

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching towards the center and overlapping, symbolizing unity and collaboration. The hands are set against a soft, reddish-pink gradient background.


Finnish school music education today—introducing recent research on the work of music teachers

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*Swedish-Speaking Schools In Finland:
A Minority Perspective on Multicultural Music Education*

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Point of departure

- *“National programme to develop multicultural skills within general education 2007 – 2011”* - 52 municipalities participated
- Swedish speaking teachers in Finland and the role of multicultural education (Mansikka and Holm 2011).

Research questions

- *Whether - and if so, how - teachers in the Swedish-speaking schools in Finland perceive that music in the school environment provides funds for the development of multicultural skills?*
 - What meanings are attached to multiculturalism in the school practice?
 - What is the role of music, both as a subject and as an informal activity within the schools?
 - What is the relationship between music education and “multicultural skills” among teachers who themselves belong to a minority group in the country?

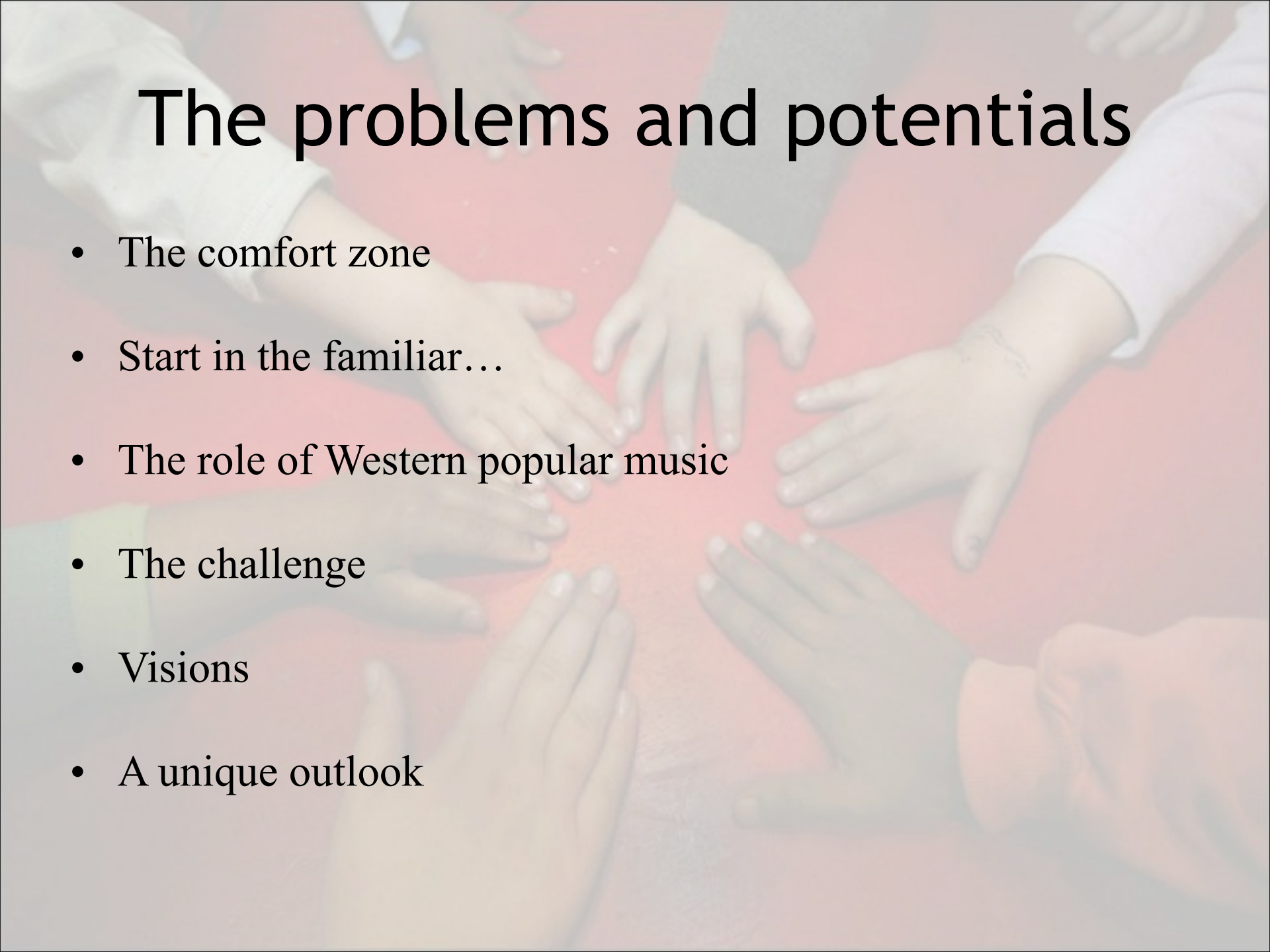
Data collection

- **Focus groups interviews**
- Individual interviews
 - Observation of the teachers' work
 - Policy documents
 - Interviews with administrators/policymakers

Some topics, quotes and themes

- The concept of multiculturalism
- "Music is multicultural to its nature..."
- "But we don't have any immigration..."
- Before and now - a more complex picture of a homeland relation
- "I used to be more multicultural 30-40 years ago"
- Prepare students musically for an intercultural society
- A minority's perspective. More open to difference? Or to the importance of "ethnic music"?
- 'The universal youth culture'

The problems and potentials



- The comfort zone
- Start in the familiar...
- The role of Western popular music
- The challenge
- Visions
- A unique outlook

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones and ages reaching towards the center, symbolizing unity and collaboration. The hands are arranged in a circle, with some overlapping. The background is a soft, light red color.

What (who) is school for?

Alexis Kallio
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Real Rap?

