



Schools 2030 Portugal:
Brief report about teachers' perceptions on the focus
groups and the tools to assess socioemotional skills



Title	Brief report about teachers' perceptions on the focus groups and the tools to assess socioemotional skills
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Abstract

This brief report summarizes the perceptions of preschool, primary school, and secondary school teachers about the online focus groups conducted in November 2022 and January 2023 by the University of Porto team, and their satisfaction with the instruments to assess socioemotional skills. Altogether, 9 online focus groups were conducted from November 2022 to January 2023. Thus, we used a short online questionnaire to assess the usefulness of these focus groups, the relevance of different instruments targeting socioemotional skills developed by our team, and the clarity of the entire process.

Introduction

We conducted 9 online focus groups (three per each cohort) with the Schools 2030 Portuguese teachers from November, 2022 to January, 2023.

In the first focus group, the goal was to get to know the new teachers enrolled in Schools 2030 Program in Portugal, understand how they define specific socioemotional skills, and identify how they currently assess these skills in the school context.

In the second focus groups, we presented and shared a comprehensive set of tools developed by our team to assess students' socioemotional skills and invited the teachers to use them with their students during January and February of 2023. We also shared the main findings of the pilot study conducted with a smaller number of teachers in the previous school year (i.e., 2021/2023).

In January, we conducted new focus groups to clarify any doubts about the tools prior to their implementation in the school context. We also used this session to ask teachers to complete a short online survey to assess the usefulness of the focus groups and the relevance of the newly developed tools to assess students' socioemotional skills.

Total number of teachers who participated in the focus groups conducted in November of 2022:

School cluster	Preschool teachers Cohort 5		Primary school teachers Cohort 10		Secondary school teachers Cohort 15	
	1st session	2nd session	1st session	2nd session	1st session	2nd session
AE AGUALVA MIRA SINTRA	4	4	8	7	1	1
AE ALEXANDRE HERCULANO	1	1	2	1	1	1
AE ALGUEIRÃO	0	0	1	1	0	0
AE ALVALADE	1	1	0	0	0	0
AE FERREIRA DE CASTRO	2	1	2	1	1	2
AE LARANJEIRAS	1	2	0	0	1	0
AE LEAL DA CÂMARA	0	0	0	0	3	0

AE DE SANTA BÁRBARA	1	2	0	2	0	3
AE VISCONDE JUROMENHA	2	1	1	1	3	3
TOTAL	12	12	14	13	10	10

Total number of teachers who participated in the focus groups conducted in January of 2023:

	Preschool teachers Cohort 5	Primary school teachers Cohort 10	Secondary school teachers Cohort 15
School cluster			
AE AGUALVA MIRA SINTRA	2	5	0
AE ALEXANDRE HERCULANO	1	1	1
AE ALGUEIRÃO	0	1	
AE ALVALADE	1	0	0
AE FERREIRA DE CASTRO	0	1	2
AE LARANJEIRAS	1	0	0
AE LEAL DA CÂMARA	0	0	2
AE DE SANTA BÁRBARA	0	2	2
AE VISCONDE JUROMENHA	2	2	3
TOTAL	7	12	10

Total number of teachers who replied to the short online survey:

