**Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională**
ISSN: 2066-7329 | e-ISSN: 2067-9270
Covered in: Web of Science (WOS); EBSCO; ERIH+; Google Scholar; Index Copernicus; Ideas RePeC; Econpapers; Socionet; CEEOL; Ulrich ProQuest; Cabell, Journalseek; Scipio; Philpapers; SHERPA/RoMEO repositories; KVK; WorldCat; CrossRef; CrossCheck

2023, Volume 15, Issue 2, pages: 35-54 | https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/15.2/719
*Submitted:* January 31st, 2023 | *Accepted for publication:* February 27th, 2023

# EU-SELF: An European Platform about Social and Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Education

**Nadia KOLTCHEVA** [1]

[1] senior assistant professor, Department of Cognitive Science and Psychology, New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Bulgaria, nkoltcheva@nbu.bg, ORCID ID 0000-0002-4651-7414

**Abstract**: Researchers and practitioners nowadays are convinced that social and emotional skills (SES) are a crucial element in human development. Numerous scientific research studies and international and national reports show the significance of attaining SES in the early years. Supporting the development and improvement of social and emotional skills in children from an early age increases to a great extent their chances of success in school, work, and life. This will influence on one-hand side children's level of development as a whole, not only in the field of the social and emotional domain, but also has an influence on their families, kindergarten and school community, and the overall society.

The EU-SELF project presents an innovative approach that integrates scientific knowledge and proficiency in the realm of SES with its applied implementation into educational practices. Within the framework of the project, a Europe-wide web-based platform was developed. It provides reliable, professional and user-friendly information on SES states regarding several key areas like skills development, their assessment, and approaches to interventions for early childhood education and care (ECEC) (i.e., children aged 0 to 7 years old). Some of the project outputs are (1) country-specific SES descriptions for all the European countries, (2) a program SES compendium for Europe, (3) SES assessment measure compendium, and (4) a systematic review.

The EU-Self platform functions as both a repository of information and a means of communication and exchange for early childhood education and care providers, teachers, researchers, stakeholders, and experts in Europe and worldwide. It supports the achievement of EU key priorities, raises awareness and promotes SES development in children.

**Keywords:** *Early childhood, ECEC, Emotional skills, EU-Self Project, Digital platform, Social skills.*

**How to cite:** Koltcheva, N. (2023). EU-SELF: An European Platform about Social and Emotional Skills in Early Childhood Education. *Revista Românească pentru Educație Multidimensională, 15*(2), 35-54. https://doi.org/10.18662/rrem/15.2/719

©2023 Published by LUMEN Publishing. This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC-ND license http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/

There is overwhelming evidence that social and emotional skills (SES) play a crucial role in human development. Nowadays, there is no doubt about that. "A considerable number of studies have convincingly demonstrated that if children are not attaining minimal SES at approximately six years of age, they are likely to be at risk in the following stages of their development" (McClellan & Katz, 1993; Koltcheva et al., 2022a). Over the last decades, SES has been increasingly recognised internationally. Research shows that the development of SES at an early age has a high correlation with numerous positive outcomes in children. A variety of benefits are not only during the early years. Many studies confirm various long-term benefits that can be observed later during their school years and even during adulthood (Bierman et al., 2016; Durlak et al., 2011; Eklund et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2015). SES are critical to successful functioning in life in general (Gresham & Elliott, 2008). The deficits in SES might have many negative consequences like poor academic achievement and performance (Caprara et al., 2000; Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Wentzel, 1993), problems with social integration and socialization or severe mental health issues (Coie & Dodge, 1983; Parker & Asher, 1987). Early childhood is a crucial time and can provide incredible opportunities for investment in children's SES development (Bierman & Motamedi, 2015).

Research shows (OECD, 2018) that policymakers, decision-making bodies, and experts working with young children generally recognise the enormous significance of SES. Despite that, there are still numerous problematic issues, setbacks and obstacles. "We still need to explain how different dimensions of SES relate, how these skills can be developed, to communicate "how to raise skills that matter" to policy-makers, teachers and parents. However, we still do not have a comprehensive understanding of "what works"." (Koltcheva et al., 2022a). Teachers are not always in a position to influence curricular frameworks, programs and school activities and/or have the understanding and appropriate qualifications. Parents might have limited understanding and/or tools. That is why, we need solid research, scientific findings and evidence for informing various parties that need to be engaged throughout the process. We need valid data, evidence-based programs, and reliable SES instruments.

The EU-Self project aims at "an innovative approach to linking the knowledge and expertise in the field of SES and educational practices. Research and practice should meet in order to achieve goals based on solid research grounds while facing the reality of the practice. Thus, our approach

relies on the knowledge alliance between HEIs and ECEC providers and the planned collaboration between universities and ECEC providers, who share and develop their knowledge, good practices, and methodologies." (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

Policymakers, experts, educators, parents, and researchers can assist in the enhancement of children's growth potential by building an ecosystem that can support that. This is a very efficient way in investing in skills investment over the life cycle but also to multiply the return of such investment. Parents and various practitioners, policymakers and decision-making bodies, all of them would benefit from knowing what works, the way it works, how to adapt and implement it, having guidelines for fostering children's SES development. Besides the numerous existing programs and activities, there are still significant "gaps between stakeholders' knowledge, expectations, and capabilities on how best to mobilise children's SES" (Djamnezhad et al., 2021).

