child who can say "I am scared" experiences less intense fear than a child who has only unnamed tension in their body.

We offer the tool that teachers need

That same baseline questionnaire also brought a second, far more hopeful finding. While children's skills received the lowest ratings, **the highest ratings at the start of the school year were the ones teachers gave themselves:** 3.88 out of 5 for how they feel in their own classroom and 3.86 for understanding their own emotions. **In other words, the people who are with children every day have a relationship to emotions and feel they have something to pass on in this area.**

The problem is that they have no tools to pass it on. **Slovak school system does not give the teacher a methodology for systematically building children's emotional vocabulary and coping tools, grade by grade and week by week. This is where Emocionálny Kompas comes in** — as a ready-made tool for work the teacher already wants to do today.

> From September 2026, a new State Educational Curriculum applies to all primary schools in Slovakia, obliging schools to develop social and emotional skills. Emocionálny Kompas is the only practical tool developed for Slovak schools that provides year-round development of social and emotional literacy for every grade.

95,6 %

of teachers named “ready-made methodology and prepared activities” as what helped them the most during the year. No other factor, not leadership support, not education, not collaboration with colleagues, came close to this number.

> *"The materials are very helpful to me. On the one hand, they help me, as all the materials are provided for us, which I can easily look at before class. On the other hand, I see the benefit for the students."*
>
> **Teacher Nikoleta, 6th grade, Košice region**

And this is precisely why this year brought about what is the core of this whole report: a programme that began as help for one teacher with one class reached all nine grades, 372 schools and more than 25,000 children.

RESULTS OF THE SCHOOL YEAR 2025/2026

How Emocionálny Kompas changes children and whole classrooms

In autumn it was confirmed to us that what we do is something children are missing. In June we asked what had changed over the school year.

The results below are an average across all participating classes — from those where teachers ran Emocionálny Kompas every week to those that only got to it occasionally. And that is exactly why these numbers are good news: they show what the programme can do under completely ordinary Slovak school conditions. In the classes where Emocionálny Kompas worked best, the results are significantly higher still.

THE GREATEST IMPACT IN THE AREA OF GREATEST NEED

87 %

of teachers said that Emocionálny Kompas improved children's ability to name emotions.

The very skill that was rated the worst in the fall has changed the most over the year. It is also the skill that opens up all the others: a child who can say "I am angry" suddenly has something to regulate and, as a result, can build better relationships or work more effectively with a mistake.



> *"What resonated with me most was a situation where one pupil, who used to scribble all over his exercise books, suddenly identified that he was nervous because he could not solve the problems in the workbook. He named what he was experiencing and was then able to take an anti-stress toy and cope with it."*
>
> **Teacher Andrea, 4th grade, Trenčín Region**

> *"What pleased me most was when the children spontaneously began to use what they had learned during the program, even outside of the activities themselves. During one conflict, instead of arguing, they stopped, named their feelings, and looked for a solution together."*
>
> **Teacher Iveta, 3rd grade, Košice region**

HEALTHIER EXPRESSIONS

84 %

of teachers said that Emocionálny Kompas improved children's ability to express emotions safely.

Naming a feeling is the first step; dealing with it without hurting anyone is the second. But different things help different people during strong emotions, and universal instructions of the "when you are angry, do this" type do not work for everyone. In Emocionálny Kompas we help children and teachers explore different techniques together and choose the ones that work best for them.



> *"When one student got angry and went to respond to anger with a fight, another classmate, who has a speech problem and has a very hard time understanding him, started showing him how to breathe with his fingers to calm him down. He showed him a way to safely manage anger, moving his fingers up and down and using inhales and exhales. It was really beautiful! The individual activities are great, because here is an example of how even a student with a speech therapy problem can use them and without words."*
> **Teacher Michaela, 1st grade, Košice region**

> *"For example, during an argument, two students used the naming of how they felt and what was happening in their bodies, on their own. And then they subsequently resolved the dispute. Some students told me that they tried several breathing techniques in stressful situations. Or the 5,4,3,2,1 method when they couldn't sleep. "*
> **Teacher Lucia, 5th grade, Banská Bystrica region**

> *"I had a student who really consistently, while dealing with the emotion of anger, worked on managing it without exploding (as he usually did). We also communicated this with his parents and when I look back at it now at the end of the year, his management of this emotion has definitely improved by 50-60%. The student reacts more calmly and knows how, or even where, he can process his anger (counting, ninja breath, in a safe corner)."*
> **Teacher Miroslava, 1st grade, Prešov Region**

BETTER TEAMS

81 %

of teachers said that Emocionálny Kompas improved the atmosphere and cooperation in their class.

A good atmosphere is not a skill that someone can be taught. It arises only where a class has a shared language and feels safe using it. That makes it the best evidence that Emocionálny Kompas does not merely deliver ordinary activities, but changes how a class functions, thanks to the structure of the programme.



> *"I was a new class teacher for the fifth graders, and the time I spent with them in the program helped me strengthen my relationship with them. I was on a longer leave at the end of the year and when I came to see them, they said they missed me (it's mutual). Thanks to the program, I also gained the trust of a student on the autism spectrum."*
> **Teacher Alena, 5th grade, Žilina Region**

> *"I was pleased when students began to talk more openly about their feelings and listen to each other more during the activities. One student, who normally did not participate in discussions, dared to name his feelings during the emotions activity, and his classmates supported him without ridicule. It was nice to watch how an atmosphere of greater trust, respect, and empathy gradually developed in the classroom."*
> **Teacher Mariana, 1st grade, Banská Bystrica Region**

AND NOT JUST FOR CHILDREN

74 %

of teachers said that thanks to Emocionálny Kompas they feel better in their own classroom.

The programme does not change only children. A teacher who knows in the morning what each child has arrived at school with teaches differently and goes home carrying less.