30 teachers

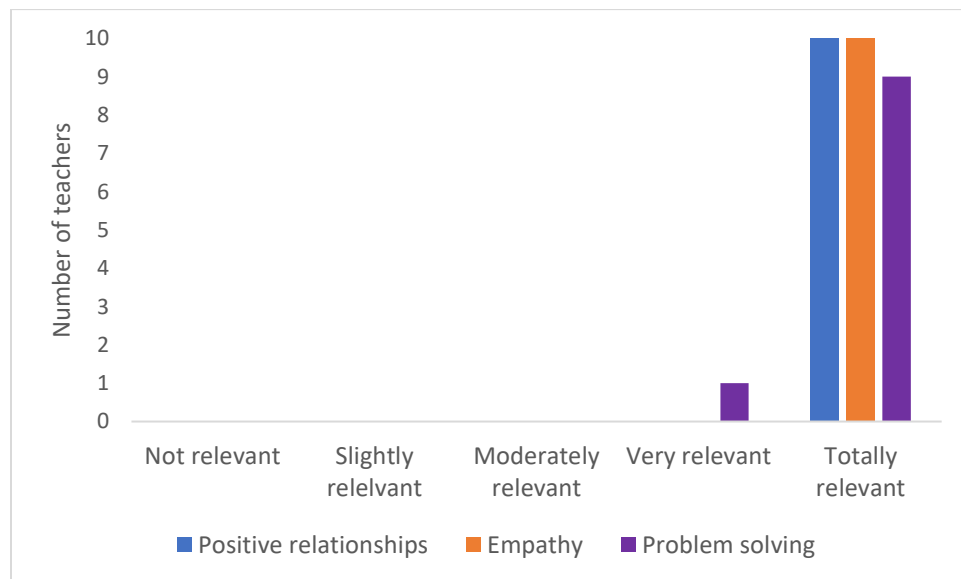
- 10 preschool teachers (5 school clusters represented)
- 12 primary school teachers (6 school clusters represented)
- 8 secondary school teachers (5 school clusters represented)

Notes. Some teachers who did not attend the third online focus group in January of 2023 also filled in the survey. Secondary school teachers here refer to teachers of students in the 3rd cycle of basic education (Grades 7 to 9).

1. To what extent do you consider the three targeted socioemotional dimensions to be relevant?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

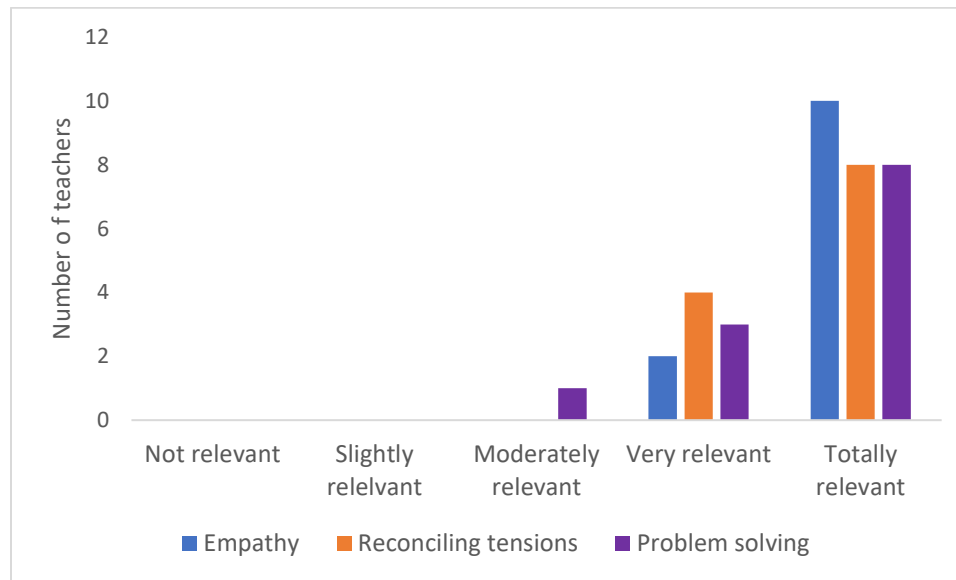
- **Positive relationships:** All preschool teachers considered this dimension as "totally relevant" (100%), $M = 5$, $SD = 0$.
- **Empathy:** All preschool teachers described this dimension as "totally relevant" (100%), $M = 5$, $SD = 0$.
- **Problem solving:** Except for one preschool teacher who considered this dimension "very relevant" (10%), the other nine teachers described this dimension as "totally relevant" (90%), $M = 4.90$, $SD = 0.30$.



Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

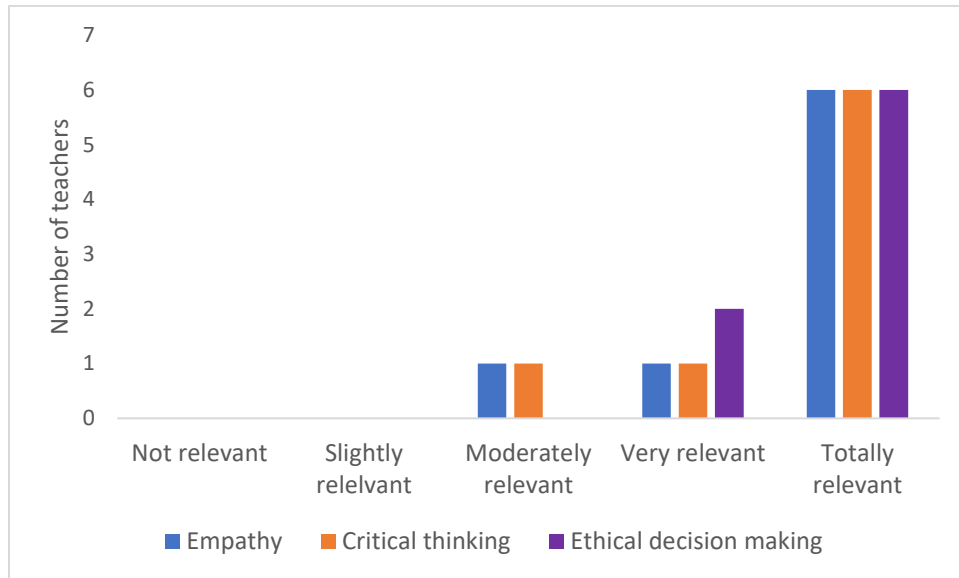
- **Empathy:** Two primary school teachers considered this dimension as "very relevant" (17%), while the remaining ten teachers described it as "totally relevant" (83%), $M = 4.83$, $SD = 0.14$.
- **Reconciling tensions:** Four primary school teachers described this dimension as "very relevant" (33%), while the remaining eight considered it as "totally relevant" (67%), $M = 4.67$, $SD = 0.47$.

- **Problem solving:** One primary school teacher indicated that this dimension was "moderately relevant" (8%), three teachers characterized this dimension as "very relevant" (25%) and the remaining eight teachers considered it as "totally relevant" (67%), $M = 4.58$, $SD = 0.64$.



Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

- **Empathy:** One secondary school teacher considered empathy as "moderately relevant" (12.50%), 1 teacher considered it "very relevant" (12.50%), while the other teachers assumed that empathy is a "totally relevant" dimension (75%), $M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.70$.
- **Critical thinking:** One secondary school teacher considered critical thinking as "moderately relevant" (12.50%), another teacher considered it "very relevant" (12.50%), while the remaining teachers assumed that critical thinking is a "totally relevant" dimension (75%), $M = 4.63$, $SD = 0.70$.
- **Ethical decision-making:** Two teachers considered ethical decision-making as "very relevant" (25%), while the others considered this dimension as "totally relevant" (75%), $M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.43$.



2. How interested are you in using the instruments to assess socioemotional skills?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