Within the framework of the EU-Self project, we aim to raise awareness of the importance of SES. We produced the following outputs:

- A Europe-wide web-based platform,
- A systematic literature review,
- Overviews regarding the state of SES for children in early and preschool years in 47 European countries and 4 countries overseas,
- SES development programs in European countries,
- Descriptions of the educational context in six European countries,
- Case studies of the practices in six European countries,
- A glossary of essential SES terms,
- Brief overviews of key SES topics,
- Observational criteria.

Besides the planned outputs, the experts from the University of Maia – ISMAI and New Bulgarian University decided to work out also an assessment measures compendium of SES in Europe and a survey among psychologists regarding their practice in the assessment of children's social and emotional skills.

In **Figure 1.** below a schematic overview of the EU-Self Project outputs and activities is provided. A detailed description of all project outputs will follow.

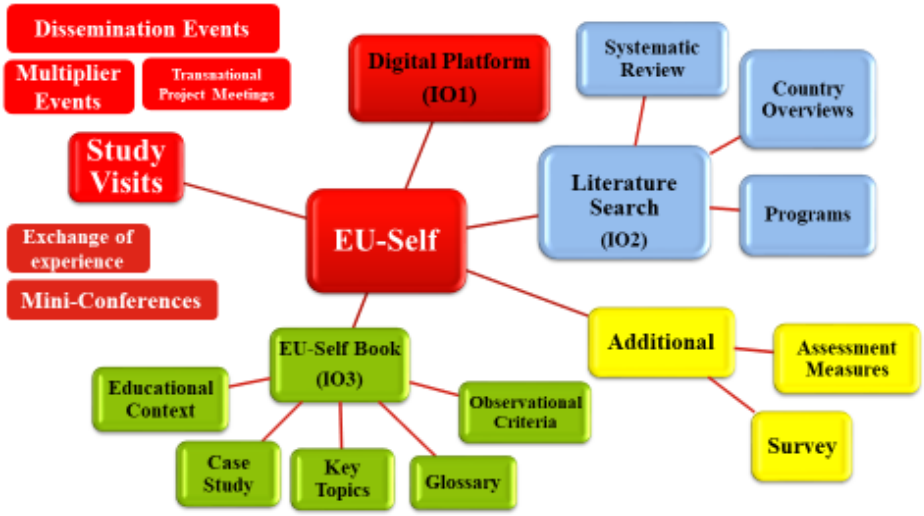



***Figure 1.*** *Overview of EU-Self Project's outputs and activities*
*Source: Author's own conception*

## Digital Platform

The EU-Self digital web-based platform is one of the main project outputs - https://euself.nbu.bg (**Figure 2.**). It is an innovative tool, which allows us to have a significant impact on promoting, supporting and improving children's SES. Furthermore, it will continue to be an effective tool even beyond the completion of the project's timeline.

The EU-Self platform focuses on connectivity, interaction, and information sharing. The platform has a repository. It is a database containing country overviews, programs, and assessment measures about SES in early and preschool children. All of them are in an interactive format, allowing users to select the ones they need using filters to select specific criteria. The platform has the potential to create communities of experts, researchers, teachers, education professionals, experts, researchers, and members of the general public interested in the topic. Thanks to the platform's forum "interaction, discussion, cooperative learning, professional development and information sharing can be promoted." (Koltcheva et al., 2022). The blog is "a space to disseminate/share the most recent developments in research, good practices, projects, useful information, results, and technical/professional opinion about subjects of relevance for preschool children's social and emotional skills development." (Koltcheva et

al., 2022) (**Figure 3.**). The platform development and all of its main features are executed according to EU data security policies. All the resources on the platform are free to use. However, all platform participants must register and their accounts must be validated by the platform's administrators in order to be able to use all the features and interact with other users. "A series of security measures and features will be included in the platform's design to ensure that every participant's rights are respected and that the platform can be a secure, comfortable, and caring community" (Koltcheva et al., 2022).