> *"I find learning in the classroom very enjoyable because there is a calm and open atmosphere. The children are not afraid to express their feelings and I can adapt the activities in the class accordingly. Depending on the morning expression of feelings, I chose activating or calming games and then learning was enjoyable."*
> **Teacher Adriana, 1st grade, Žilina Region**

> *"Emotional Compass helped me discover the world of my students during activities about social networks and their idols - they enjoyed this and spontaneously started talking. I think that thanks to Compass, the girls started to open up to me more, they spontaneously called me over for a chat, where they confided in me what was bothering them."*
> **Teacher Darina, 7th grade, Žilina Region**





SUMMARY OF IMPACT AREAS: TEACHERS' RATINGS AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR

Emocionálny Kompas helped children improve	Agreement
The ability to name emotions	87,3 %
The ability to express emotions in a safe way	83,5 %
Classroom atmosphere	81,5 %
Cooperation between pupils	81,0 %
How often do acts of kindness happen?	76,6 %
Feeling that teachers feel more comfortable in the classroom	74,1 %
Children's relationship to school	68,9 %
Managing anger and conflict	66,9 %
Supporting children with special needs in the classroom	61,4 %
Concentration of students	48,2 %

Results on a 5-point scale. In previous years, we measured results on a 4-point scale.
The results vary by grade — in the first grade, teachers confirm 7.6 out of ten changes, in the second grade, 6.6.

For the first time, we compared classes that worked with the Emocionálny Kompas and those that did not.

For the first time we compared results from the same school between classes that do and do not run the Emocionálny Kompas programme. Two primary schools took part, with classes in grades 4 and 8.

According to teachers' ratings, pupils in the "Kompas" and "non-Kompas" classes did not differ in emotional regulation at the start of the school year; in the Kompas class, pupils were 6% more advanced in empathy at the start of the year. Significant differences appeared during the mapping in the following areas:

The measurement included 93 children. In addition to the teachers' evaluation, the children were also evaluated using standardized questionnaires. Since there was a difference between the children in the program and those outside it at the beginning, it was not possible to implement a standard control measurement. Questionnaires were also filled out by parents, and the data is in the process of being processed.

+23 %
better emotional regulation after three months

+25 %
better emotional regulation at the end of the school year

+16 %
better expression of empathy after three months

Comparison with classmates from the same school outside the program.

There was also a small difference in favour of the Emocionálny Kompas classes in cooperation, but it was not statistically significant. This is consistent with the research. Children must first learn to recognise and manage their own emotions, and only once they can do that are they able to apply these skills in contact with others — which is why improvement in social skills comes later.

IMPLEMENTATION MAPPING

Under what conditions does Emocionálny Kompas work best?

Having surpassed 1,000 participating classes, we adjusted our approach to impact measurement at the end of the school year.

Not whether the programme works, but when it works best.

In the programme's early years we focused on research measurement of impact on pupils (pre-post measurement using observation sheets, and at lower-secondary level also pupil questionnaires). **These repeatedly produced similar results: the strongest improvements appeared in children's ability to name emotions and to know and demonstrate healthy ways of managing them (improvements of 26–45%).**

In the 2025/26 school year we therefore decided to begin mapping the programme's implementation: how often, in which formats and under what conditions it is delivered, and what improves or hinders delivery. This also corresponds to international evidence — in school-based social and emotional learning programmes, the quality and intensity of delivery is a stronger predictor of outcomes than the content of the programme itself.

Building on these findings, from autumn 2026 we will run focus groups with teachers. The output will be a proposal for adapting the programme and for spreading good practice across participating and new schools, as well as towards state institutions.

How does Emocionálny Kompas need to be run to be effective?

Our program is based on data from international research. These are quite clear in that the quality of the development of healthy emotional work and loving relationships is determined by the following rules:

1. **Regularly, not sporadically. Programs that have more than ten meetings per year yield significantly better results.**
2. **Cover as much as possible, rather than picking a few activities. The effects of programs are two to three times higher where the teacher teaches a larger part of the methodology.**
3. **Its own slot in the timetable, not just part of other classes.**
4. **Activities following the SAFE principle = sequenced, active, with time to practise, and with an explicitly named skill that they develop.**

> **Emocionálny Kompas is therefore set up to be implemented:**
>
> **Primary level (grades 1–4):** twice a week for 15 minutes in the morning circle, plus once a week for 45 minutes in the homeroom period or another full lesson; at least 60% of the activities in the methodology.
> **Lower-secondary level (grades 5–9):** once a week for 45 minutes; at least 60% of the activities in the methodology.

There is a group of teachers who use Emocionálny Kompas exactly as it was designed and these classes have seen the most significant improvements.

Impact area	Ideal implementation	Other classes	Difference (percentage points)
The ability to name emotions	93 %	87 %	**6**
The ability to express emotions in a safe way	89 %	83 %	**6**
Children's relationship at school	84 %	72 %	**12**
Managing anger and conflict	86 %	66 %	**20**
How often do acts of kindness happen?	98 %	80 %	**18**
Collaboration between students	91 %	80 %	**11**
Feeling that teachers feel comfortable in the classroom	89 %	74 %	**15**
Classroom atmosphere	86 %	83 %	**3**
Concentration of students	68 %	53 %	**15**
Supporting children with special needs in the team	75 %	60 %	**15**

Notes:
Ideal implementation - the teacher meets all three conditions at once: implements activities at least twice a week, completes at least 60% of the methodology, and alternates between 15-minute and 45-minute activities.

Others - all those who did not meet at least one of the three conditions. So this is not a group that does not do the program: most of them implement it, they just do not meet one of the conditions.

How close are the others? Another 27% meet two of the three conditions, 25% meet one, and 28% meet none. Among those that lack a single condition, the most common is the alternation of formats.

While across all primary-level classes teachers confirm on average 7.4 out of the ten changes tracked, in this group the figure is 8.6 out of ten.

In the 2025/2026 school year, 369 teachers responded, for this reason we have optimized the Teacher Portal for the next school year so that the questionnaire is a mandatory part of participation in the program and access to the methodologies.

Managing anger and conflict is confirmed by 86% of these teachers compared with 66% of the others — a difference of twenty percentage points. Acts of kindness in class are seen by 98% compared with 80%. Improvement in pupils' concentration, otherwise the slowest-changing area of the whole programme, is reported by 68% compared with 53%. And support for classmates with special needs — that is, a class's ability to look after its most vulnerable members — is confirmed by 75% compared with 60%.

In other words: in a class where Emocionálny Kompas is delivered in full, it is almost certain that children will be kinder to one another. And it is more likely that they will learn not to shout when they are angry, that they will manage to stay focused, and that they will notice a classmate who is having a hard time.