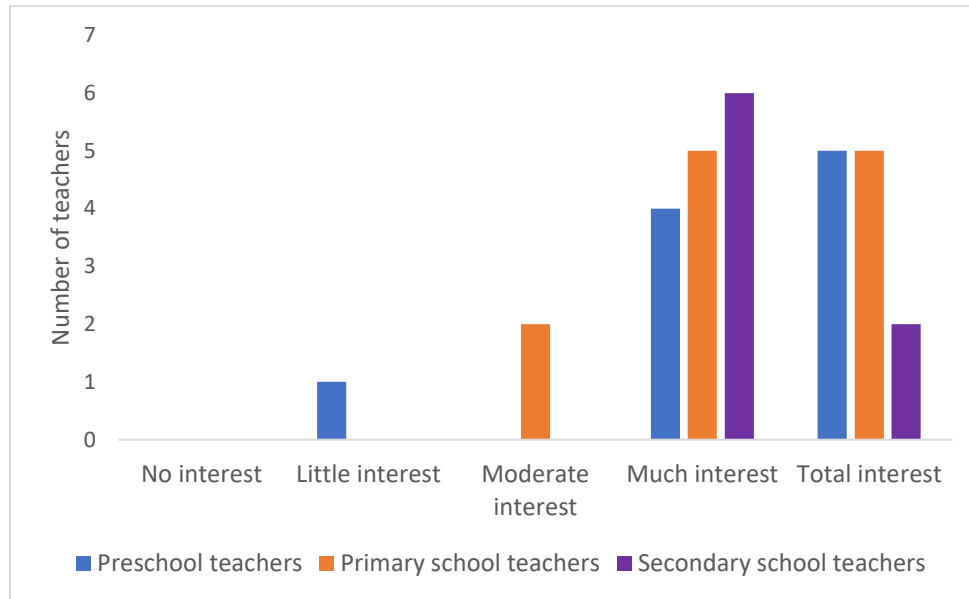
One preschool teacher considered that she had "little interest" in using the instruments (10%), while nine preschool teachers indicated that they were "much interested" or "totally interested" in using these instruments (90%). No teacher indicated "no interest" or "moderate interest" (0%), $M = 4.30$, $SD = 0.90$.

Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

Two primary school teachers reported having "moderate interest" in using the instruments (16%), five teachers reported having "much interest" (42%) and another five teachers reported having "total interest" (42%), $M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.72$.

Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

Six of the teachers considered that they were "much interested" in using the instruments (75%), while 2 revealed that they were "totally interested" in using these instruments (25%). No teacher indicated having none, little, or moderate interest (0%), $M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.43$.



3. To what extent do you think the tools will be useful to your school cluster?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

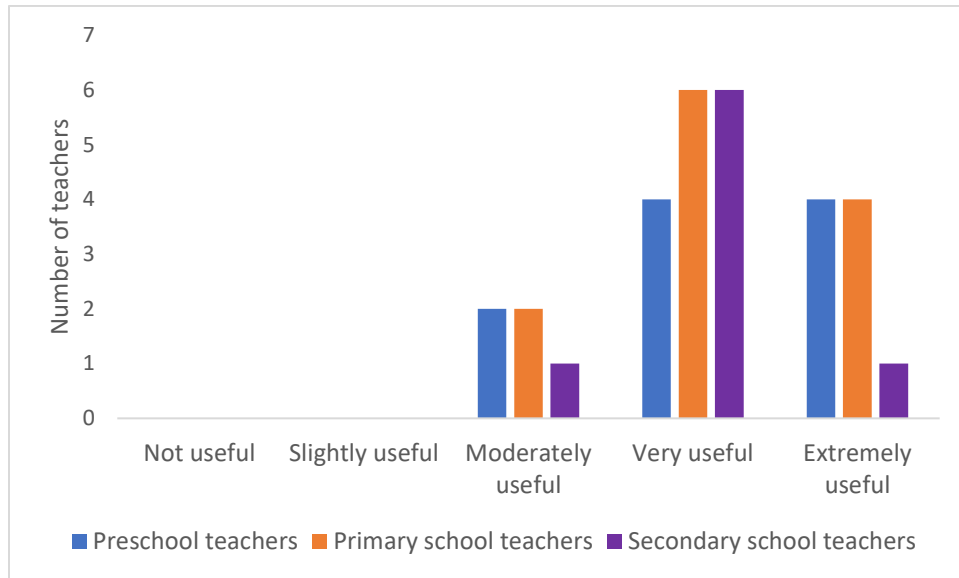
Two preschool teachers considered "relatively useful" (20%), four teachers considered it to be "very useful" (40%), and another four teachers noted that it would be "extremely useful" (40%), $M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.75$.

Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

Two primary school teachers considered that the use of the instruments would be "relatively useful" for the school cluster (17%), six teachers considered it as "very useful" (50%), and two teachers believed it to be "extremely useful" (33%), $M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.69$.

Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

Most teachers (75%) considered that the use of the instruments would be "very useful" for their school cluster, while the remaining teachers considered that it would be "extremely useful" (12.50%) and "relatively useful" (12.50%). None of the teachers considered that this use would be "not at all useful" or "slightly useful" (0%), $M = 4.00$, $SD = 0.50$.