It was difficult for me to explain. "Niko, I know that swear words and all of this rebellious stuff are part of the rap culture, but they are not a part of school culture" I had to say. He really was a very good musician, and rapper, but I couldn't grade him as a rapper, I had to grade him as a student.

A background image showing several hands of different skin tones joined together in a circle, symbolizing unity and teamwork. The hands are positioned around a central point, with fingers slightly overlapping. The background is a soft, light-colored gradient.

Whose values, principles, or criteria create and maintain school culture?

- Does a consensus of values, morals and behaviours exist?
- *Should* a consensus of values, morals and behaviours exist?
- *What* (or *who*) is school for?



Immigrant students' musical agency - and some more...

Sidsel Karlsen

Professor, Hedmark University College
Docent, Sibelius Academy

The project

- “Exploring democracy: Conceptions of immigrant students’ development of musical agency”
- Based at the Sibelius Academy, funded by Academy of Finland 2009-2011
- Research on music education in multicultural schools in the Nordic countries (Finland, Norway and Sweden)

The project

- 3 classroom practices in lower secondary schools (students aged 13-16) in immigrant areas in Helsinki, Oslo and Stockholm
- The data comprises:
 - Field notes from observations of 24 music lessons
 - 6 interviews with 3 music teachers
 - 19 interviews with a total of 30 students

5 articles

Karlsen, S., & Westerlund, H. (2010). Immigrant students' development of musical agency - exploring democracy in music education. *British Journal of Music Education*, 27(3), 225-239.

Karlsen, S. (2011). Using musical agency as a lens: Researching music education from the angle of experience. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 33(2), 107-121.

Karlsen, S. (2012). Multiple repertoires of ways of being and acting in music: immigrant students' musical agency as an impetus for democracy. *Music Education Research*, 14(2), 131-148.

Karlsen, S. (2013). Immigrant students and the 'homeland music': Meanings, negotiations and implications. *Research Studies in Music Education*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1321103X13508057>

Karlsen, S. (in print, 2014). Exploring democracy: Nordic music teachers' approaches to the development of immigrant students' musical agency. *International Journal of Music Education: Research*, 32(3).