What did schools tell us about how Emocionálny Kompas actually runs?

Primary level (grades 1–4)	
Frequency	84% carry out activities at least once a week
Range	53% passed at least 60% of the methodology
Method	the most common is the classroom lesson (34%)
Parents	34% send worksheets or topics home
Formats	52% only 15-min activity, 39% combination

Lower-secondary level (grades 5–9)	
Frequency	56% carry out activities at least once a week
Range	42% passed at least 60% of the methodology
Method	the most common is the classroom lesson (61%)
Parents	44% send worksheets home

What next?

One fifth of primary-level teachers currently work with Emocionálny Kompas in full, and it is in their classes that we see the strongest results. A further quarter are separated from them by a single condition.

The number one barrier to delivering the programme is lack of time in the timetable, cited by half of all teachers. For September 2026 we have already prepared a practical guide for them on how to build the programme into the school educational programme. We also need to expand the database of practice examples and activities for difficult situations — the form of support most frequently identified by teachers in the questionnaire. And in line with international good practice, we must focus on ensuring that Emocionálny Kompas at a school does not rest on a single teacher and maintains continuity across educational levels.

The good news is that we already have schools that have found the solution themselves: at several schools, Emocionálny Kompas runs as a standalone subject across multiple grades.

These are exactly the schools we want to map, and whose experience we want to spread further.

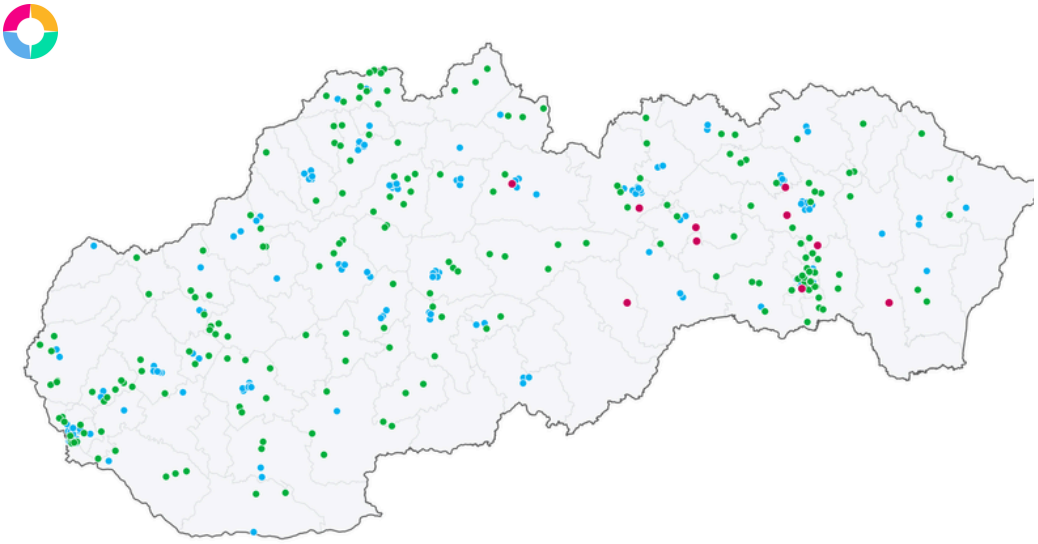
School year 2025/2026 in numbers

The second year of distributing the programme through the online Teacher Portal. And the year in which we passed one thousand participating classes.

372 schools have now joined the program ...

The 2025/2026 school year was the second year of distributing the programme through the online Teacher Portal. And the year in which **we reached the milestone of more than 1,000 participating classes across all grades of primary schools throughout Slovakia.** Alongside teachers, school leadership teams and school support teams were able to register on the portal for the first time, so that every teacher introducing the programme has backing within her own school. 98 school leadership teams and 240 members of school support teams and other pedagogical staff made use of this.

In total, we had an impact on approximately 25,000 children.



...and they stay with us

73% of the schools that joined in 2023 continued this year as well.

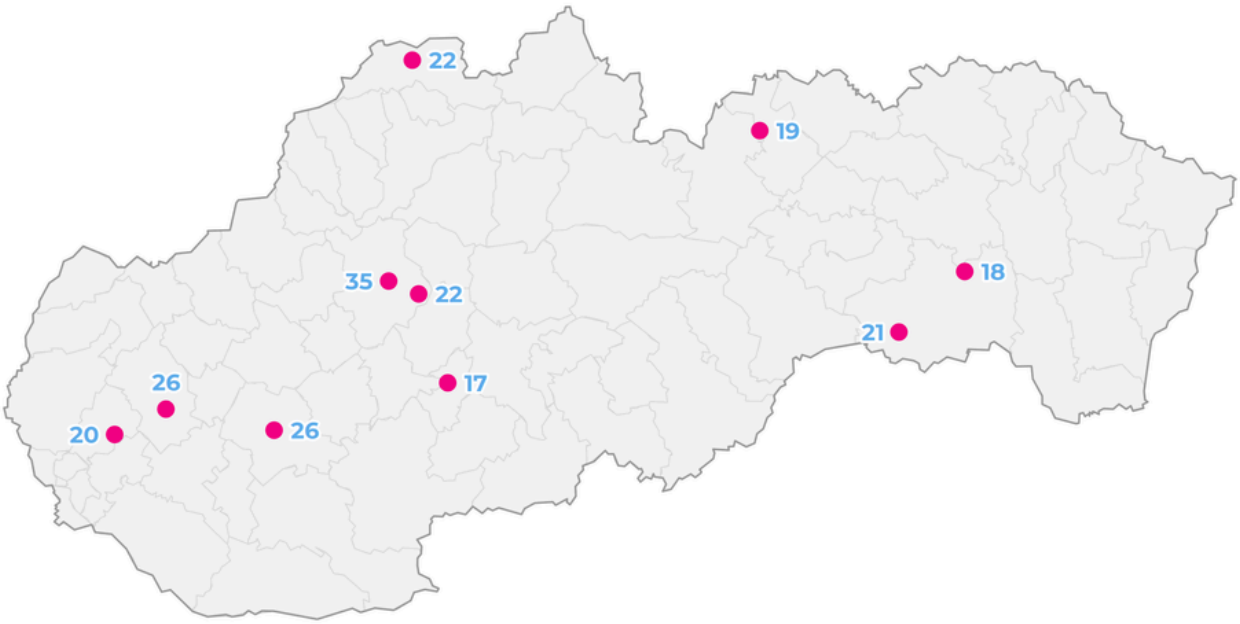
> *"I have been working with the Emotional Compass for the third year. It is the most beautiful part of the day for me. Basically, the entrance to the day, since we implement it in morning circles. It is beautiful for me to see how students who have been participating in it for the third year are growing in communication, naming and identifying their emotions. The overall climate in the classroom has improved significantly. It has brought more peace."*
> **Teacher Mária from Ľubovec, currently in 3rd grade**

