



## European Toolkit for Schools

*Promoting school success, inclusive education and well-being at school*

# BOOST – BUILDING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SKILLS TO BOOST MENTAL HEALTH RESILIENCE IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN EUROPE

SEPTEMBER 2023

A short project description is published on the platform in 29 languages.

### GENERAL DESCRIPTION AND RELEVANCE OF THE MEASURE

#### WHEN WAS THE MEASURE FIRST STARTED?

January 2018.

#### IS THE MEASURE STILL RUNNING? IF NOT, WHY?

Completed June 2023.

#### WHICH NEEDS DOES THE MEASURE ADDRESS?

Promoting mental health and well-being in the young.

#### WHO WAS INVOLVED IN IDENTIFYING NEEDS, THE PLANNING, AND THE DESIGN OF THE MEASURE?

The project was carried out through a collaborative effort between researchers with expertise in public health, psychology, education, and service design; experts in dissemination; and school owners and policy makers.

#### WHO IS/WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEASURE?

The implementation of the project can be divided into the following components:



Formative study: The formative study provided a solid foundation on which to base the BOOST approach. All the research partners contributed to the formative study, led by partners with educational expertise.

The BOOST approach: Through an iterative process, and in consultation with schools in Norway, Spain, and Poland, the Final BOOST approach is an organisational learning process tool that can be used by schools to integrate social and emotional learning into their day-to-day activities and school environments. Development of the approach was led by partners with expertise in education and service design; however, all partners in the consortium and the project's advisory board contributed to the process.

Research components: To study the effectiveness and implementation of the BOOST approach in the three countries; an effectiveness study, an economic evaluation and a process evaluation were carried out by research partners with expertise in psychology, public health, and health economics.

Dissemination activities have occurred throughout the project, led by the regional health authority's network partner, with support from all partners.

Exploitation activities have ensured involvement of stakeholders, at the local, regional, and EU levels. All partners contributed to these activities, which were led by a policymaker partner.

#### WHAT RESOURCES ARE/WERE INVOLVED (E.G. MATERIAL, SPACE, AMOUNT OF FUNDING)?

The testing of the BOOST approach occurred in primary schools in Norway, Poland, and Spain.

The final BOOST approach is available at: [www.boostapproach.com](http://www.boostapproach.com)

#### HOW ARE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN IMPLEMENTATION BEING SUPPORTED (E.G. DO THEY RECEIVE SPECIFIC TRAINING)?

The Final BOOST approach is an organisational learning process tool which can be used by schools to integrate social and emotional learning into their day-to-day activities and school environments. It comprises a step-by-step guide and 2 supporting guides ([www.boostapproach.com](http://www.boostapproach.com)).

## IMPACT OF THE MEASURE

#### WHAT HAS BEEN THE IMPACT OF THE MEASURE?

To study the effectiveness and implementation of the BOOST approach in the three countries, an effectiveness study, an economic evaluation and a process evaluation were carried out. Unfortunately, the start of implementation coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which greatly affected both implementation and research during the subsequent two years (D3.1). The effectiveness study did not reveal significant increases in terms of social and emotional competence, psychological adjustment, resilience, or school climate; however, it is worth noting that no deterioration was observed, suggesting a consistent trend in these variables between the experimental and

control schools (D5.1). Furthermore, the presence of internal and external challenges and varying implementation strategies did not allow for an economic evaluation as originally planned. Consequently, the aim and content of the economic analysis were revised and focused on presenting the data collected on time used to support social and emotional learning, from both the implementation and control schools (D6.1). The process evaluation highlighted variability in implementation quality across schools and countries. This evaluation not only underscored the difficulties faced during this period but also emphasized the challenges of implementing such a flexible and context-dependent approach. The findings of the evaluation offer a series of recommendations aimed at facilitating and enhancing the overall quality of future implementations (D4.1).

#### WHAT HAS CONTRIBUTED MOST TO THE SUCCESS OF THE MEASURE?

The BOOST approach has a solid research foundation (a formative study), and it has been developed through an iterative process with school staff, which has been essential to its relevance and acceptance in real-world school environments.

#### HAVE THERE BEEN ANY OBSTACLES WHEN IMPLEMENTING THE MEASURE, AND HOW HAVE THEY BEEN ADDRESSED?

The start of implementation coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which greatly affected both the implementation and the evaluation research components.

#### EVIDENCE BASE

##### IS THERE A MONITORING/EVALUATION SYSTEM IN PLACE? WHAT IS MONITORED, AND HOW IS IT DONE?

See above.

##### ARE FURTHER EVALUATIONS PLANNED AND WHEN WILL THE RESULTS BE AVAILABLE (IF THEY PLAN TO BE PUBLISHED)?

No further evaluations are planned, but there are several publications in the pipeline from all research components.

#### CONTACT DETAILS

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