***Figure 2.*** *Home page of the EU - Self Digital platform*
*Source: Author's own conception*

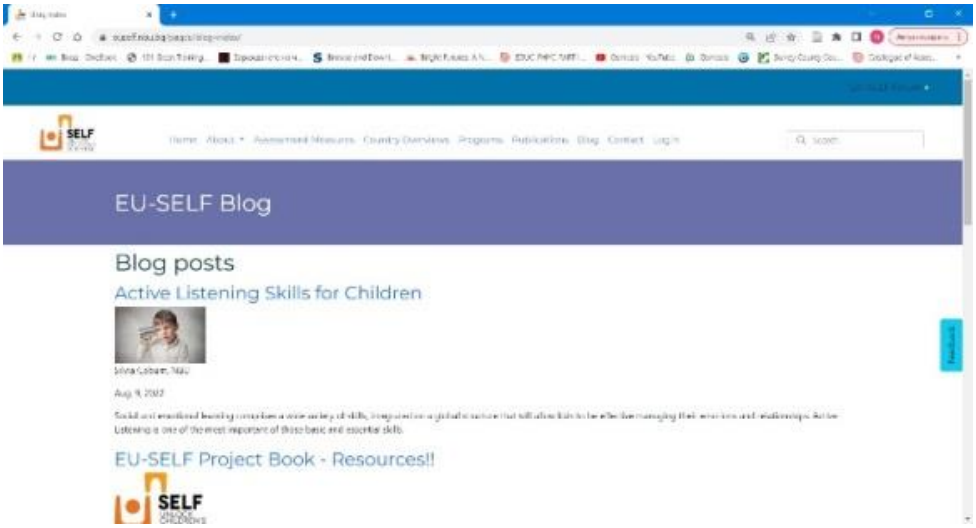



***Figure 3.*** *Blog page of the EU-Self Digital platform*
*Source: Author's own conception*

## Systematic Analyses

We screened seven different databases according to preliminary defined criteria and keywords to develop "a systematic review of systematic reviews based on quantitative studies" (Djamnezhad et al., 2021). All the studies we screened were published in peer-reviewed journals. The article "Social and Emotional Learning in Preschool Settings: A Systematic Map of Systematic Reviews" is accessible on the Frontiers in Education website (Djamnezhad et al., 2021) (**Figure 4**.). It is an open-access resource.

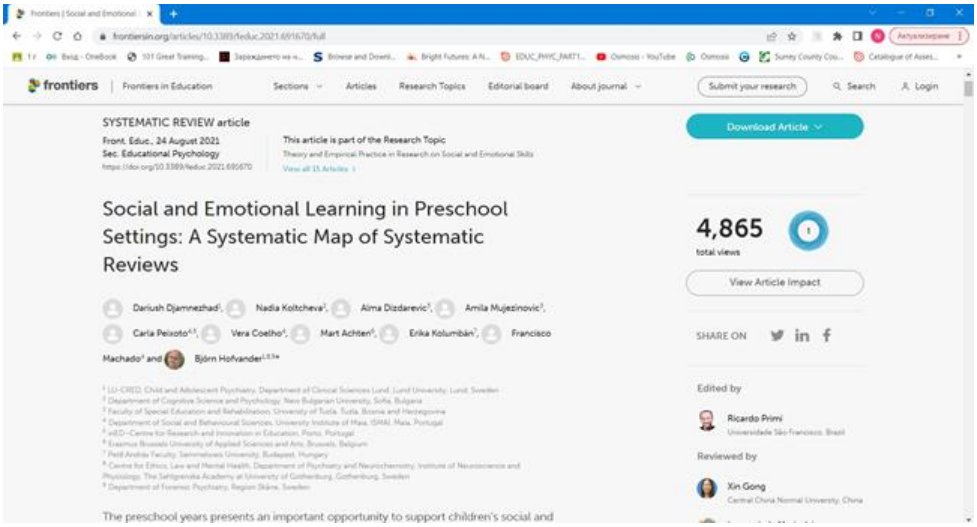



***Figure 4.*** *The article "Social and Emotional Learning in Preschool Settings: A Systematic Map of Systematic Reviews" available on the Frontiers in Education website*
*Source: Author's own conception*

## Country Overviews

"The European Council recognised the importance of key competencies development. So on 22 May 2018, Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning was issued (2018/C 189/01) (European Council, 2018). Seven fields of competencies are defined: (1) Literacy competence, (2) Multilingual competence, (3) Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering, (4) Digital competence, (5) Personal, social and learning to learn competence, (6) Citizenship competence, (7) Entrepreneurship competence, and (8) Cultural awareness and expression competence. Our main interest is the field (5) Personal, social and learning to learn competence. In 2020, the European framework, LifeComp, for personal, social, and learning key competencies, was released (Sala et al., 2020). The LifeComp framework presents a broader view and is "a set of competencies applying to all spheres of life that can be acquired through formal informal and non-formal education and can help citizens to thrive in the 21st Century" (Sala et al., 2020). According to the authors, "LifeComp can be used as a basis for the development of curricula and learning activities fostering personal, and social development, and learning to learn" (Koltcheva & Coelho, 2022; Sala et al., 2020)."

"Nevertheless, despite these improvements across the EU, there are significant variations within each EU country, as well as between all the countries in Europe as a whole. One of the main aims of the EU-Self Project was to make a step towards a better understanding of the SES European context." (Koltcheva et al., 2022b; 2022c). The "Social and Emotional Development for Children aged 0 to 7 years old: European Countries Overviews Compendium" presents an in-depth overview of 47 European countries and four countries overseas regarding SES assessment, development and intervention practices. What becomes evident from the compendium is the lack of a unified understanding of SES in the different countries and also the numerous specificities among them. We came out with the finding that "there is still a huge gap between scientific knowledge in this field and its implementation" (Koltcheva & Coelho, 2022). What we can claim is that there is still a lot to be done on different systemic levels by different parties in order to implement the recommendations into kindergartens and schools' curricular, developmental activities and programmes.

The EU-Self Project Country Overviews Compendium is "a valuable tool for educators, researchers, parents, stakeholders, decision-making bodies, local authorities, professionals, ECEC providers, EU bodies, etc." (Koltcheva & Coelho, 2022). The compendium's content is also available in an interactive format on the EU-Self digital platform with search criteria and filters (**Figure 5.**). "It is presented in an interactive, structured, easily accessible and user-friendly format. It is an information hub regarding the state of SES, programmes, assessment measures and resources. Our SES "map" of Europe can be an indispensable tool for various activities for early and preschool children: prevention, inclusion, research, educational services, and the planning of interventions." (Koltcheva & Coelho, 2022).