1 “meta-article” on inclusion

Karlsen, S. (in print, 2014). Inkludering - av hva og av hvem? En problematisering av musikkpedagogisk praksis i det flerkulturelle samfunnet [Inclusion - of what and of whom? A problematization of music education practice in multicultural society]. In S.-E. Holgersen, E. Georgii-Hemming, S. G. Nielsen & L. Väkevä (Eds.), *Nordic Research in Music Education. Yearbook 15*.

The demand for inclusion

- The increasing complexity and diversity of the Nordic countries should be represented, incorporated, handled and attended to in school
- Increasing diversity in terms of (for example):
 - Ethnicity and geographical, cultural and linguistic backgrounds
 - Beliefs and lifestyles
 - Students' learning styles, prerequisites for learning and already acquired knowledge

Inclusion in (Nordic) music curricula

- Inclusion of a broad range of musics
 - “The music of Finland and other countries and cultures ... contain examples from different eras and musical genres” (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, p. 231)
- The music subject as especially suited for acts of inclusion
 - “The music subject plays an important role in adapted teaching in the inclusive school ... in a multicultural society the music subject may contribute to positive identity creation by promoting a sense of belonging in one’s own culture with awareness of one’s cultural heritage, and with tolerance and respect for the cultures of others” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006, p. 1)

Challenges of ‘inclusion complexity’



- Students’ identity
- Students’ knowledge and competence
- The representation and presence of music styles in the classroom

Students' knowledge and competence

Christina: I have one [student], he is from Morocco, he is *really good* at playing drums, but he doesn't want to do it.

Researcher: Oh? Why?

Christina: No, he does it in those unattended situations where he sneaks out to play and when I have told [them] that we're supposed to sit *here* now, then he is in his own world, and that's cool ... [but] when I give him the opportunity to play drums, he doesn't want to do it ... and I think that's about him not being confident that I and the others will appreciate the musical knowledge he has achieved in Morocco, that he doesn't see that it belongs to the subject, [that] he can't see that what he has to offer has anything to do with music, and it's really hard to convince him about that.