4. To what extent do you consider relevant the following instruments to assess socioemotional skills?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

4.1. Dilemmas: Five preschool teachers indicated that this tool was "very relevant" (50%) and five other teachers considered it as "totally relevant" (50%), $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$.

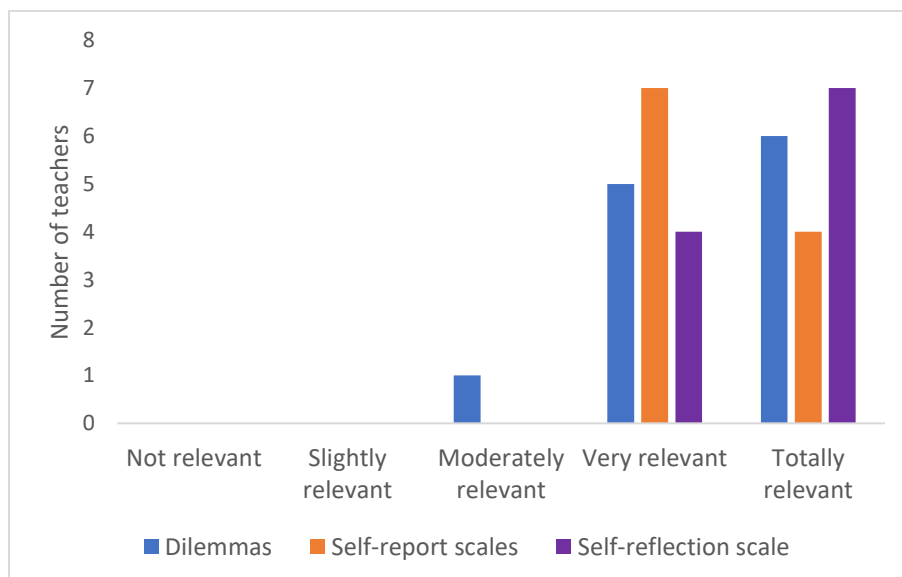
4.2. Self-report scales: Six preschool teachers considered this instrument as "very relevant" (60%), while four teachers described it as "totally relevant" (40%), $M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.49$.

4.3. Self-reflection scale: One preschool teacher indicated that this instrument was "moderately relevant" (10%), two teachers considered it as "very relevant" (20%) and the remaining seven teachers described it as "totally relevant" (70%), $M = 4.60$, $SD = 0.66$.



Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

- **Dilemmas:** One primary school teacher considered this instrument "moderately relevant" (8%), five identified it as "very relevant" (42%) and six as "totally relevant" (50%), $M = 4.42$, $SD = 0.64$.
- **Self-report scales:** Seven primary school teachers considered this instrument as "very relevant" (58%) and four as "totally relevant" (33%), $M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.48$. One teacher did not answer the question.
- **Self-reflection scale:** Four primary school teachers characterized this instrument as "very relevant" (33%) and seven considered it as "totally relevant" (58%), $M = 4.64$, $SD = 0.48$. One teacher did not answer the question.