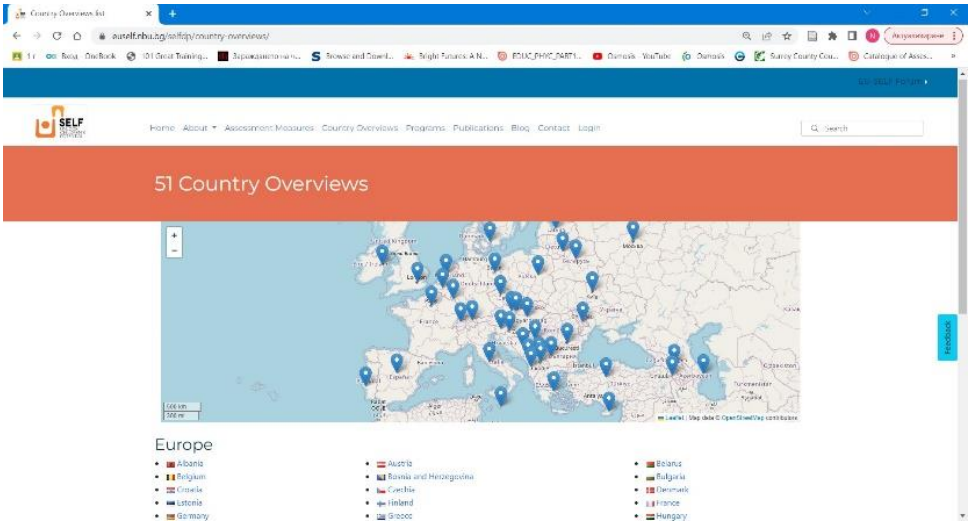



***Figure 5.*** *EU-Self Digital platform, Country Overviews page*
*Source: Author's own conception*

The development of country overviews dedicated to the state of early and preschool years social and emotional skills (SES) development, assessment, and intervention across all of Europe was a very ambitious goal but also a very challenging and complex task. It was demanding. We faced many obstacles. One of the primary obstacles we faced was the language barrier. Many European researchers and experts publish in their native language. Our literature search and review were mainly based on English language sources. Access to sources of information was another obstacle. There are valuable sources in printed format and/or grey literature. We had access mainly to online databases and online sources of information. Despite our efforts, sometimes our search was very limited. For some countries, the information derived in English was very scarce. In some cases, we were unable to obtain any documents on a country's SES initiatives. In some cases, we only found a few. Despite these difficulties, the lack of information derived on a country's SES state and practices was not interpreted as a lack of such practices within the country.

We intended to be as objective as we could. That is why we aimed to go beyond just literature searches and desk reviews and to validate the descriptions with the input of national experts. We attempted to reach national experts by sending numerous letters. Unfortunately, we did not get many replies. As a result, we had to rely on the sources that were available to us, we could access and review for the majority of the descriptions.

These are significant limitations for our country overview descriptions, as to a great extent they are based on the sources that were accessed and analysed. Nonetheless, we believe that these overviews serve as a foundational starting point for a European information hub. They can be further updated, enriched and expanded upon through contributions from national experts and researchers. The EU-Self digital platform provides opportunities for that.

**Programs**

"There is evidence of how children, adults, and society as a whole can benefit from early social and emotional skills (SES) development (Caprara et al., 2000; Coie & Dodge, 1983; Malecki & Elliott, 2002; Parker & Asher, 1987; Wentzel, 1993). However, we still do not apply this knowledge to practice. According to the NESET II report, most of the educational curriculums in European countries still lack SES (Lazzari, 2018). The same report recommends that the Member States examine their education objectives, curricular frameworks and learning outcomes to see whether their current policies and practices target a comprehensive set of SES and make appropriate revisions accordingly. Many teachers, parents, educators, kindergarten principals, stakeholders, etc. have no clear understanding of what SES are, how to develop them, and how to implement them in the educational curriculum. Parents of early and preschool children are usually oriented towards literacy and numeracy skills, but not SES" (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

Over the past few years, SES have been recognised as a significant and vital protective factors. SES in children hold immense potential for enabling them to lead a more fulfilling and happy life, promoting their well-being and future success. SES are also indispensable in "preventing social exclusion, aggression and bullying, school dropout, different risk behaviours, psychopathology, unemployment, etc." (OECD, 2018). A 20-year longitudinal study (D. Jones et al., 2015) provides evidence of the predictive power of prosocial skills in preschool years for graduating from high school, obtaining higher education, employment, less need for social services, fewer problems with the law, less substance abuse (alcohol, drugs), etc. Therefore, we know that the development of SES in young children positively impacts their overall well-being, mental health, adaptation and integration (Durlak et al., 2011; Blewitt et al., 2018). In addition, we know these skills can be developed. However, we need well-designed programs that target specific

skills, have evidence for their effectiveness, and are well-methodologically equipped.

EU-Self Team put much effort into the identification of programs for Europe. We set specific criteria for selection: age group (0-7), programs in any of the European countries, universal school-based SEL programs targeting all or part of the CASEL framework skills (CASEL, 2020), and curriculum-based programs using S.A.F.E. criteria. After a thorough search, based on the requirements, 59 programs were selected. They are available in the "Programs for Social and Emotional Skills Development for Early and Preschool Children Applied in European Countries" Compendium. (Koltcheva et al., 2022) and in an interactive format on the Platform (**Figure 6.**).