> *"The Emotional Compass has been part of my classroom lessons for two years now and I wouldn't change it. The materials are very helpful to me. On the one hand, they help me, and on the other, I see the benefits for the students. They learn to name emotions, work with them, and they enjoy the activities very much."*
> **Teacher Nikola, 6th grade**

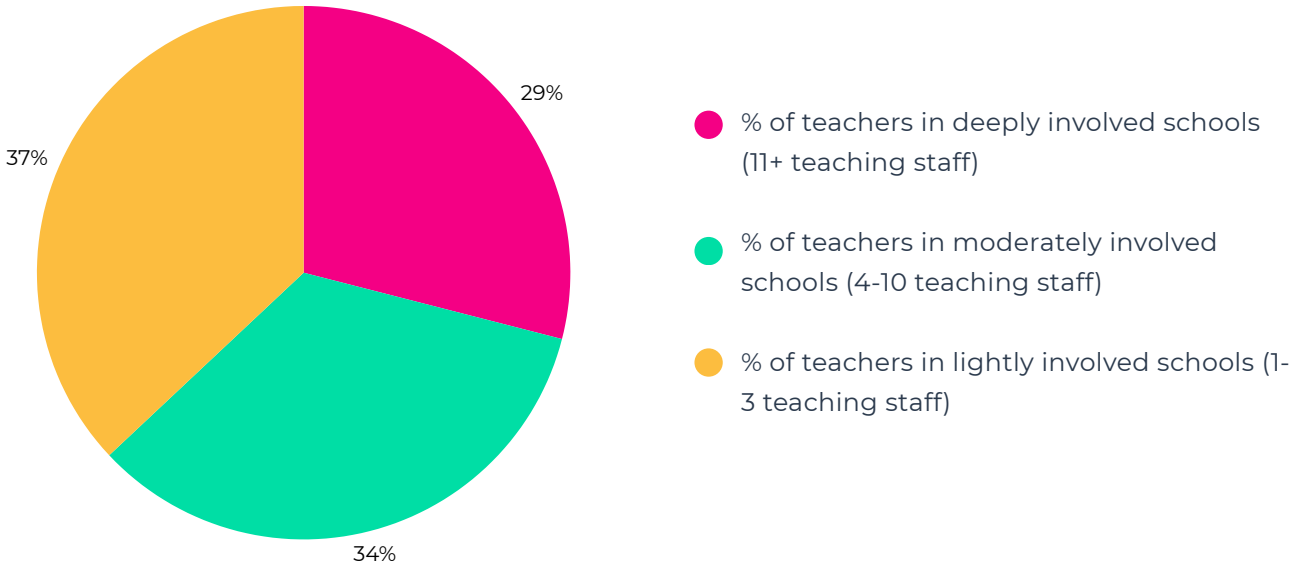
We grow vertically and horizontally

The programme is not growing only geographically, but also within individual schools. Most schools in the programme started with one or two classes. Today almost 60% of teachers work at schools where more than five members of the teaching staff are involved.

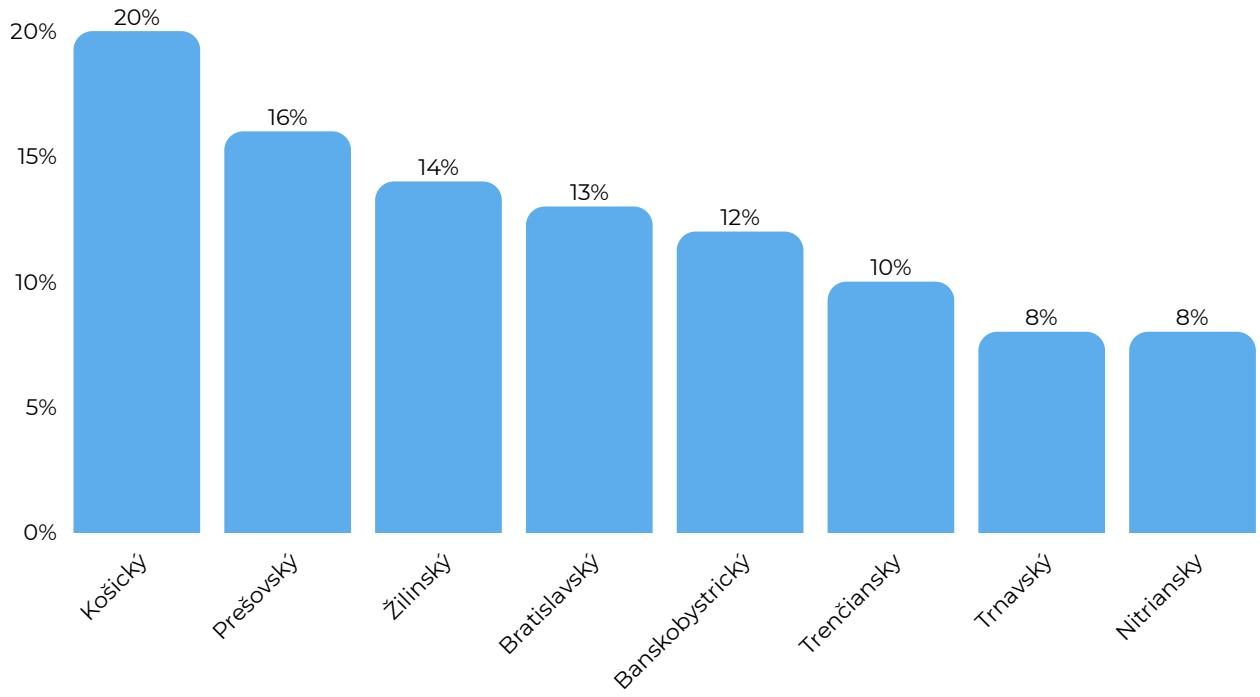
Top 10 schools by number of participating classes:



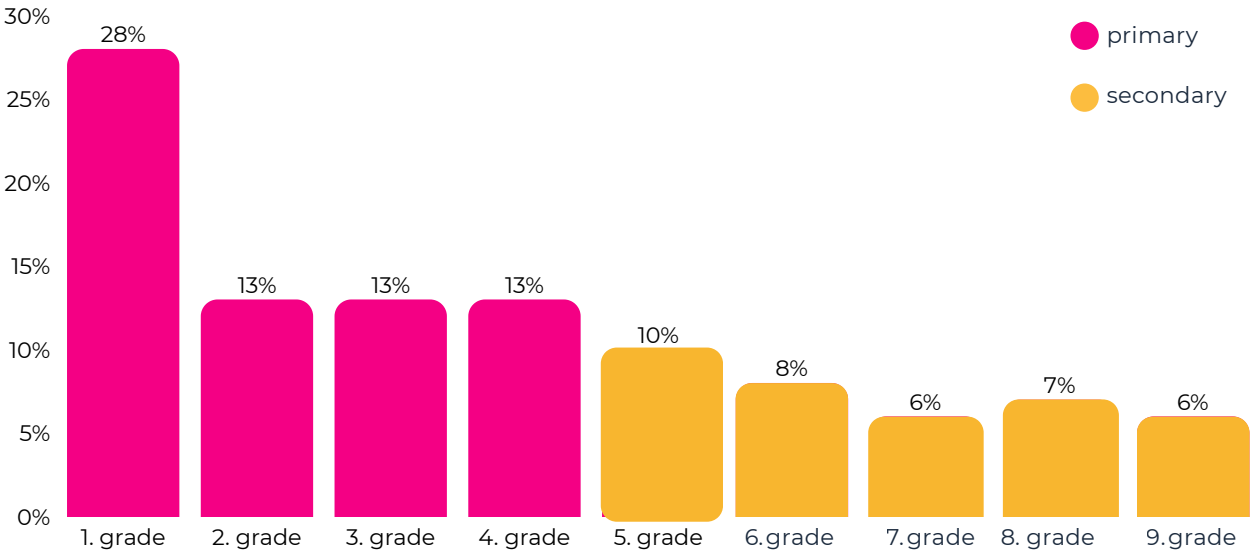
These schools account for a total of 21% of all teachers in the program.



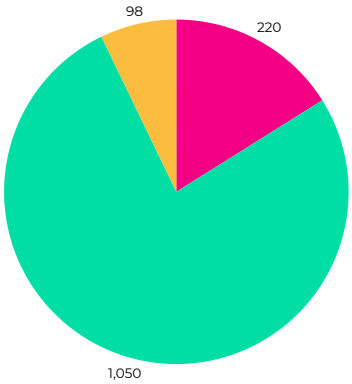
Participation by region - the program covers all 8 regions



More than 1,050 classroom teachers



Structure of registered (372 participating schools)



- Class teachers
- School support teams and other educators
- School management

Programme development in the 2025/2026 school year

New methodology, support groups, a programme for high schools, and a system that lets Kompas spread without us.

News in the program for elementary schools

Support groups for teachers (online and in person)

We launched pilot online and in-person support groups for teachers, led by psychologists Katarina Nagy Pázmány and Denisa Potančoková, resilience coach Zuzana Laurincová, and with the help of mentor and teacher Mária Leitnerová.

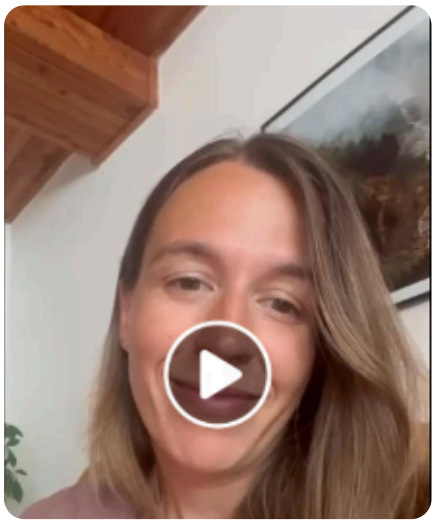
40 %
of all teachers in the programme joined the online group

5,3 / 6
overall satisfaction with the in-person groups

5
sessions of 8–10 teachers in the Žilina Region

In the online group, teachers received regular advice for different situations, webinars and emotionally supportive content. We tested in-person support groups in the Žilina Region. However, they proved unscalable because of geographical and time barriers, so we will continue with the findings from them in an online format.

The main benefits proved to be those consistent with our implementation mapping: teachers valued above all concrete examples from practice and practical guidance on how to handle them, as well as the sense that they are not facing difficult situations alone.





Updated methodologies in cooperation with INTYMYTA

In cooperation with the organisation INTYMYTA, this year we updated the methodology guides for all grades with activities on kind and respectful relationships, covering topics such as setting boundaries and recognising respectful and disrespectful behaviour in a relationship.