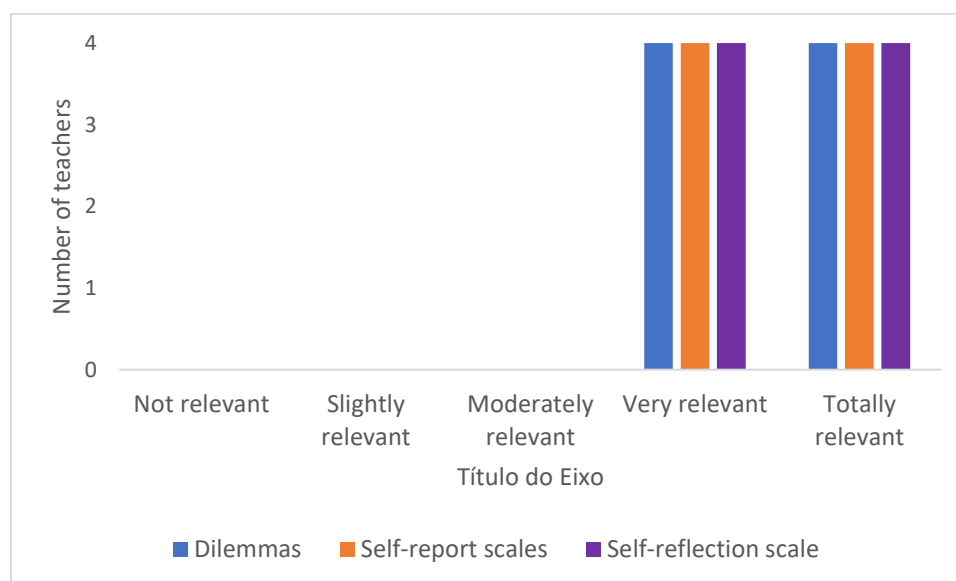


Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

4.1. Dilemmas: Half of the secondary school teachers (50%) considered the dilemmas "very relevant" for assessing social and emotional skills, while the other half (50%) considered these tools as "totally relevant", $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$.

4.2. Self-report scales: Half of the secondary school teachers (50%) considered the self-report scales "very relevant" for assessing socioemotional skills, while the other half (50%) considered these as "totally relevant," $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$.

4.3. Self-reflection scales: Half of the secondary school teachers (50%) considered the self-reflection scale as "very relevant", while the other half (50%) considered it as "totally relevant," $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$.



5. How satisfied are you with the online focus groups led by the University of Porto team?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

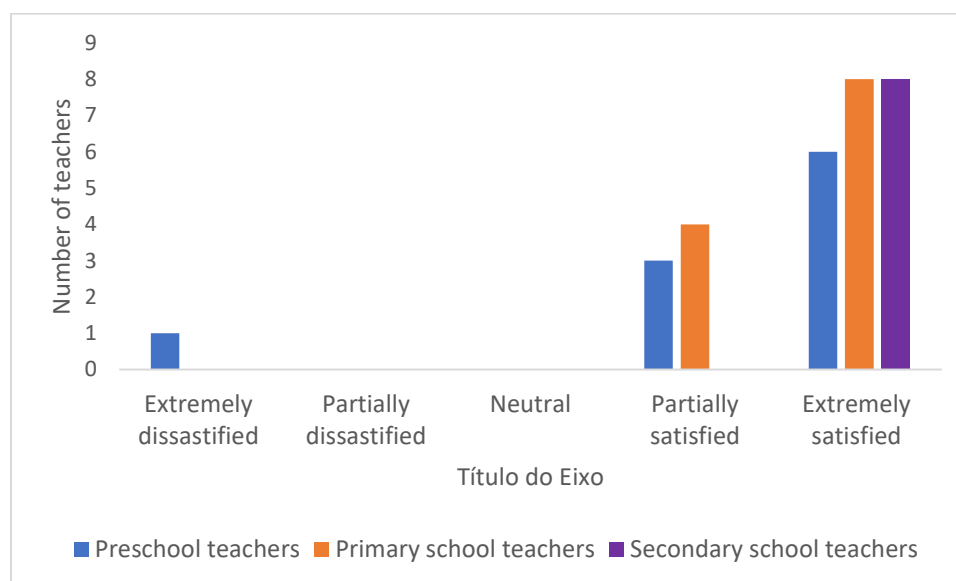
Three teachers reported being "partially satisfied" (30%) and six "extremely satisfied" with the online focus groups (60%). Only one preschool teacher reported feeling "extremely dissatisfied" (10%), $M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.19$.

Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

Four primary school teachers were "partially satisfied" (33%) with the online focus groups, and eight were "extremely satisfied" (67%), $M = 4.67$, $SD = 0.47$.

Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

All the teachers were "extremely satisfied" with the online focus groups (100%), $M = 5.00$, $SD = 0.00$.



6. To what extent was the matrix document (available in the shared drive folder) important for understanding the instruments?

