



Lab-PSE



80<sup>th</sup> International Scientific  
Conference of the  
University of Latvia 2022



# The PROMEHS project

## a universal multi-component curriculum to promote mental health in schools

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Plenary Session  
Human, Technologies and Quality  
of Education

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of the European Union



# PROMEHS

## Promoting Mental Health at Schools



PROMEHS is an Erasmus + Key Actions 3 project co-funded by the European Commission (2019-2022) designed to develop, implement and evaluate a mental health promotion curriculum in schools



*Training study*  
Pre & post-test

Experimental group Vs waiting group  
Quantitative and qualitative evaluation



Collaboration among Universities, Ministries of Education, Scientific association and policy-makers



Promotion of policy innovation at local, regional, national and international level creating a bridge between evidence-based school programs and educational Institutions

# Partners



- University of Milano-Bicocca (Italy)
- Regional School Office of Lombardia (Italy) & Ministry of Education (Italy)
- University of Malta (Malta)
- University of Latvia (Latvia)
- School Regional Office of Sigulda (Latvia)
- City of Rijeka (Croatia)
- Faculty of Teacher Education University of Rijeka (Croatia)
- University Stefan Cel Mare Din Suceava (Romania)
- Inspectoratul Scolar Al Judetului Suceava (Romania)
- University of Patras (Greece)
- School of Human Kinetics (Portugal)



## Associated:

- Alliance for Childhood European Network Group
- European Association for Developmental Psychology (EADP)
- European Network for Social and Emotional Competence (ENSEC)
- Italian Association of Psychology (AIP)
- Lombardy Region
- Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab

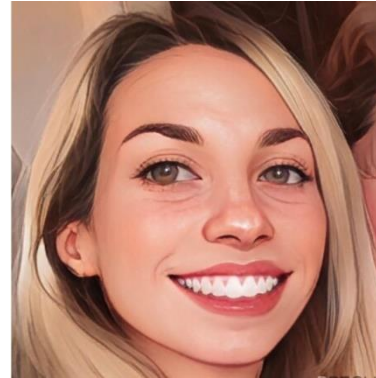
# Italian team



Ilaria Grazzani  
(Coordinator)



Alessia Agliati



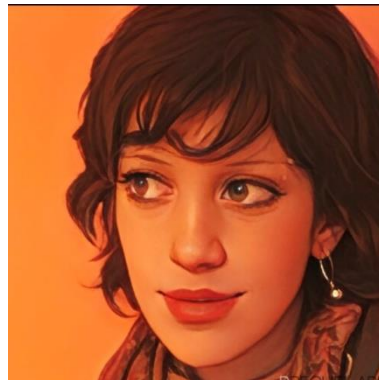
Valeria Cavioni



Elisabetta Conte



Sabina Gandellini



Francesca Micol  
Rossi



Veronica Ornaghi

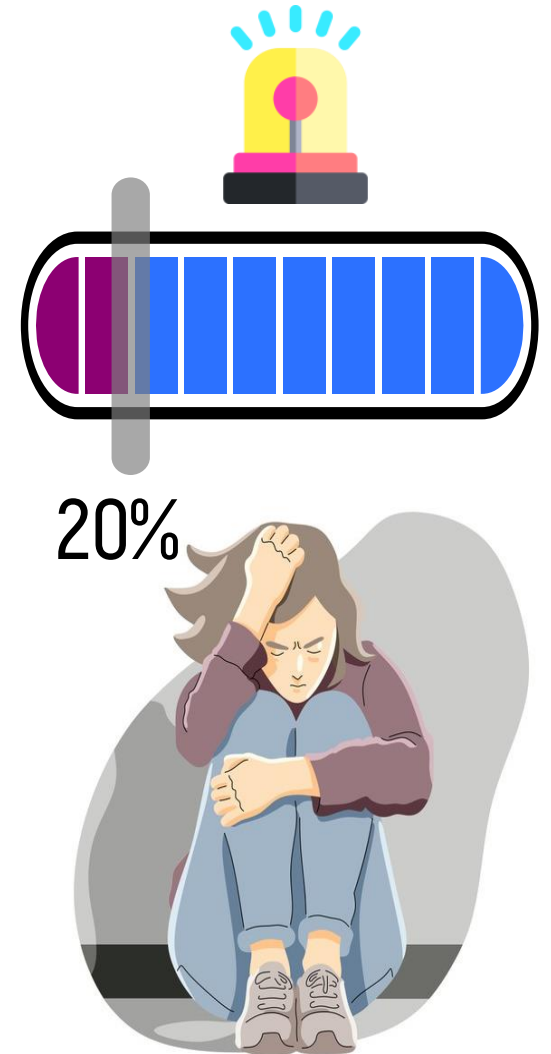
**Laboratory for  
Developmental  
and  
Educational  
Studies in  
Psychology**