The representation and presence of music styles in the classroom

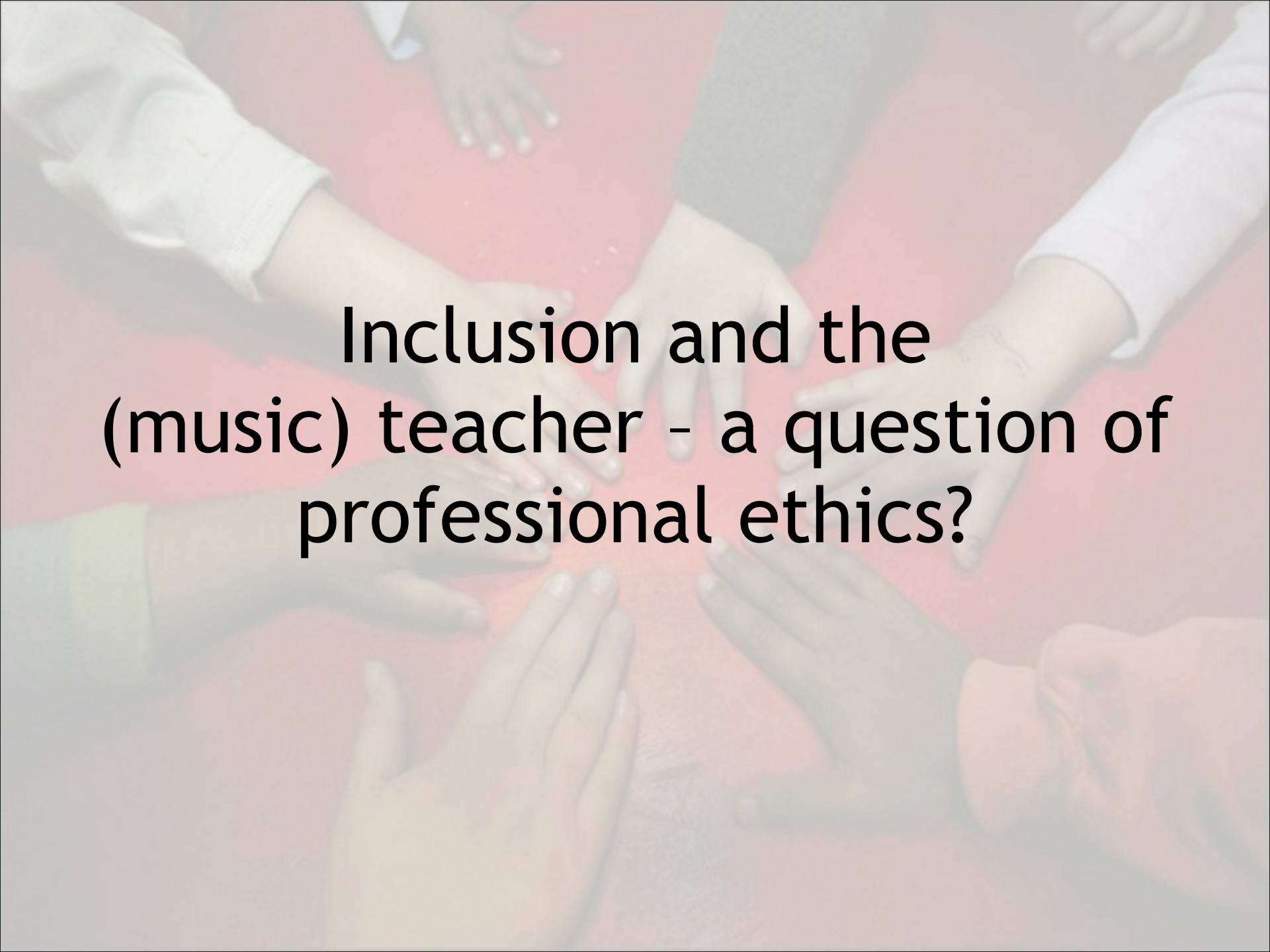
Carl: This year they [the students] wanted some more dancing [than previous years].

Researcher: Yeah, right, because they had a few, two or three, party scenes or something.

Carl: Yeah, and they wanted some more dancehall ... and I thought “sure, OK”, “anything else?”, “no, that’s what we want”, “sure”, I said, “that’s what you’ll have then”.

Researcher: Right.

Carl: And then they joined in writing the lyrics, came with suggestions and ideas ... I wrote some music, it’s still a bit hard for them, after all they’re only in lower secondary school.

