The role of **social, emotional and intercultural skills** in building **tolerant** and **non-discriminative societies:** *a whole school approach*

Ana Kozina[1], Maša Vidmar[1], Birgitte Lund Nielsen[2], Helle Jensen[2], Christine Sälzer[3], Svenja Vieluf[3], Iris Marušić[4], Maria Rasmusson[5], Aleš Ojsteršek[1], Svetlana Jurko[4]

[1]SLO, [2]DEN, [3]GER, [4]CRO, [5]SWE

BACKGROUND

The **project HAND in HAND** is focusing on the importance of social, emotional and intercultural competencies (**SEI competencies**) for building inclusive societies and to prevent segregation and discriminative bullying, by enhancing SEI competencies of all students and school staff (**the whole school approach**) including schools with large proportions of migrant and refugee students.

Figure 1. Five dimensions of **social-emotional (SE) competencies** (CASEL, 2017)

	Skills of interpreting and relating	
Knowledge	**Education**	**Attitudes**
►Global knowledge ►Multiple literacies	►Critical transcultural awareness ► Border literacies	
	Skills of discovery and interaction	

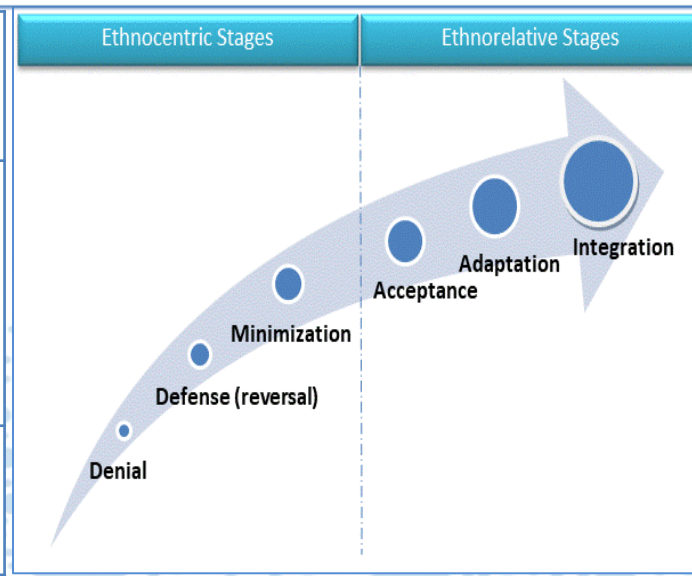*Figure 2.* Model of **Inter-and Transcultural Communicative Competence** (Blell & Dofff, 2014)

Figure 3. **Developmental Intercultural Competence** Model (Bennett, 1986)

According to scientific evidence, *students' enhanced SEI skills* can result in several **positive outcomes**:
• better educational outcomes,
• better mental health,
• decreased numbers of early school leavers, improvement in prosocial behavior,
• decrease of physical aggression, and
• positive self-image (Bierman, Nix, Greenberg, Blair & Domitrovich, 2008; Durlak et al., 2011; Greenberg, 2006; Sklad et al., 2012; Zins, Weissberg, Wang, & Walberg, 2004).

On the other hand enhanced SEI skills among *school staff* are of vital importance for:
• the development of students' social and emotional competencies (Schonert-Reichl et al., 2015),
• students' behavioural and academic achievement (Valiente, Lemery-Chalfant, Swanson, & Reiser, 2008), and
• school staff's own well-being (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

THE PROJECT

HAND in HAND: Social and Emotional Skills for Tolerant and Non-discriminative Societies (A Whole School Approach)

A collaborative EU based policy experimentation project will create and apply an innovative HAND in HAND program for SEI competencies development for students and school staff that will be tested using an experimental design with control groups across four EU countries (Slovenia, Croatia, Germany, Sweden). So far, SEI competencies are not explicitly included in national educational systems across Europe (OECD, 2015) and thus, this program brings novelty and scientific relevance to the field.
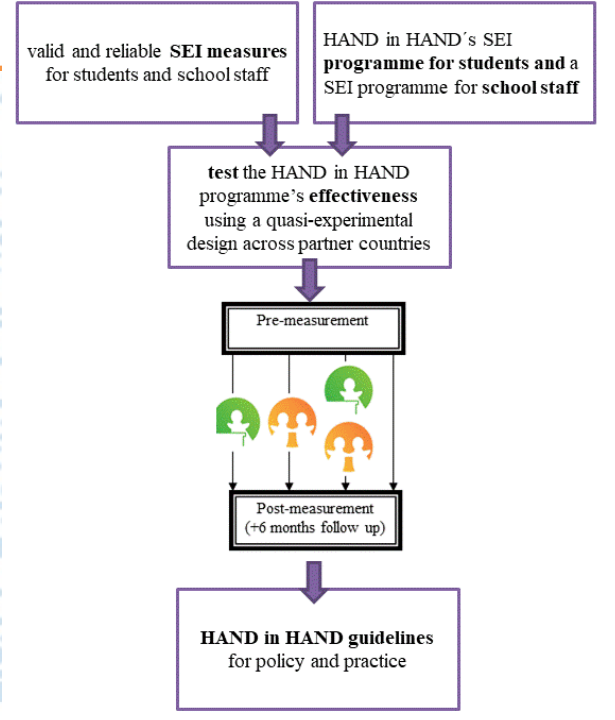

Figure 4. HAND in HAND project

OUTCOMES

CATALOGUES composed of a systematic review of existing SEI assessment measures and intervention programmes that stimulate SEI competencies among students and school staff, both internationally and within the partner countries (available on: **http://handinhand.si**)
❑ *Assessment catalogue*
❑ *Catalogue of student programmes*
❑ *Catalogue of school staff programmes*
• **ASSESSMENT**
❑ quantitative and qualitative SEI assessment measures
• **PROGRAMME**
❑ For students (deepening SEI competencies)
❑ For school staff (deepening SEI competencies and relational competence)
• **GUIDELINES for policy and practice**
Main outcomes + programme evaluation → key recommendations for policy and practice (national contexts included)

Key references :
Blell, G. & Doff, S. (2014). It takes more than two for this tango: Moving beyond the self/other-binary in teaching about culture in the global EFL-classroom. *Zeitschrift für Interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht, 19*, 77-96.
Durlak, J. A., Weissberg, R. P., Dymnicki, A. B., Taylor, R. D., & Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. *Child development, 82*(1), 405-432.
OECD (2015), *Skills for Social Progress: The Power of Social and Emotional Skills,* OECD Skills Studies, OECD Publishing.

Contact: info@handinhand.si
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