



# Needs-assessment and action-planning report

## Finland

**Project Title: SWPBS**

**Project Number: 606687-EPP-2018-CY-EPPKA3-PI-POLICY**

**Programme: Erasmus+**

<b>Activity Code:</b>	<b>D1.3</b>
<b>Title:</b>	Needs-assessment and action-planning report per partner country
<b>Estimated Start Date:</b>	01/06/2019
<b>Draft due to WP leader on:</b>	30/06/2019
<b>Estimated End Date of WP1:</b>	31/07/2019
<b>Activity Leading Organisation:</b>	CARDET

## Task Description

This task is a follow-up activity to the literature review (see D1.3) and its focus is to prepare a research report per country that

1. Identifies the current local needs on schoolwide discipline prevention and student socio-emotional supports based on survey and focus group interview data
2. Develops an action plan around schoolwide discipline prevention and student socio-emotional supports

Below, you will find a structure and template with guidelines for report development. As soon as you compile the research report, please email it to us.

Thank you!

## Report Structure

# Needs-Assessment Analysis and Action Planning

### **PART A: Needs-Assessment Analysis (questionnaires and focus group interview)**

#### **1. Need-Assessment Methodology**

Describe in one paragraph (8-10 lines) the steps you took to conduct a needs assessment in your local context. Refer to the scope and administration process based on the two tools (interview, TFI survey questionnaire) as well as the recruitment efforts with your participants in each case.

#### **2. Needs-Assessment Results**

**2.1 Focus Group Interview Results** (Report 2-3 thematic categories identified in the focus group interview based on these parameters (refer the reader to D1.2b for a more detailed description)

- 2.2.1 Main priority school needs for promoting positive and preventative learning environments
- 2.2.2 Existing practices for supporting schoolwide discipline prevention and positive learning environments
- 2.2.3 Important teacher training topics for promoting schoolwide prevention and stronger socio-emotional supports

#### **2. Main Conclusions**

Describe main conclusions on the existing needs of your context based on the above findings.

### **PART B: Action Reporting**

1. Complete the table to document your next action steps in the project for promoting positive learning environments

# Needs-Assessment Analysis and Action Planning for Finland

## PART A: Needs-Assessment Analysis (questionnaires and focus group interview)

### 1. Need-Assessment Methodology

The situation of Finnish participants is very different from other countries as schools from only three municipalities will participate in the project. All three municipalities, Kontiolahti, Lappeenranta and Varkaus, are partners in the projects because they have all implemented SWPBIS for several years now. The needs analyses for these schools will be about evaluating the situation of their current Tier 1 implementation. The assumption is that Tier 1 has to be carried out with adequate fidelity before Tier 2 and Tier 3 implementation will function optimally.

Thus, a translated and adapted version of well-known SWPBIS fidelity measure Tiered Fidelity Inventory (TFI) will be used for the purpose of this activity. Translation will be ready in October and partners will be trained to use it. TFI will provide later fidelity information also for the Tier2 and Tier3 interventions which are the experimental activities run in Finland.

### 2. Needs-Assessment Results

#### 2.1 Survey Results

*In Finland TFI outcomes is not yet available.*

#### 2.1 Focus Group Interview Results

*[Report 2-3 thematic categories identified in the focus group interview based on these parameters (refer the reader to D1.2b for a more detailed description)]*

##### 2.1.1 Main priority school needs for promoting positive and preventative learning environments

Kontiolahti people saw that one challenge in their municipality of building a uniform universal support across the schools is the structure of their school network. Kontiolahti has one big lower secondary school collecting students from all over the relatively large geographical area of the municipality. At the same time, it has many small and some bigger elementary schools that spread quite far away from each other on different parts of the municipality. A coordinator of universal support will be needed at the municipality level will be needed, or there is a risk that practices begin to develop in their own directions and uniform behavioral support may disappear from some schools.

Participants from Kontiolahti argued that universal prevention for behavior problems is widely used and going relatively well in elementary schools, but requires concrete measures and support in lower secondary school (grades 7-9). The lower secondary education school has, however, expressed its interest in developing behavioral support systems. What seems to be a challenge is that the lower secondary school lacks a systematic model for addressing behavior issues. The lower secondary school is quite big by number of students and staff. Partly related to this and the fact teaching is done by subject teachers there would be a need for guided process for launching systematic universal support. External support will be needed as school has tried to launch universal support on its own without much success so far. Universal support has an important position in the school system as it is written as a concrete activity in the municipality curriculum for compulsory education.