Preschool teachers – Cohort 5

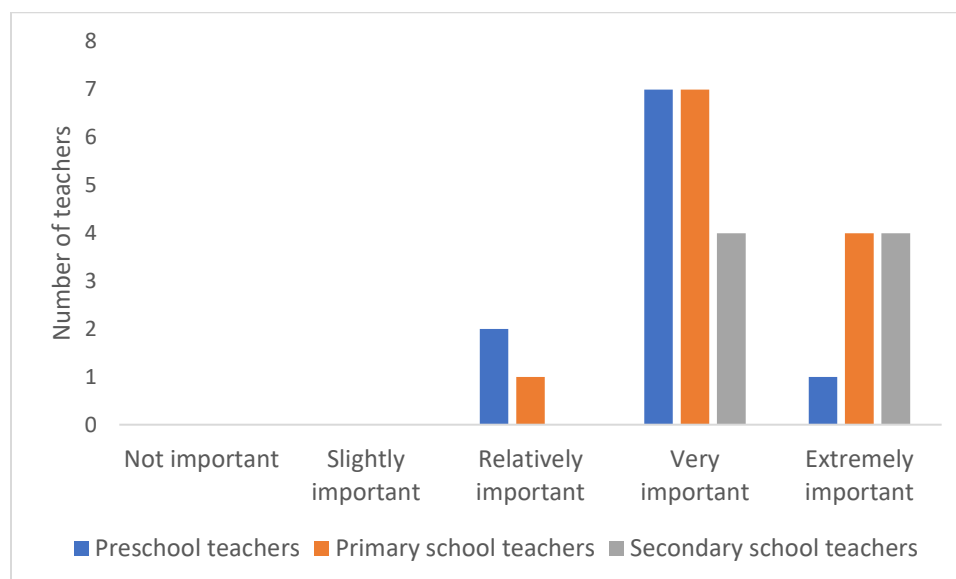
Two preschool teachers considered the matrix document as "relatively important" (20%), seven teachers considered it "very important" (70%), and one teacher described it as "extremely important" for understanding the instruments, $M = 3.90$, $SD = 0.54$.

Primary school teachers – Cohort 10

One primary school teacher characterized the matrix document as "relatively important" (8%), seven considered it "very important" (59%), and four described it as "extremely important" (33%), $M = 4.25$, $SD = 0.60$.

Secondary school teachers – Cohort 15

Half of the teachers considered the matrix document as "very important" for understanding the instruments (50%), while the other half considered it "extremely important" (50%). None of the teachers considered the document-matrix as unimportant, slightly important or relatively important (0%), $M = 4.50$, $SD = 0.50$.



Conclusion

This brief report aimed to examine the perceptions of Portuguese teachers enrolled in the Schools 2030 Program about the online focus groups led by our team as well as assess their satisfaction with the tools to assess students' socioemotional skills.

All teachers considered that the three targeted socioemotional dimensions were very or totally relevant. Most teachers reported having much or total interest in using the instruments to assess socioemotional skills developed by our team. Only one teacher reported having little interest and two teachers stated they had moderate interest. Most teachers considered that these instruments will be very or extremely useful to their school clusters, while five teachers considered these tools as moderately useful. Teachers considered the three instruments – dilemmas, self-report scales, and self-reflection scales – as very or extremely relevant. Only a minority of teachers considered them to be moderately relevant. A preference for a specific tool was not observed. Except for one teacher, all teachers were partially or extremely satisfied with the online focus groups. Finally, the majority of teachers considered that the matrix document – an introductory

document which explains the tools in detail – was very or extremely important for understanding the instruments. Only three teachers considered that this document was relatively important.

Overall, teachers were very satisfied with the online focus groups as well as with the instruments developed by our team to assess students' socioemotional skills. Teachers are now in the process of using these tools with their students in the school context and will send the data until the 1st of March. After that, we will analyse the data (statistical analyses of the whole dataset per cohort, and statistical analyses per cohort for each school cluster). We expect to present these results to all teachers during a new joint session in April.