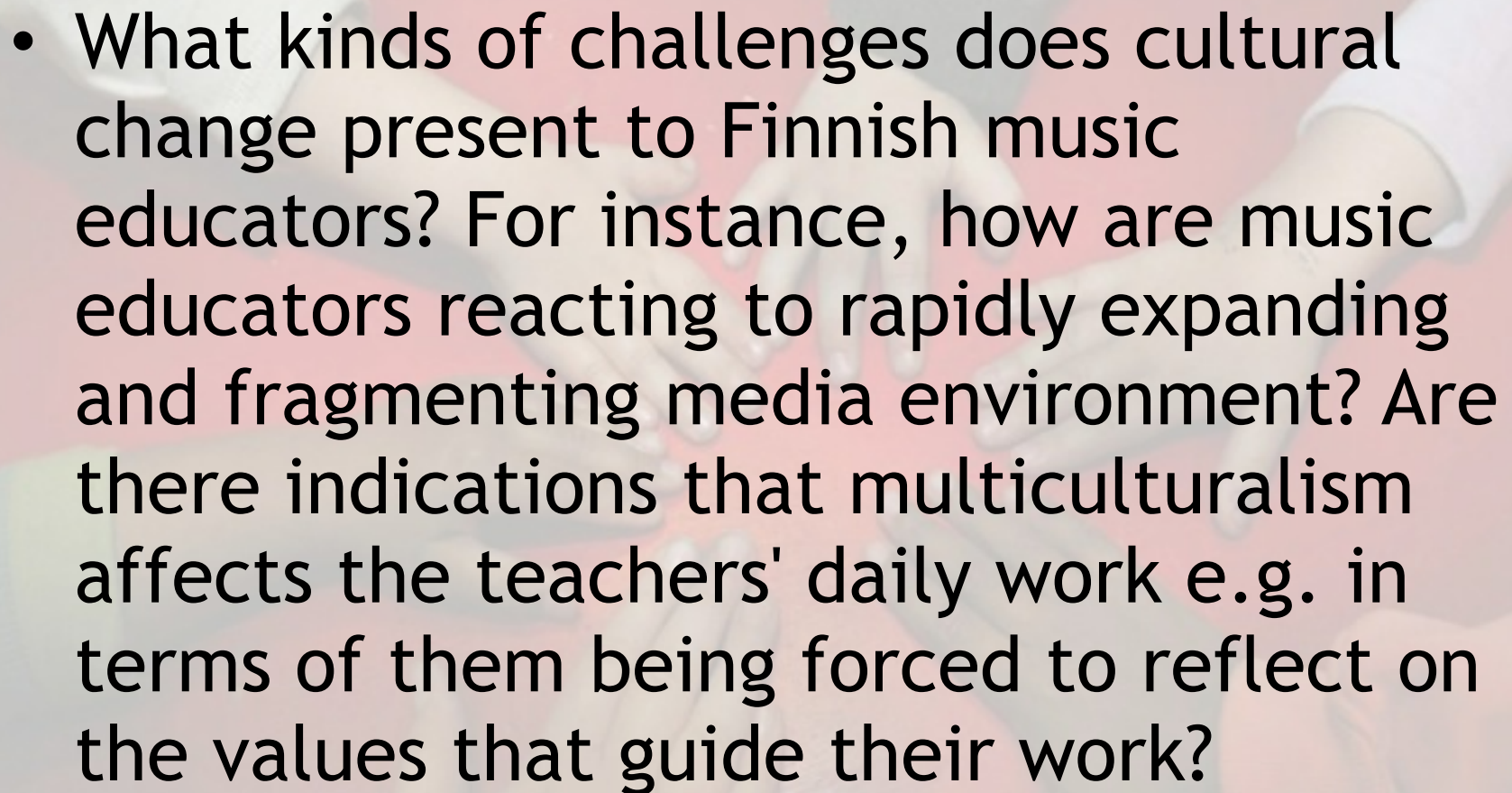
A background image showing several hands of different skin tones reaching towards the center, symbolizing unity and inclusion. The hands are arranged in a circle, with some palms facing up and some facing down. The background is a soft, light red color.