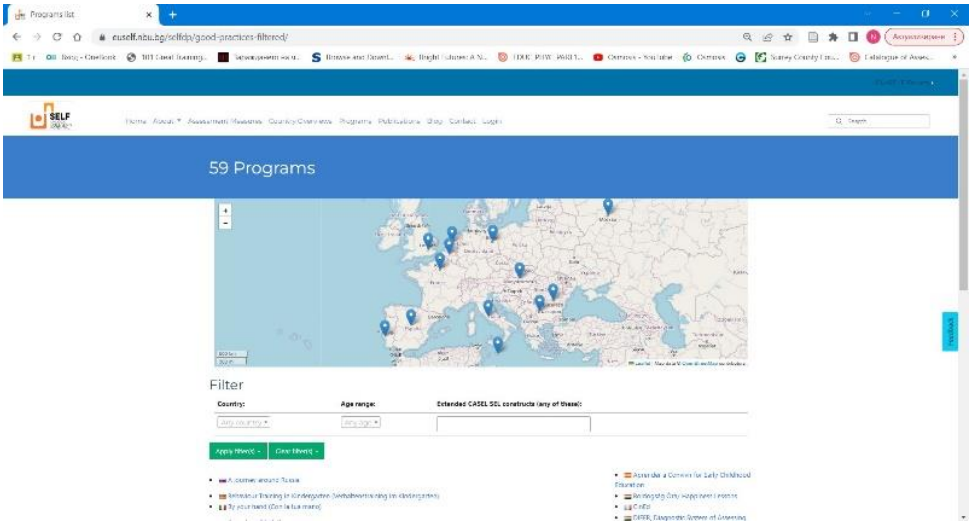



***Figure 6.*** *EU-Self Digital platform, Programs page*

## Assessment Measures

There are different reviews and summaries of existing measures of social and emotional skills for children (just some of them Bracken et al., 1998; Denham et al., 2009; Denham, 2015; Humphrey et al., 2011; Jennings et al., 2008; McKown, 2015; Halle & Darling-Churchill, 2016; Whitcomb & Kemp, 2020, etc.). Denham and colleagues (2010) wrote a compendium for social and emotional learning (SEL) assessment measures in 2010. "CASEL runs an online database of SEL Measures. The Buros (n.d.; 2020) Center for Testing houses the largest collection of commercially available tests in the

world. Every three years, they publish the Mental Measurements Yearbook. In the last years, they also recognised the difficulties of selecting and using social and emotional learning assessments. They have started the Grant Project, and in parallel with our work on the current compendium, in 2020, they issued the Social-Emotional Learning Assessment Technical Guidebook. All these endeavours show the recognition of the importance of social and emotional skills. Most of these databases and publications, however, cover mainly measures available and in use overseas and to a very low extent in European countries" (Koltcheva et al., 2022c).

Despite the shortage of assessment measures, there has been a surge in recognising socio-emotional learning, the significance of social and emotional skills, and the continuous emergence of new intervention programs. There is an urgent need for systematic knowledge about the existing measures. There is a considerable need for valid and reliable assessment criteria to assess programs' effectiveness and/or the acquisition of socio-emotional skills in children. Therefore, it is urgent to identify and describe these instruments. This can help researchers and practitioners select the most appropriate measures when implementing programs and interventions to understand their effectiveness and impact on children.

As a result, we provide our "Social and Emotional Competences and Development of Children Aged Zero to Seven: European Assessment Measures Compendium" (Koltcheva et al., 2022). It is a collection of mainly psychometric measures adapted, scandalized and/or in use in any European country. The compilation consists of tools for the assessment of core children's social and emotional skills, according to the CASEL (2020) model domains, as well as children's social and emotional development.

We followed a strict procedure of identifying, selecting and collecting assessment measures. "The process ended up with 103 measures divided into two sets of measures: (1) Assessment Measures for Social and Emotional Skills (80 measures) and (2) Assessment Measures Targeting Overall Childhood Development and Specifically Social and Emotional Developmental Domain (23 measures). This compendium was realised based on a thorough literature search and with the contribution of Hogrefe, Pearson-UK, Giunti Psychometrics and Pracownia Testów Psychologicznych Polskiego Towarzystwa Psychologicznego Sp. z.o.o.)" (Koltcheva et al., 2022). All the measures are also available in an interactive format in the EU-Self Platform (**Figure 7.**)