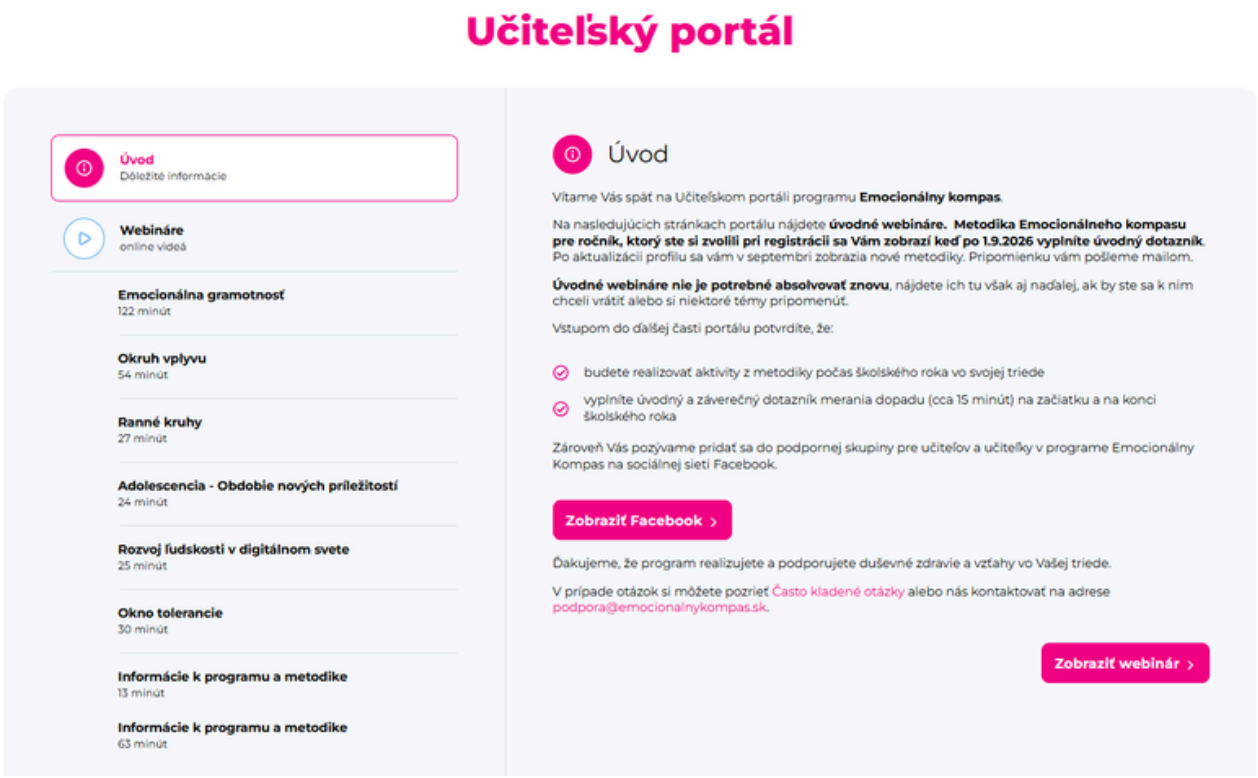
We also updated the guides with activities related to the rise of artificial intelligence: coping with change, self-confidence, and distinguishing real from AI-simulated empathy.

Development of the Teacher Portal

Since its launch in 2024, the Teacher Portal has been what makes Emocionálny Kompas available to every school in Slovakia, regardless of its budget or the size of the municipality it is in. A teacher registers, watches the introductory webinars, downloads the methodology guide for her grade, and from September works with her class.

In the 2025/2026 school year, we took the portal one step further

1. We have implemented better automated data collection on participating schools, including their evaluation. Thanks to this, we can provide targeted support to schools in their participation in real time.
2. We have adjusted the data collection so that the initial and end-of-year questionnaires are a mandatory part of the portal and their answers are automatically matched with the teachers' profiles. Starting next school year, we will have an overview of every single participating class.
3. School leadership teams and school support teams were able to register for the first time, 338 individuals made use of this.



New programme for high schools – Emocionálny Kompas in the age of AI

In the 2025/26 school year we developed our first year-long programme for secondary schools, in which 40% of activities focus on preventing risky online behaviour in the era of artificial intelligence. Our first target is to involve 150 classes in real-world testing and adaptation.

167

teachers from 70 secondary schools are registered as of July 2026 - we met the goal before the start of the school year.

The programme was created in cooperation with Prof. Vladimír Šucha (former representative of the European Commission in Slovakia), who provided the expert framework; with Zuzana Juráneková (IPčko), who provided valuable advice and comments; and with Barbora Karpíšková (AI dětem), co-author of several activities.

Why AI?

Artificial intelligence became a natural part of young people's lives faster than schools were able to react. **80% of pupils already use it** (AI Kompas 2025) — for learning, creating, searching for information, communicating, and also for working through personal questions. Almost no one is teaching them how to handle it safely. The question is therefore no longer whether young people use AI, but **how** they use it and at which moments they reach for it.

We also start from what researchers are warning about: the greatest risk of artificial intelligence is not the technology itself, **but the gradual weakening of the abilities we stop using because of it: the ability to concentrate, to think critically, to make our own decisions, to manage emotions and to build relationships.** Like muscles, these abilities develop through use and weaken without regular training.

How the program is set up

The programme begins with introductory class communities focused on getting to know one another and strengthening cohesion. Further lessons are organised into **five areas of development that correspond to the five pillars of mental resilience in the age of AI as defined by Prof. Vladimír Šucha:**

1. **Recognizing and managing emotions**
2. **Strong self-awareness**
3. **Self-confidence in decision-making & communication**
4. **Flexible thinking**
5. **Quality of relationships and connections**

Examples of activities

- **The stress we do not notice** — pupils mark on a body silhouette where they feel tension and suggest what would help them relax. First on their own, then comparing with AI's suggestion.
- **When AI is not enough** — sorting situations into those where AI helps, those where it is only a supplement, and those where you need to go to a human straight away.
- **Recognise who is really listening** — comparing a conversation with AI and with a human: how genuine and simulated empathy differ.
- **AI personas** — pupils communicate with four AI assistants with different styles and identify which type of support suits them.
- **My advice to adults in the world of AI** — pupils map how the adults around them use AI and formulate recommendations for them.



Cooperation with the Ministry of Education on the topic of AI and social and emotional skills

The Ministry of Education signed a Memorandum of partnership with us in the previous school year to strengthen healthy relationships, emotions and mental health in schools. In the 2025/2026 school year, we collaborated in the area of protecting mental well-being and the safe use of artificial intelligence.

26

methodological materials for elementary schools and other educational articles on how to use artificial intelligence in a way that does not negatively interfere with the emotions and relationships of students, as well as adults.



Pre mladších žiakov základnej školy

Aktivity zohľadňujú vývinové potreby vekovej skupiny 6 až 10 rokov. Toto obdobie je charakteristické konkrétnym myslením, učením sa cez hru, pohyb a skúsenosť a postupným rozvíjaním vzťahov s rovesníkmi.

Zobraziť metodiky

Pre starších žiakov základnej školy

Materiály zohľadňujú vývinové potreby vekovej skupiny 11–15 rokov. Toto obdobie sa vyznačuje hľadaním identity, citlivosťou na prijatie a odmietnutie, potrebou uznania a rozvíjajúcou sa schopnosťou abstraktne myslieť.