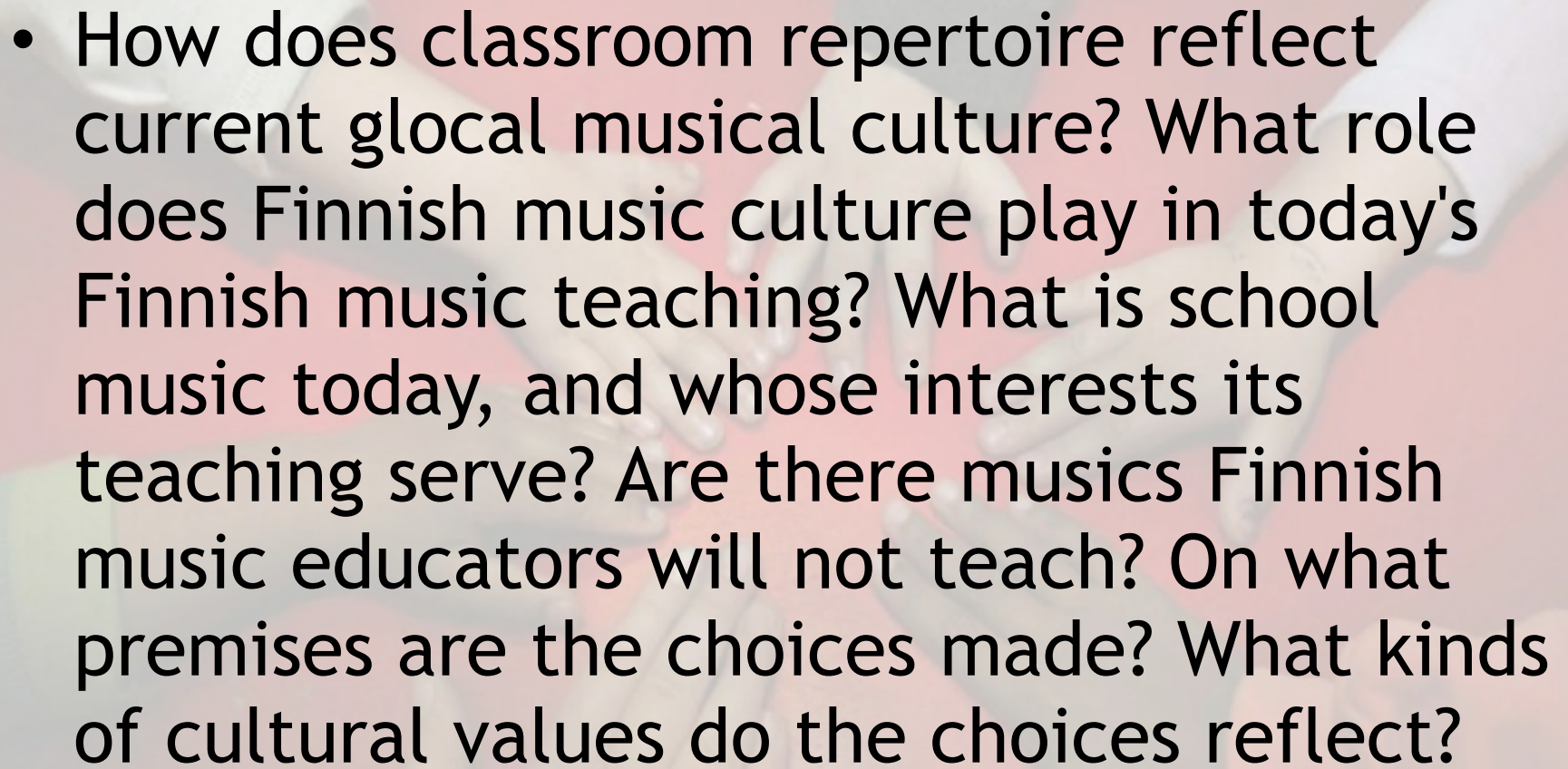
**Inclusion and the
(music) teacher - a question of
professional ethics?**