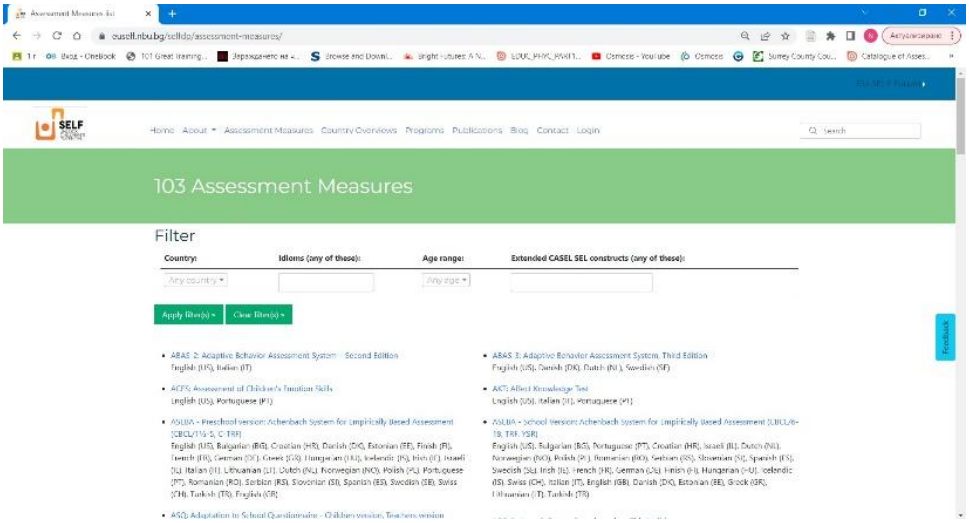



***Figure 7.*** *EU-Self Digital platform, Programs page*

## Survey

We also designed and ran a survey to collect information about the practice of psychologists in assessing SES in children from birth until the age of seven. Besides collecting data from practitioners, one main aim of our study was to reveal and differentiate between assessment measures psychologists know and assessment measures they can use. There is a gap between measures available and in use in the practice in the different countries. The survey form was translated into five languages - English, Portuguese, Bulgarian, Bosnian, and Hungarian. It was distributed online (**Figure 8.**). Most of the collected data were from Portugal (90 responses). A good number of responses were collected from Bulgaria (55). The data from these two countries will be analysed in separate reports. We collected also some data from Bosnian, Hungarian and Swedish practitioners. Due to the low sample size, they will not be taken into account.

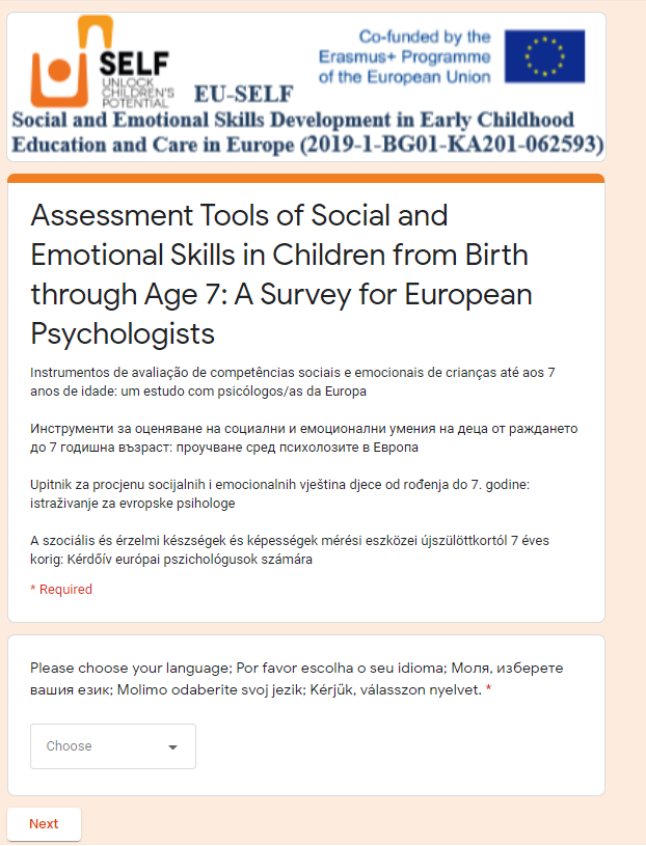



***Figure 8.*** *EU-Self Digital platform, Programs page*
*Source: Author's own conception*

## EU-Self Project Book

Every practice takes place in a specific national and educational context. Some practices may be well-designed, effective, and efficient, but their implementation in another cultural and/or academic context needs adaptation. "That is why we want not only to share practices and observe them but also to have a deeper understanding, starting from the broader context in which they exist. That is why we will review our practices concerning children's social and emotional skills (SES) in the early and preschool years but aligned to the specificities of the educational regulations, normative requirements, educational context, and curriculums." (Koltcheva, Mujezinovic & Dizdarevic, 2022).

In order to accomplish our goal, we decided to work out three distinct documents:

1. An overview of the educational context in the partner countries (Educational Context)
2. A description of the preschool practices in our partner countries that provide services for young children (Case Study)
3. Observations of preschool practices (Observational Criteria)

The above-listed three documents are interrelated and linked together. This is shown in the diagram below (**Figure 9.**). Our approach began with a broad examination of the national or regional context (Educational Context document). "We wrote descriptions of real practices within that context (Case Study). During EU-Self project short-term joint staff training events, we had the opportunity to observe those practices on the spot, discuss them with the teachers, educators, and other professionals, and reflect on them." (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