[www.labpse.it/en/](http://www.labpse.it/en/)

# Global mental health emergency



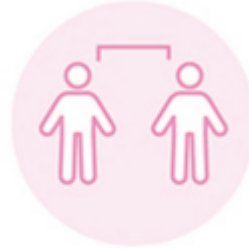
- Mental health problems among children and adolescents have been increasing over the past decades. Need for early intervention.
- Main priority of the public health agenda for WHO and EU Framework for Action on Mental Health and Well-being.
- Support mental health of students and teachers working in collaboration with developmental contexts and policy-makers (Education and Health sectors)
- Lack of evidence-based national programs in Europe



# COVID-19 impact on mental health and learning



AVOID CROWDS



KEEP DISTANCE



STAY AT HOME

## Mental health

- Depression, anxiety, stress, insomnia, irritability, inattention, anger, somatization and other disorders
- Fear of contracting the virus and about death
- Fear of separation from the family members
- Limited access to friendship groups

**Increasing  
the risk of  
multiple  
traumatic  
experiences**

## Learning

- Disruption of school routine
- Lack access to resource material
- No peer group face-to-face interactions and teacher-student relationship at school
- No opportunities of learning within a social context and developing social and emotional skills
- Lack of motivation and sense of school belonging



# Why promoting mental health in schools?

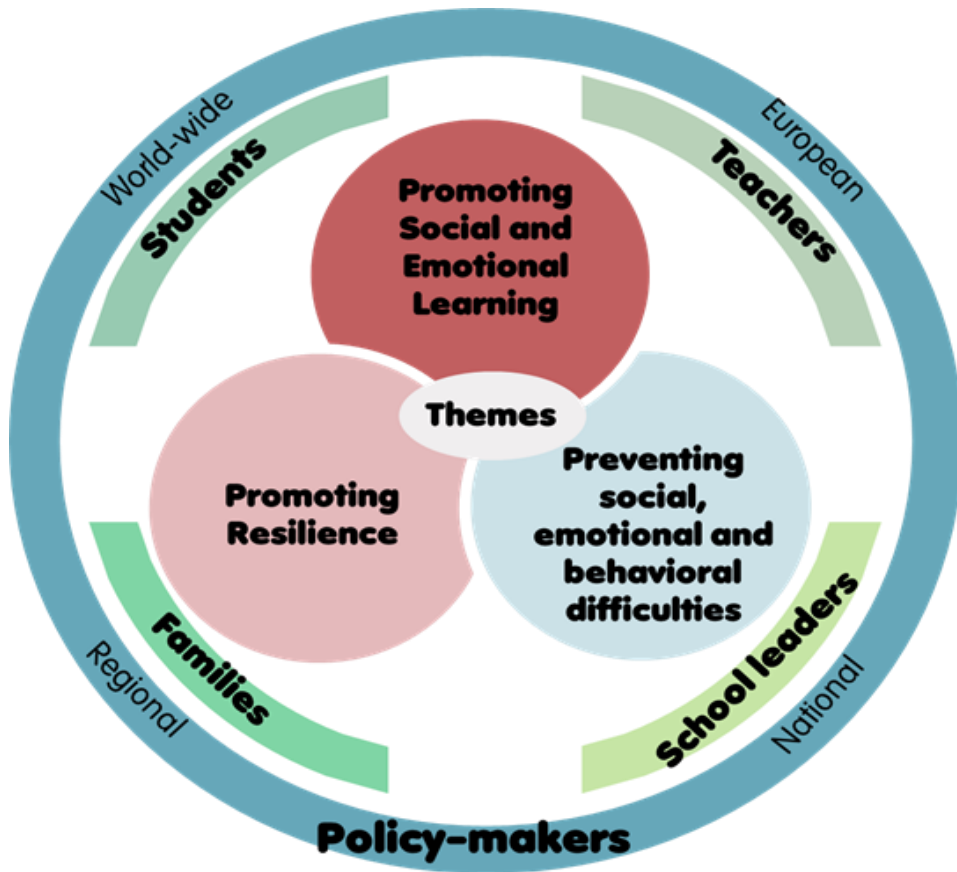


*"Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community" (WHO, 2014).*

- Schools are an ideal setting in which to promote mental health for children and youth, providing an opportunity to reach large groups of children during their formative years of cognitive, emotional and behavioural development (Weare, 2000).
- Mental health impacts on learning processes
- School-based programs can promote mental health and prevent social, emotional and behavioral difficulties both in teachers and school staff



# PROMEHS Theoretical framework



**Teachers**



**Students**



Cavioni, V., Grazzani, I., Ornaghi, V. (2020). Mental health promotion in schools: A comprehensive theoretical framework. *International Journal of Emotional Education*, 12(1), 65-82



