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PROMOTING SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET **SAFE INTERNET** AGAINST CYBERBULLYING (SIAC)

**LGBTI DISCRIMINATION AND THE CURRENT STATE OF THE ART
IN THE UK, SPAIN, MALTA AND ITALY**



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INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

Cyberbullying of vulnerable LGBTI young people is a reality and an increasing concern among all Erasmus+ countries. Unlike standard-bullying that is more common at school, it can continue throughout the day through SMS, and apps, in social media, forums, or gaming where people can view, participate in, or share content. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or damaging content about someone else.

There is evidence that LGBTI+ groups are disproportionately affected by cyberbullying.

According to the FRA latest European LGBT survey, 91 to 97 % of school students have heard negative comments or seen negative conduct because a schoolmate was perceived to be LGBTI+ during school years. This can result in serious problems, including anxiety and depression, self-harm, social isolation, privacy violation, identity theft.

The heavy reliance on the internet during the Covid-19 pandemic highlights the need for an urgent response that will enable both young people and youth workers to deal well with cyberbullying.

At this critical point in time, the RJ4All International Institute brought together a strategic partnership from four Erasmus+ countries to address multiple Sectorial and Horizontal programme priorities.

The project aims to support youth workers and other professionals working with young who are at risk of cyberbullying. It will increase the skills, knowledge and confidence that will allow these professionals to foster their young peoples' resilience as well as knowledge in using the internet and being safe from cyberbullying.

SIAC - SAFE INTERNET AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

OVERALL PROJECT GOALS:




- Supporting youth workers and other relevant professionals to better meet the needs of young people at risk of cyberbullying.
- Minimize the harassment of students that have bad habits with the use of the Internet through innovative education.
- Increase the professionals' skills, knowledge and confidence to allow them to foster their young peoples' resilience as well as knowledge in safely using the internet and being safe from cyberbullying.
- Promoting quality, innovation and recognition of youth work.
- Improve young peoples' digital literacy and the use of technology in a safe way.
- Enhancing this knowledge and experiences will enable our target groups' adaptation to the digital age and shape their future professions.
- Raise awareness of the importance of a safe use of the internet and need to tackle cyberbullying.

BULLYING

The bullying phenomenon is considered as a set of arrogant and oppressive behaviors towards most weak and vulnerable people. The definition comes from the noun "bully", concerning

the one who carries out acts of violence (verbal or physical) against another person, to mock, to exclude and to offend and to look for approval. Those who persecute are driven by the perception they are more important, more “cool”, stronger, just because older or physically stronger, or because they have a more expansive character.

To understand exactly what bullying is and, above all, to be able to recognize it, we must distinguish three ways in which it can manifest itself:

-  *direct physical bullying*: if the bully hits with kicks, punches, shoves, slaps, etc.), steals or ruins other people’s belongings.
-  *direct verbal bullying*: if the bully threatens, offends, insults, blackmails.
-  *indirect bullying*: if the bully uses a series of actions aimed at excluding and isolating a person, spreading false information about him. This type of bullying is the most difficult to understand and recognize, because it acts in a subtle and silent way.

In bullying episodes (physical), victims can find refuge (at least partially and momentarily) physically moving away from the aggressors. Cyberbullying, on the other hand, does not give escape, because the insults are carried out on the net and therefore have neither space, nor time. It means they can happen anytime and anywhere without ever ending and involving a huge number of people. Also, while the bully is usually someone the victim knows and meets in a common place (school, bus, gym, etc.), the cyberbully can be anyone. Behind keyboard bullies can hide a complete stranger or an acquaintance (who might even use fancy names or remain anonymous). Unlike the bully who “shows himself in the face”, who cyberbully protected by the screen of a PC or a mobile phone has less hesitation, feels more protected and therefore more inclined to do the “cyberbully”, because he/she can use even more offensive and extremely insulting expressions. Cyberbullying material (photos, videos, screenshots of private conversations) can be spread all over the world, in a very fast and viral way; can reach both people who know each other and strangers. Among other things, the contents are permanent. Among other things, for cyberbullying episodes, it is difficult to identify a single offender. And this is not due to the victim’s failure to report, but also to the numerous shares that a content can achieve, making it almost impossible to understand who started the chain. Some of the most common forms of cyberbullying are¹:



- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Harassment• Catfishing• Exclusion | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outing• Trolling• Fraping• Cyberstalking. |
|---|--|

¹ <https://parentology.com/7-most-common-forms-of-cyberbullying/>

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This document pools information and data about trends in cyberbullying in general and then specifically in relation to LGBTIQ. The purpose is that of identifying common areas and diverse approaches to the phenomenon, remedies and interventions, systemic and ad hoc measures.

This is therefore the consolidated groundwork by the partners before embarking on the design of the training path for educators/youth leaders, organisations and players around the phenomenon of cyberbullying related to LGBTIQ. It will assist the partners to bring into the training path best practices and to identify grey areas that require innovative training content in order that SIAC may offer a more complete solution to meet the needs the project is set to meet.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

One of the specific project objectives of this project is to understand the extent, seriousness, and dynamics of cyberbullying in the participating countries and comparatively across Erasmus+ countries.

SIAC will involve the development of an innovative curriculum in the format of a learning material/handbook targeted at:

1. young people
2. youth workers, analysing the current situation and providing new methods and approaches to promote the safer use of the internet with additional tools and methods for the prevention of Cyberbullying.