People from Lappeenranta describe their involvement in universal support development as an effort that fits all schools and their people. In Lappeenranta the activities are organized well including the commitment of highest education authorities to support the work. However, the interviewed experts emphasize that the theoretical and practical basis of universal support need ongoing support and strengthening. The principles of behavior and behaviors management (the ABC model) needs to be constantly taught to teachers and other adults working in the schools or there is a risk that universal support activities remain in some places at a very surface level, reminding rather routine 'tricks' than conscious pedagogical intervention. Thus, the corner-stone principles of behavioral theory need to be strengthened.

### 2.1.2 Existing practices for supporting schoolwide discipline prevention and positive learning environments

Municipality authorities from Varkaus mentioned that in recruiting new teachers expressed commitment to working accordance the universal support model is taken as a prerequisite for employment. Measures to maintain momentum are carried out in an ongoing manner and there is a need to develop further teacher skills in behavior management. Developing social interaction skills between adults working in Varkaus is seen as an important approach to affect positively

the working culture in the municipality. People from Lappeenranta describe their involvement in universal support development as an effort that fits all schools and their people. In Lappeenranta the activities are organized well including the commitment of highest education authorities to support the work.

### 2.1.3 Important teacher training topics for promoting schoolwide prevention and stronger socio-emotional supports

In addition to the training needs already mentioned at the first part the participants mentioned need to listen to the training needs of school teams. The need for strengthening the theoretical basis and understanding of school-wide behavior support was brought forward again. It was also mentioned that perhaps also some support to concrete pedagogy, eg lesson plans, would be important in supporting the work of some teachers.

## 3. Main Conclusions

It seems to people working in the schools and education offices that there is an increase of socio-emotional problems in schools, but for varying reasons. One factor behind some problems are the cultural differences, therefore there is an agreement that schools need to remember that there may be these differences for example in child rearing practices. This highlights the importance of involving families in development and sustaining SWPBIS.

One new phenomenon interviewees were worried about are students' difficulties in emotional self-regulation. This leads often into behavior incidents that can be harsh both for adults in the schools as well as the students.

SWPBIS seems to work well in elementary schools in these municipalities, but getting it functioning with fluency in lower secondary education is a common challenge. Since many schools are unified as comprehensive schools serving grades 1-9 and sometimes also in the same building, it is of importance that SWPBIS approach develops ways which support lower secondary schools' participation and commitment to the support.

It is clear on the basis of the information received from municipalities that the commitment of school leaders but also the higher education authorities at the municipal level is of crucial importance for successful and sustained implementation of SWPBIS. Municipalities have taken alternative routes to secure this commitment, but all these three educational communities share the same feature of high commitment of local education authority on SWPBIS.

Teachers even in well-functioning schools need updates on SWPBIS framework and especially on behavioral psychology and the key elements or "kernels" of behavior interventions. There needs to be a full understanding on why behavior is supported in the way it is in SWPBIS schools

and for example on the role and nature of school level reward system. Finally, some individual teachers may still have negative attitudes toward PBIS and strong professional identity that is contradictory with some elements of the intervention. Thus, one obstacle for learning may be the need to un-learn something.

## PART B: Action Planning

Action goal (What?)  (E.g., Develop a schoolwide approach to promote positive learning environments)	Action step (Describe the what)  (e.g., Culturally adapt the tiered SWPBIS framework in local context)	By whom?	When?	Assessment Status:  Yes (Y) No (N) In Progress (IP)
Develop intervention plan for Tier 2 and 3 interventions	Select initial schools		October 2019	IP
Begin intervention	Quality control of CICO Coaches	Team	Oct-Nov 2019	IP
	Training of CICO coaches	Team	Nov 2019 – Jan 2020	N
Adequate Universal support	Run TFI	Team	October 2019	IP
	Analyse TFI results and give additional	Team	Nov 2019-Dec 2019	N

	support to school which need			
--	---------------------------------	--	--	--