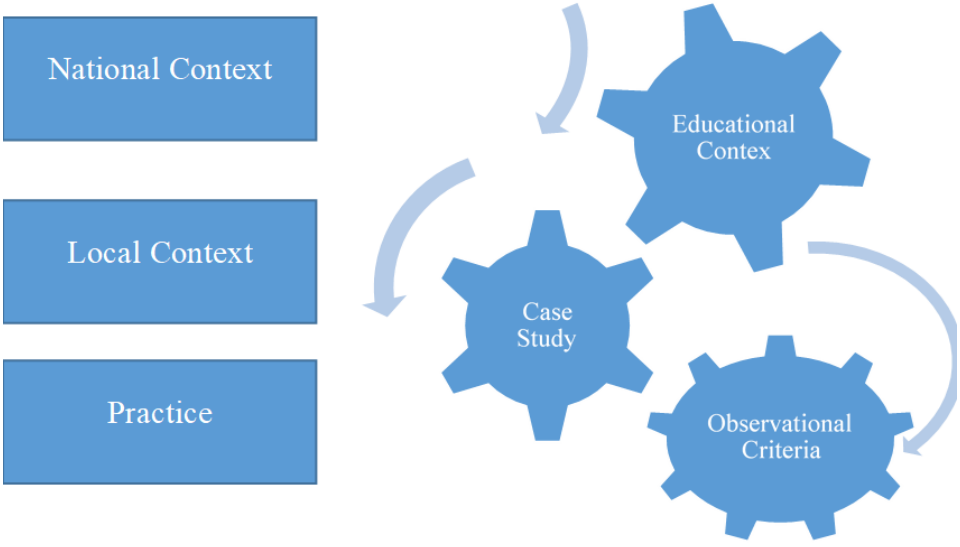



***Figure 9.*** *Interconnection between the EU-Self project outputs on educational context, description of practices and criteria for observation of a practice*

All these documents are compiled in the EU-Self project Book "Social and Emotional Skills in Early and Preschool Age Children" (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

**Glossary**

A glossary of main concepts regarding SES is another part of our outputs. We know how crucial for children's future SES are. There are many concepts, models, and definitions, but we still lack a common understanding of some. That is why we think having clearly formulated, structured, user-friendly information is compulsory. The purpose of the Glossary is not to be exhaustive, but rather to provide a concise overview. We didn't aim at creating new definitions or a very detailed and comprehensive review, but rather to choose, gather, and share a widely accepted vocabulary among the project partners that can be used by all and ensures common comprehension and understanding. We also followed a strict procedure of generating a long list of keywords and selecting and describing them. The latter is published in our EU-Self Project Book (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

We aspire to see a substantial and long-lasting impact from the EU-Self project's intellectual outputs. All the possible benefits will not only be realized by the participating partners, academic researchers, and providers of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), but also extended to indirect groups such as university students, prospective ECEC professionals, parents, teachers, service providers, experts working with children and families, policymakers, stakeholders, non-profit organizations (NGOs), government agencies, and many, many others. The project results, including the innovative platform and various publications, will be valuable to the European Commission as well. "The EU-Self project's scope extends far beyond the EU and Europe. This impact can also be on multiple levels: municipal, regional, national, and international. We also expect impact and added value, such as the creation of a proactive and effective network(s) maintained after the end of the project. The EU-Self digital platform has the potential of a powerful network tool for people with different profiles, needs and interests" (Koltcheva et al., 2022).

It is important to mention that we do not claim to have compiled sophisticated country overviews, a complete list of programs developed and/or adapted and in use or a comprehensive list of assessment measures available in all the European countries. We have listed the multiple obstacles and limits that we faced. However, we foresee our endeavours as a first step toward such a collection of knowledge in Europe. We see our efforts as a beginning, rather than a comprehensive solution. We consider our efforts to be the initial phase in assembling a repository of knowledge in Europe. We hope that it will serve as a solid foundation for future growth and refinement

into a valuable resource for multiple stakeholders including EU institutions, providers of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC), researchers, specialists, practitioners (such as teachers, educators, psychologists, speech therapists, etc.), decision-makers, policy-makers, stakeholders, parents, and others.

Let's unlock children's potential!

**Acknowledgements**

All the presented outputs are developed within the framework of the EU-Self Project "Social and Emotional Skills Development in Early Childhood Education and Care in Europe", 2019-1-BG01-KA201-062593, KA2 - Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices, KA201 - Strategic Partnerships for school education. They are available free of charge on the EU-Self Project Digital Platform (https://euself.nbu.bg) and the EU-Self Project Website (https://eu-self.nbu.bg).

This paper was presented at the 8th edition of the ENSEC Conference on the topic Social Emotional Learning and Positive Development held at Suceava, Romania, between 30th of June to 3rd of July 2022.

## References

Bierman, K. L., & Motamedi, M. (2015). SEL programs for preschool children. In J. A. Durlak, C. E. Domitrovich, R. P. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *Handbook of social and emotional learning: Research and practice.* (pp. 135–150). The Guilford Press.

Bierman, K., Greenberg, M., & Abenavoli, R. (2016). *Promoting social and emotional learning in preschool: programs and practices that work*. Edna Bennet Pierce Prevention Research Center: Pennsylvania State University. https://www.prevention.psu.edu/

Blewitt, C., Fuller-Tyszkiewicz, M., Nolan, A., Bergmeier, H., Vicary, D., Huang, T., McCabe, P., McKay, T., & Skouteris, H. (2018). Social and emotional learning associated with universal curriculum-based interventions in early childhood education and care centers: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *JAMA network open, 1*(8), e185727. https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2018.5727

Bracken, B. A., Keith, L. K., & Walker, K. C. (1998). Assessment of preschool behaviour and social-emotional functioning: A review of thirteen third-party instruments. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment, 16*, 153–169.

Buros Center for Testing–Spencer Foundation Project Scholars. (2020). *Social-Emotional Learning Assessment Technical Guidebook*. Buros. https://buros.org/sel-assessment-technical-guidebook

Buros. (n.d.). *About*. Buros. https://buros.org/

Caprara, G.V., Barbaranelli, C., Pastorelli, C., Bandura, A., & Zimbardo, P. G. (2000). Prosocial Foundations of Children's Academic Achievement. *Psychological Science, 11*, 302-306.