# Principles



**Universal**



**Evidence-based**



**Embedded**

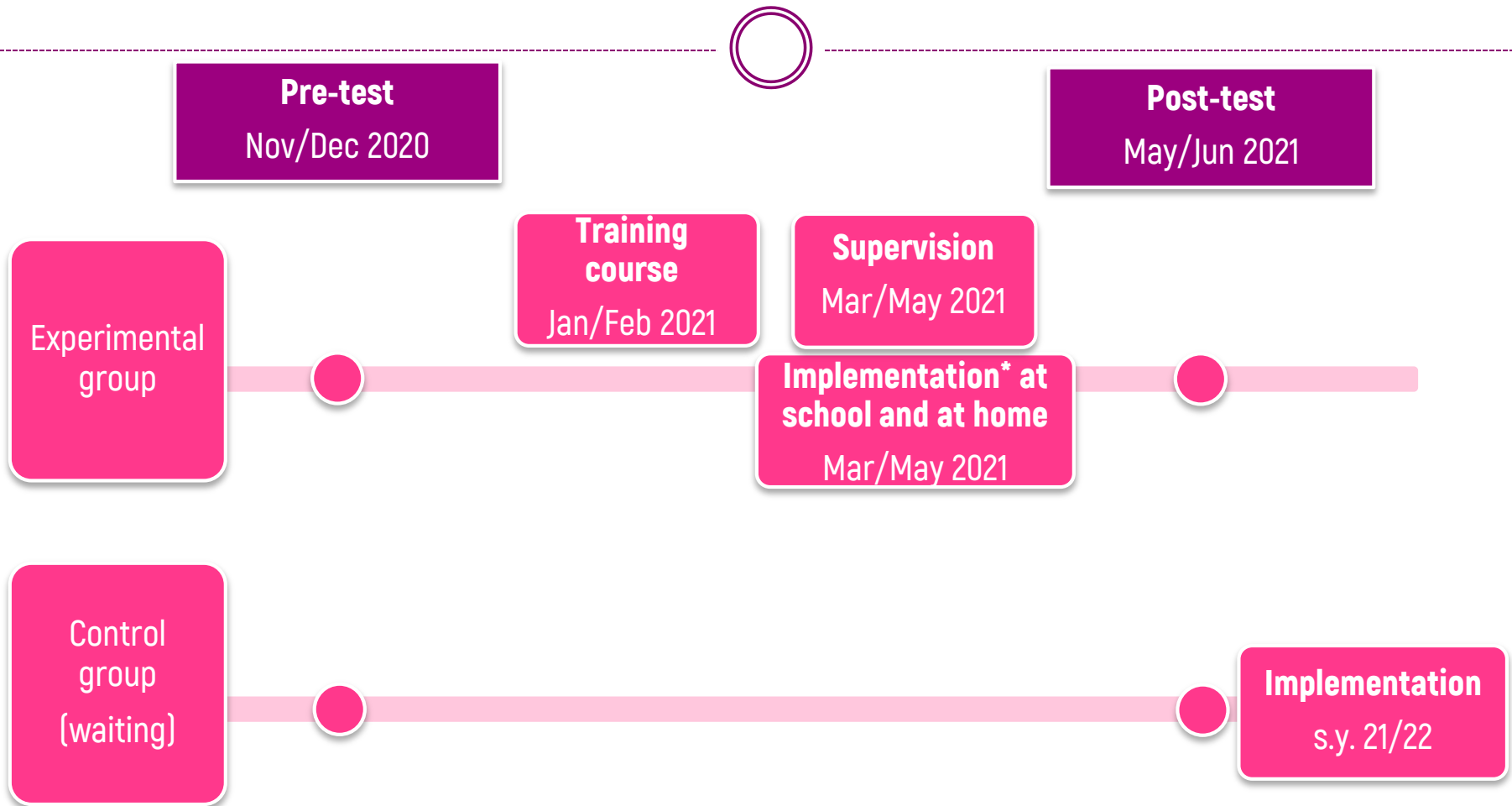


**Whole school  
approach**



**Systematic  
implementation**

# Research design



The length of the implementation in some schools / classes have been reduced due to lockdowns and quarantines.

# PROMEHS curriculum



Training course and supervisions for teachers recognized by the Ministries of Education



Activity handbooks with glossaries for teachers and students + guidelines for teachers, parents and policy-makers in 7 languages



Meetings for parents and headteachers



# Contents of the training course



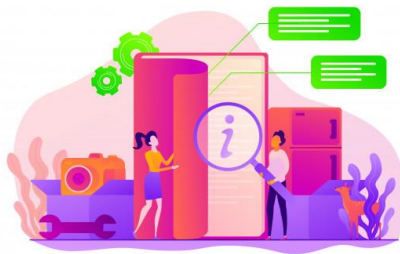
Students' and teachers' mental health



Effects of COVID on mental health



Stress, burnout e resilience of teachers



Instructions for implementation



Sharing experiences



Policy and programs

# Themes and topics addressed



Themes	Topics
1. Promoting social and emotional learning	Self-awareness
	Self-management
	Social awareness
	Relationship skills
	Responsible decision making
2. Promoting resilience	Dealing with psychosocial challenges
	Dealing with traumatic experiences
3. Preventing social, emotional and behavioral problems	Dealing with internalizing problems
	Dealing with externalizing problems
	Dealing with at risk behaviors

# Handbooks' structure



## Handbook for kindergarten and primary school teacher

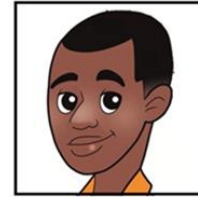
Theme	1. Promoting social and emotional learning
Topic	1. Self-awareness
Goal	1. To be able to identify and label basic and complex emotions
Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Basic level for kindergarten: To be able to identify and label basic emotions</li> <li>2. Advance level for primary: to be able to identify and label complex emotions</li> </ol>

<b>Theme 1: Promoting social and emotional learning</b>	8
■ <b>Topic 1.1: Self-awareness</b>	8
Goal 1: To be able to identify and label basic and complex emotions	9
Activity 1: The three little pigs	9
Activity 2: Perform complex emotions	12
Goal 2: To develop self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem	15
Activity 1: The goodness tree	15
Activity 2: My...shelf	17
Goal 3: To be able to understand the relationship between emotions, thoughts and behaviours	19
Activity 1: The box of emotions	19
Activity 2: The emotions' cards	22