Zobraziť metodiky

Short-form and Ukrainian methodology guides

Our support methodologies for groups with children from Ukraine and for managing difficult situations have been downloaded by **more than 2,000 schools**, counseling and prevention centers (CPPs), and NGOs since 2022.

This school year the figure was 413 organisations, and the guides reached more than **17,500 children.**





Training mentors at Regional Teacher Support Centres: so Emocionálny Kompas can spread without us

From November 2025 to March 2026, in cooperation with the organisation Inklucentrum, we trained 68 mentors from Regional Teacher Support Centres (RCPÚ).

The course, "How to create a safe classroom environment for effective work with emotions and support for mental health", comprised 28 teaching hours: a full-day in-person session, three online modules, and small-group consultations addressing specific situations from schools.
We did not teach them only about the methodology. They worked with their own resources, with the fundamentals of a trauma-informed approach, with how the stress response manifests in a child's behaviour, and with how to support a child's regulation at the hardest moments. The final topic was the most practical of all: how to anchor healthy work with emotions in the everyday running of a school so that it lasts. Every graduate left with an Emocionálny Kompas trainer certificate and a manual enabling them to deliver the introductory training themselves.

85 %
rated the training with the two highest grades out of six

87,5 %
gained new knowledge and skills

NPS 80
average rating 9.3 out of 10 points

> *"The materials are worked out in detail. The teacher takes away steps that they can use the very next day."*
> **Participant of the RCPÚ training**

> *"I appreciate the professionalism and enthusiasm of the lecturers and how they were able to create a safe atmosphere."*
> **Participant of the RCPÚ training**

In the coming school year, working with selected mentors, we want to bring healthy work with emotions to hundreds more teachers from every corner of Slovakia.



Spolufinancovaný Európskou úniou

Inklucentrum

nadácia pontis

IMPACT LAB

PREPARING FUTURE TEACHERS

Under a Memorandum of cooperation, Doc. Mgr. Miroslava Lemešová, PhD. of the Faculty of Education of Comenius University, together with our expert on psychological safety, Mária Jaššová, are creating a new course for Faculty of Education students entitled "Foundations of Self-Knowledge and Inner Resilience".

PEDAGOGICKÁ FAKULTA
Univerzita Komenského
v Bratislave

PARENTAL SUPPORT

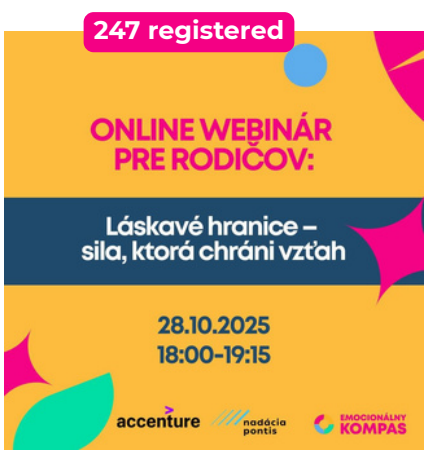
Emotional literacy does not stop at the classroom door. A child who learns at school to name anger and knows what to do with it brings this language home. And conversely, the family is the environment where everything learned can be either reinforced or undermined. International reviews of social and emotional learning therefore consistently identify family involvement as one of the conditions under which school programmes have a more lasting effect. That is why parents in Emocionálny Kompas are not merely informed — they receive concrete activities they can do with their children at home. And we develop families' social and emotional skills beyond the programme as well.



WEBINARS FOR PARENTS

Our psychological safety expert Mária Jaššová, together with Katarína Nagy Pázmány and Lucie Kubíny, conducted webinars to help parents work with their own emotions and their children. In the 2025/2026 school year, we conducted the following free webinars:







Emotional Compass at Home and Summer Compass

Emocionálny Kompas at Home was created as a thank-you to the people who support our work and help us bring social and emotional learning into schools and families. It is not a manual for parents, but a practical aid for shared conversations. It contains short activities, questions, worksheets and simple prompts that help children and parents talk to each other about emotions, relationships and coping with difficult situations.

Since 2023 more than 800 parents have received it, including more than 100 in the 2025/2026 school year.

The Summer Kompas gives families activities that strengthen healthy work with emotions and kindness over the summer holidays. **We sent it to more than 2,000 subscribers of our newsletter.**



Support for parents through the program

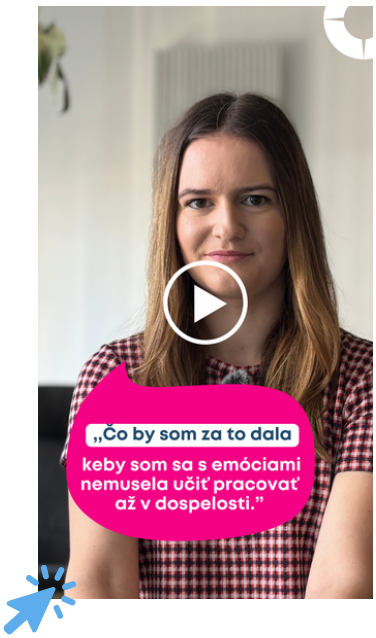
An optional part of the programme are worksheets for families accompanying every thematic area of the methodology. Parents thus receive information about the programme at school and at the same time activities for home that can strengthen social and emotional skills and, by linking activities, the school community as well. 40% of teachers stated in the final questionnaire that they had passed the worksheets on to parents.

FIRST AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

What would I give for that...