Coie, J. D., & Dodge, K. A. (1983). Continuity of Children's Social Status: A five-year Longitudinal Study. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly, 29*, 261-281.

Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning [CASEL]. (2020). *What is the CASEL framework*?. CASEL https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/#social-emotional-learning

Denham, S. A. (2015). Assessment of social-emotional learning in educational contexts. In J. Durlak, R. W. Weissberg, & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *The handbook of social and emotional learning*. Guilford Press.

Denham, S. A., Ji, P., & Hamre, B. (2010). *Compendium of social-emotional learning and associated assessment measures*. Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning.

Denham, S. A., Wyatt, T. M., Bassett, H, H., Echeverria, D., & Knox, S. S. (2009). Assessing social-emotional development in children from a longitudinal perspective. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health, 63* (Suppl 1), i37–i52. https://doi.org/10.1136/jech.2007.070797

Djamnezhad, D., Koltcheva, N., Dizdarevic, A., Mujezinovic, A., Peixoto, C., Coelho, V., Achten, M., Kolumbán, E., Machado, F., & Hofvander, B. (2021). Social and Emotional Learning in Preschool Settings: A Systematic Map of Systematic Reviews. **Frontiers in Education,** *6*, 691670. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.691670

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*, 405–432. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2010.01564.x

Eklund, K., Kilpatrick, K. D., Kilgus, S. P., & Haider, A. (2018). A Systematic Review of State-Level Social-Emotional Learning Standards: Implications for Practice and Research. *School Psychology Review, 47*, 316–326. https://doi.org/10.17105/SPR-2017.0116.V47-3

European Council. (2018). Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, 22 May 2018. *Official Journal of the European Union*, (2018/C 189/01). https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32018H0604(01)&rid=7

Gresham, F., & Elliott, S. (2008). Social Skills Improvement System, Rating Scales Manual. In A. Slater, & M. Lewis (Eds), Pearson Introduction to Infant Development (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Halle, T. G.., & Darling-Churchill, K. E. (2016). Review of measures of social and emotional development. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, *45*, 8-18. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2016.02.003

Humphrey, N., Kalambouka, A., Wigelsworth, M., Lendrum, A., Deighton, J., & Wolpert, M. (2011). Measures of Social and Emotional Skills for Children and Young People: A Systematic Review. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 71*(4), 617–637. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013164410382896

Jennings, P. A., Denham, S. A., Ji, P., & Weissberg, R. P. (2008). *Assessment for social, emotional, and academic learning with preschool and elementary-school children discussion forum report*. Garrison.

Jones, D. E., Greenberg, M., & Crowley, M. (2015). Early Social-Emotional Functioning and Public Health: The Relationship between Kindergarten Social Competence and Future Wellness. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 112283–112290. https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2015.302630

Koltcheva, N., & Coelho, V. (2022). *Social and Emotional Development for Children aged 0 to 7 years old*. European Countries Overviews Compendium.

Koltcheva, N., Mujezinovic, A., & Dizdarevic. A. (2022a). *Social and Emotional Skills in Early and Preschool Age Children*. EU-Self Project.

Koltcheva, N., Peixoto, C., & Coelho, V. (2022b). *Social and Emotional Competences and Development of Children Aged Zero to Seven: European Assessment Measures Compendium*. EU-SELF Project. ISBN 978-619-233-217-4

Koltcheva, N., Wastijn, B., Achten, M., Van Rossem, L. & Costa, I. S (2022c). *Programs for Social and Emotional Skills Development for Early and Preschool Children Applied in European Countries*. Compendium. EU-SELF Project.

Lazzari, A. (2018). *The current state of national ECEC quality frameworks, or equivalent strategic policy documents, governing ECEC quality in EU Member States*. NESET II Ad Hoc Report.

Malecki, C. K., & S. N. Elliott (2002). Children's Social Behaviors as Predictors of Academic Achievement: A Longitudinal Analysis. *School Psychology Quarterly, 17*(1), 1-23.

McClellan, D. E., & Katz, L.G. (1993). *Young Children's Social Development: A Checklist*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education.

McKown, C. (2015). Challenges and Opportunities in the Direct Assessment of Children's Social and Emotional Comprehension. In J. Durlak, R. W. Weissberg & T. P. Gullotta (Eds.), *The handbook of social and emotional learning*. Guilford Press.

OECD. (2018). *Education at a Glance 2018: OECD Indicators*. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/eag-2018-en

Parker, J. G., & Asher, S. R. (1987). Peer Relations and Later Personal Adjustment: Are Low-accepted Children at Risk?, *Psychological Bulletin, 102*(3), 357-389.

Sala, A., Punie, Y., Garkov, V., & Cabrera Giraldez, M. (2020). *LifeComp: The European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence, EUR 30246 EN*. Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. https://doi.org/10.2760/302967

Wentzel, K.R. (1993). Does Being Good Make the Grade? Social Behavior and Academic Competence in Middle School. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 85*, 357-364.

Whitcomb, S., & Kemp, J. (2020). Behavior and Social-Emotional Skills Assessment of Preschool. In Ed. V. Alfonso, B. Bracken, & R. Nagle (2020). *Psychoeducational assessment of preschool children* (Fifth edition). Routledge.