Themes and topics are the same across all activities' handbooks



# Characters



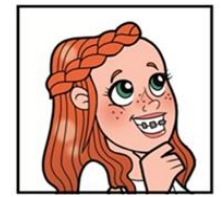
Ana

Borna

João

Hong

Jamal



John

Liza

Luca

Lucia

Sofia

# Stories

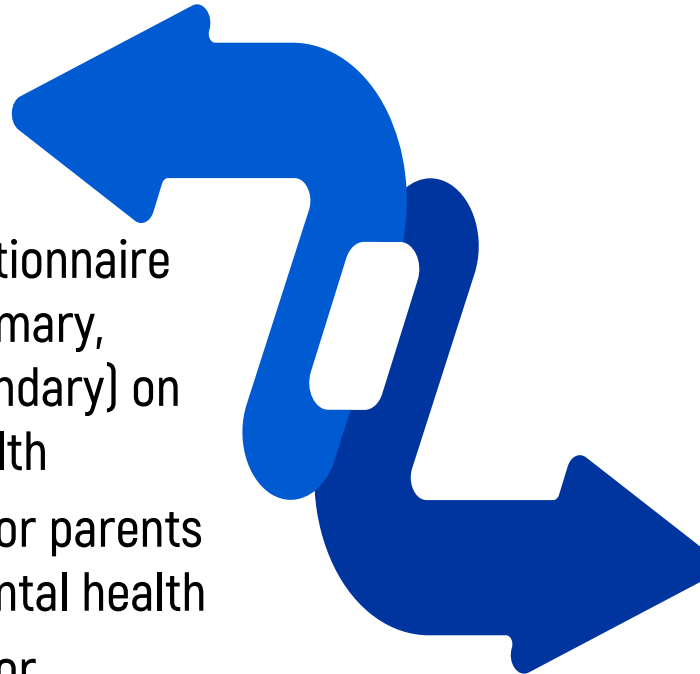


# Measuring the impact of PROMEHS



## Students

- Self-report questionnaire for students (primary, middle and secondary) on their mental health
- Questionnaires for parents on children's mental health
- Questionnaires for teachers on students' mental health



## Teachers

- Self-report questionnaire teachers on their mental health

# Participants

## Expected sample

1000 students per Country (Croatia, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Romania e Portugal  
Total 6000 students) + teachers

Cohorts	Experimental group	Control group
4-5 yrs	125	125
8-9 yrs	125	125
11-12 yrs	125	125
15 yrs	125	125
	500	500
Total	1000	

## Real sample

Questionnaires at pre-test

Respondent	N
Student self-report (primary)	2650
Student self-report (middle and secondary)	3961
Teacher about students	10796
Parents	8650
Teacher self-report	1042



# Instruments for students' evaluation

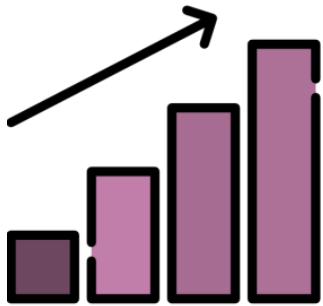


Variable	Instrument	Respondent
<b>Social and emotional learning</b>	Social Skills Improvement System, Social Emotional Learning – SSISSEL Brief Scales, (Elliott et al., 2020). Subscales: Self-awareness; Self-management; Social awareness, Relationship skills; Responsible decision making	Teacher, parent and student self-report
<b>Resilience</b>	Connor Davidson Resilience Scale - CD10 version (Connor & Davidson 2003)	Student self-report
<b>Mental health</b>	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire - SDQ (Goodman, 1997). Subscales: Internalising; Externalising and Prosocial behaviors	Teacher, parent and student self-report
<b>Achievement</b>	Motivation, engagement in learning and performance	Teacher

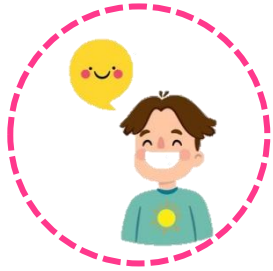




# Results: Impact on students



## Social and emotional learning



Self-awareness



Self-management



Social awareness



Relationship skills



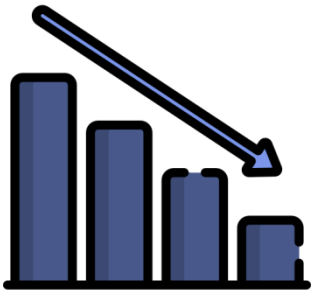
Responsible Decision making



# Results: Impact on students



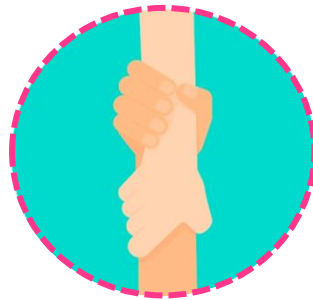
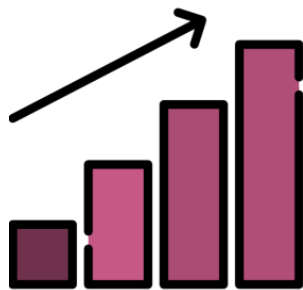
## Mental health