In spring 2026 we launched a campaign that combined two things: raising awareness of why social and emotional learning matters, and a call to become a regular donor to Emocionálny Kompas. It was built on a simple question that most adults ask themselves today: **what would I give to have been taught at school to work with emotions, not only with numbers?**

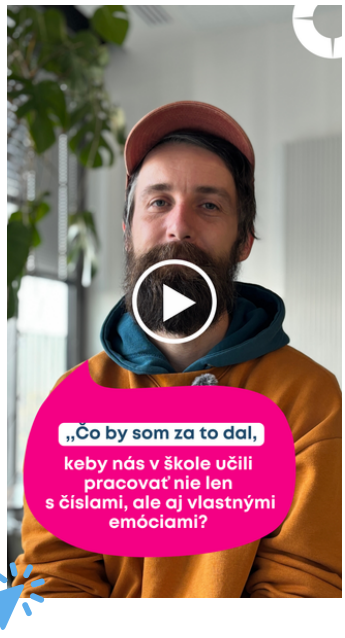
That is exactly why we let people speak, not numbers. At the heart of the campaign were five one-minute videos in which people from very different worlds answered this question: co-founder Anna, entrepreneurs Robo Dusík and Marek Greško, analyst and author Juraj Čokyna and Katarína, a mother of three. Each of them spoke about something different — their own childhood, their work with people, what they see in their own children today. Together they showed that emotional skills are not a soft topic for schools, but something a person misses their whole life if they do not receive it in time.











EVENTS AND MEDIA APPEARANCES

We talk about emotions outside of class

Conferences and events



TedX Trenčín - Anka Viľchová



ARICOMA EduHub 2026. Education in the AI era. Lenka Svoradová and key note: Emotional Compass - so we don't get lost in the AI era.



Lab forum (networking event of Pontis Impact Lab) Panel discussion First-hand: What we have done for the strength of civil society, represented by Lenka Svoradová and Aurel Olle (Leaf).



NIVAM webinar “How to develop social and emotional literacy at school?” Anna Viľchová Mária Jaššová.



EPALE - 6th Slovak-Czech EPALE conference entitled "Developing Adult Civic Skills in a Changing World". Lenka Svoradová with a lecture Are We Using Our Emotional Compass?



Future Skills Hub at The Spot - Panel Discussion - AI Expedition, When Machines Start Thinking. Lenka Svoradová, Vladimír Šucha, Rado Baťo, Miroslava Šáchová.



Incorporating healthy work with emotions and building loving relationships into teaching (conference School Vision for the 21st Century, Košice, November 2025). Lenka Svoradová and a professional workshop on how to process students' emotions.

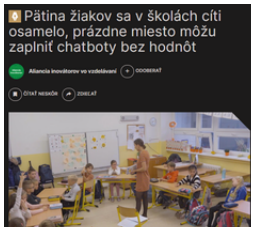


ENTER (Košice, September 2025) Anka Viľchová - How not to get lost in the online space: practical examples of digital mindfulness for students and adults. Panelovka - Anka Viľchová, T. Švrčková, D. Štrauch, J. Motešický, L. Krištofičová.

EVENTS AND MEDIA APPEARANCES

We talk about emotions outside of class

Media appearances



Eduvalue blog

- https://dennikn.sk/blog/5197904/emocionalny-kompas/



STVR

- https://www.stvr.sk/radio/archiv/1175/2754468



IEDU

- https://ai.iedu.sk/stredne-skoly-dostavaju-emocionalny-kompas/



Podcast By Yourself - Boys Don't Cry

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFMzsuw5F4g&t=1918s



Press conference with the Ministry of Education and TASR news agency

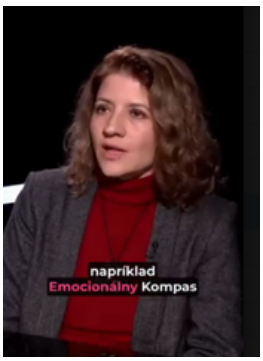
- https://www.minedu.sk/skoly-posilnia-kriticke-myslenie-aj-emocionalnu-odolnost-v-ere-umelej-inteligencie
- https://www.ta3.com/relacia/1039691/tb-t-druckera-na-temu-digitalna-koalicia-spusta-15-rocnik-it-fitness-testu

Mentions in the media - We don't talk about ourselves

Juraj Čokyna for 360tka
https://www.instagram.com/p/DTx1ty5AA3j/



Natalia Kaščáková for 360tka
https://www.instagram.com/p/DZStKXRjfli/?img_index=1



The cost of running the program

Emocionálny Kompas is free for schools and will stay free. But someone has to pay for it. **Every euro we receive we try to use as effectively as possible to maximise the number of participating schools, classes and children,** to maintain **quality** during rapid growth, and to ensure the **stability** of the organisation.

With the 25,000 children who went through the programme this year, the annual cost per child works out at approximately 6 EUR, which is significantly below international benchmarks for comparable programmes. And because we work with the same class in subsequent years as well, **this amount is spread over an ever longer period of impact.**

Just as important as the size of support is its **predictability**. Developing social and emotional skills in children takes years, which is why this school year we began systematically building a base of regular donors — people thanks to whom we can promise schools that the methodology guides will still be here for them next year.

Revenue structure in the 2025/2026 school year

Telekom Foundation	44,896 EUR
Impact Lab Accelerator of the Pontis Foundation	57,460 EUR
TAKTIK	13,750 EUR
Unicredit Bank CZ & SK	8,000 EUR
Accenture Fund	3,984 EUR
TITANS freelancers	2,700 EUR
Individual large philanthropic donations	20,000 EUR
Individual small donations, including 2% of taxes	6,077 EUR
Total:	**EUR 156,867**

Expenditure structure in the 2025/2026 school year

Program design and implementation in schools	**18 %**
External collaborations with experts on methodology development and impact measurement	**20 %**
Graphic and marketing services	**7 %**
Costs for in-person and online support for teachers in the program	**11 %**
Organization operating costs	**9 %**
Organizational leadership and project management	**35 %**

The people behind Emocionálny Kompas

Advisory Board



Robert Dusík
member of the
Advisory Board



Marek Greško
member of the
Advisory Board



Lada Kaliska
member of the
Advisory Board



Abel Ravasz
member of the
Advisory Board



Federika Plesnik
member of the Advisory Board
until June 2026

Corporate partners and governmental institutions

Spolufinancovaný Európskou úniou

nadácia pontis

IMPACT LAB

accenture

NADAČNÝ FOND TELEKOM

TITANS

TAK I K

UniCredit

MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVA, VÝSKUMU, VÝVOJA A MLÁDEŽE SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY

Individual supporters

We thank the 132 individual donors who have supported the development of Emocionálny Kompas since September 2025 with a one-off or regular donation. Your trust and generosity allow us to expand the programme and make it available to more schools and more children in Slovakia.

Thank you for your support.