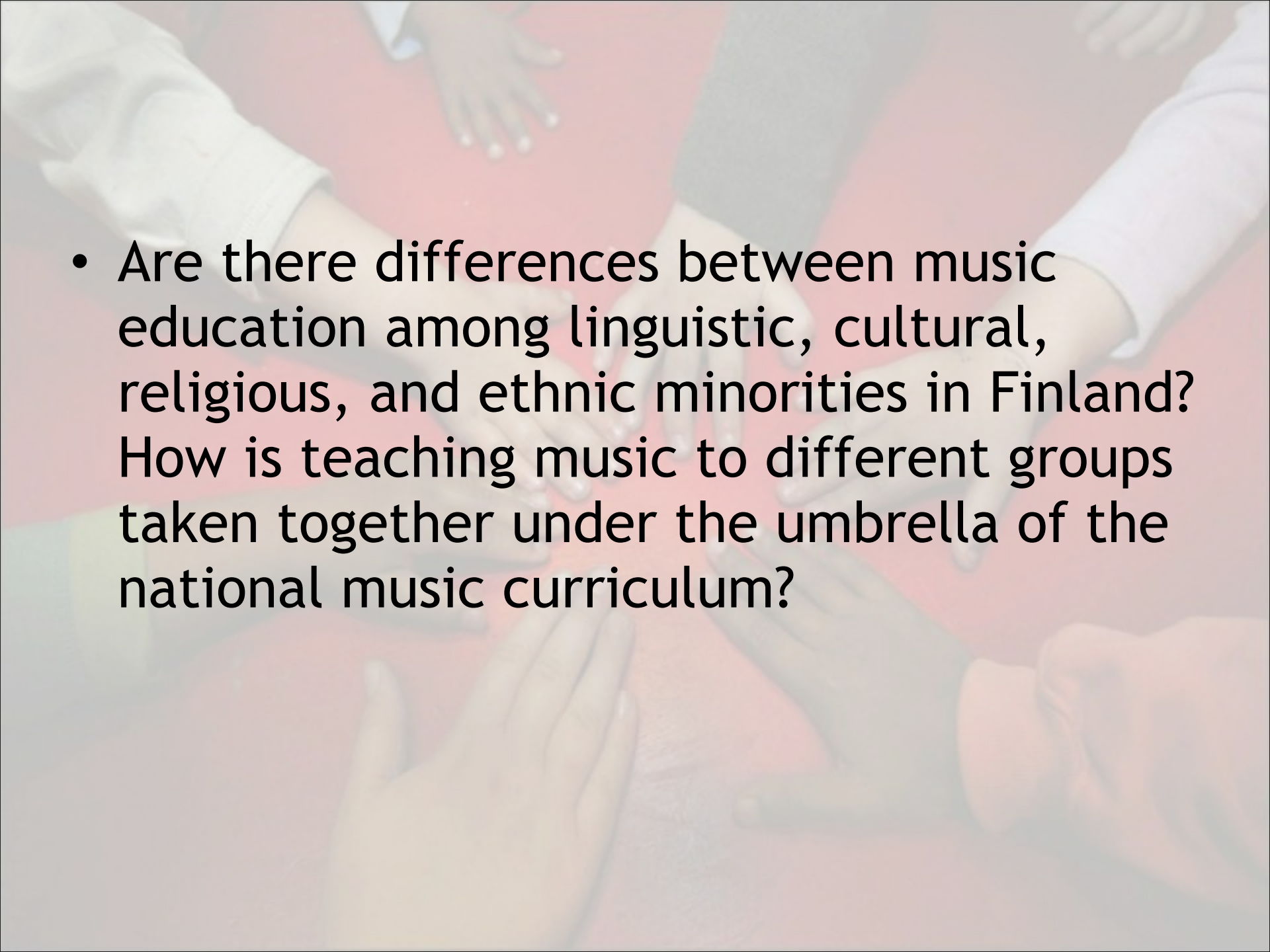


Thank you!

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- What kinds of challenges does cultural change present to Finnish music educators? For instance, how are music educators reacting to rapidly expanding and fragmenting media environment? Are there indications that multiculturalism affects the teachers' daily work e.g. in terms of them being forced to reflect on the values that guide their work?

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- How does classroom repertoire reflect current glocal musical culture? What role does Finnish music culture play in today's Finnish music teaching? What is school music today, and whose interests its teaching serve? Are there musics Finnish music educators will not teach? On what premises are the choices made? What kinds of cultural values do the choices reflect?

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- Are there differences between music education among linguistic, cultural, religious, and ethnic minorities in Finland? How is teaching music to different groups taken together under the umbrella of the national music curriculum?