Internalizing problems



Externalizing problems



Prosocial behaviors



Achievement

# Instruments for teachers' evaluation



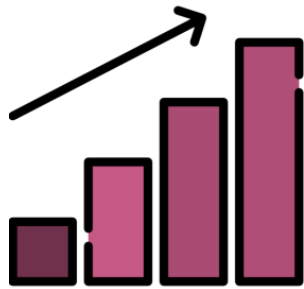
Variable	Instrument
<b>Self-efficacy</b>	Teacher Sense of Efficacy - Short Version (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Ita: Biasi et al., 2014) 12 items. Subscales: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Student engagement</li><li>2. Instructional strategies</li><li>3. Classroom management</li></ol>
<b>Resilience</b>	Connor Davidson Resilience Scale - CD 10 (Connor & Davidson, 2003). 10 items
<b>Burnout</b>	Single question " <i>I feel exhausted at the end of the working day</i> " (Schaufeli, 2018)
<b>Social and emotional competence</b>	Social and Emotional Competence of Teachers – SECTRS (Tom, 2012) 52 items. Subscales: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Teacher-student relationship</li><li>2. Emotional Regulation</li><li>3. Social Awareness</li><li>4. Interpersonal Relationships</li></ol>



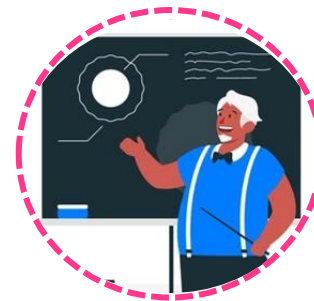
# Results: Impact on teachers



## Self-efficacy



Student engagement



Instructional strategies



Classroom management



Resilience



Interpersonal relationships with peers and parents

**Increasing the number of activities carried out in the classroom increases the well-being of teachers**



# Monitoring system



## Aims

1. Questionnaire to evaluate the training course and materials
  - Quality of the contents of the training course
  - Teachers' readiness for implementation
2. Battery to assess the quality of the implementation
  - Fidelity of contents and procedure
  - Dosage
  - Participant responsiveness (teachers, students and parents)
  - Adaptation

## Methodology

Focus group and questionnaires



# Strengths



Contents useful to provide support to students' mental health due to COVID-19 emergency



Step-by-steps activities that can be embedded and adapted



Practical tips to promote school climate, social inclusion, and civic education



"Relational spaces" to enhance teacher-student relationship, interest and to discuss about emotional topics



Different methodologies including the use of media resources online tools



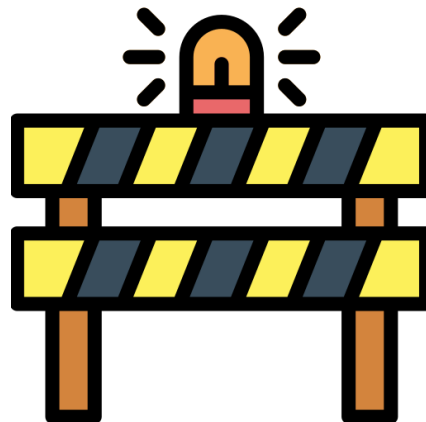
Innovative approach on teachers' mental health

# Limitations



- E-learning adaptations:

- Lack of group activities
- Difficulties in monitoring at home implementation



**Less activities implemented in some countries due to the lockdown/quarantine**



# Conclusion



- The teachers felt supported especially to manage students' behavioral problems (anxiety, fears, isolation, lack of motivation ...) during the COVID emergency.
- The school has created partnerships with universities and local authorities to take care of the social and emotional needs of the whole school community
- Promotion and prevention with a whole school approach to support teachers and families. Teachers' training have to include components related to teachers' mental health
- Early intervention and educational continuity
- Policy-makers should train all teachers to be attentive, caring, and able to identify the emotional needs of children and adolescents. Crucial collaboration with regional and national policy-makers to support long-term PROMEHS implementation. Further experimentation in Greece, Portugal, Latvia (PROMEHS included in the regular curriculum in Sigulda region schools, teacher education course for teachers;; study courses for students of pedagogy)

# PROMEHS video



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zNd9GW\\_\\_PY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zNd9GW__PY)

# Thanks for your attention



## **PROMEHS Latvian team**

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- Ilze Damberga
- Inga Supe
- Vineta Inberga



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