The innovative character of the curriculum will be its design as a support methodology. Objectives, will include:

- Identify existing methods used to reach marginalized youth
- Identify the best innovative practices in preventing cyberbullying
- Identify existing tools and facilitation of non-formal educational activities attended by youth workers
- Identify accessible methods of communication and distribution of information about the organization programs/projects/activities to reach the most affected young people.

To reach these objectives each partnering country representative in this project conducted a desk research:

- on data and statistics on cyberbullying in their countries, identifying pertinent issues at the local, regional, and national level.
- On data collected on EU wide initiatives to tackle cyberbullying.

VisMedNet was responsible for elaborating on the guidelines for this desk research and developed the template for the desk research report to be adopted by all partnering countries.

In the production of this report VisMedNet collected and analysed these national reports and created a transnational report summarising the findings from the national report, which will act as a reference document that will be sent to the partners for their use later.

This report is a collection of examples, training practice, and other learning features.

ORGANISATIONAL PARTNERS & AUTHORS

**EDITED BY PROF. DR. THEO GAVRIELIDES (RJ4ALL FOUNDER AND
DIRECTOR; SIAC COORDINATOR)**



RESTORATIVE JUSTICE FOR ALL (RJ4ALL) | WWW.RJ4ALL.INFO

Is a charitable International Institute, user-led NGO with a mission to advance community cohesion and human rights, is the UK. Leading Project partner, non contributor to this transnational report.



EUROSUD | WWW.EUROSUD.INFO

Is the Italian contributing partner for this transnational report. Eurosud offers support, help, service and counselling in the areas of development of civil society and democratic institutions, civil values and non-formal education for all citizens, especially for young people



KAIROS EUROPE | WWW.KAIROSEUROPE.CO.UK

Is a company dedicated to provide quality training opportunities for youths and adults in order to improve their knowledge and skills and enhance their career prospects. They are based in the UK Contributing partner in this transnational report,



INERCIA DIGITAL | WWW.INERCIADIGITAL.COM

Is a Vocational Education and Training accredited centre with expertise in fostering digital and entrepreneurial skills. They are the Spanish contributing partner for this report.



VISMEDNET | WWW.VISMEDNET.ORG

Is an association of professionals in the areas of education, training and career development in Malta, Europe and in other parts of the world where VisMedNet has networks, partnerships and friendships.

VisMedNet is located in Malta and is the contributing partner and compiler of this transnational report.



CURRENT STATE OF THE ART

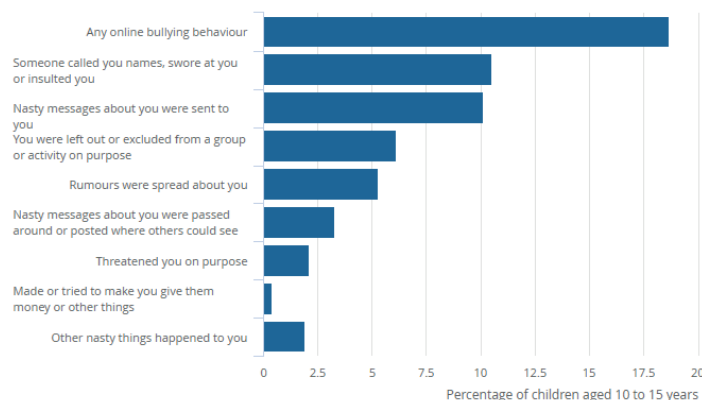
THE UK

The Office for National Statistics in the UK has published research into online bullying in England and Wales, in the year ending March 2020. They found that “Around one in five children aged 10 to 15 years in England and Wales (19%) experienced at least one type of online bullying behaviour in the year ending March 2020, equivalent to 764,000 children. More than half (52%) of those children who experienced online bullying behaviours said they would not describe these behaviours as bullying, and one in four (26%) did not report their experiences to anyone. Being called names, sworn at or insulted and having nasty messages about them sent to them were the two most common online bullying behaviour types, experienced by 10% of all children aged 10 to 15 years. Nearly three out of four children (72%) who had experienced an online bullying behaviour experienced at least some of it at school or during school time.”

Moreover, the statistician Sophie Sanders commented that “Greater use of smartphones, social media and networking applications means online bullying can follow a child anywhere they go. [...] These data were collected before the coronavirus pandemic, children’s isolation at home and increased time spent on the internet is likely to have had a substantial impact on the split between real world and cyber bullying.” This suggests that cyberbullying during the pandemic may have increased or intensified due to the amount of time young people spend online. Different types of online bullying from this report and its prevalence²:

Figure 1: Almost one in five children experienced at least one type of online bullying behaviour in the previous 12 months

Proportion of children aged 10 to 15 years who experienced online bullying behaviours in the previous 12 months, by type of bullying behaviour, England and Wales, year ending March 2020



Abimbola Duro-David from Support Solutions UK writes that “Girls are about twice as likely as boys to be victims and perpetrators of cyber bullying”, and sadly that “Bullying victims are 2 to 9 times more likely to consider committing suicide.”³

Although slightly out of date, a Public Health England report in 2014 found that:

- 17.9% of 11-15 year olds reported being cyberbullied
- Young people from more affluent families were more likely to report being victims of cy-

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/onlinebullyinginenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2020>

³ https://www.supportsolutions.co.uk/blog/social_media_for_the_sector/post/facts_about_cyberbullying.html

berbullying

- Girls were twice as likely as boys to report being cyberbullied
- Cyberbullying increased with age for both boys and girls, the likelihood of being cyberbullied at age 15 is almost double that at age 11⁴

In 2014 “a national bullying survey by Bullying UK found that 40% of young people who reported being bullied experienced thoughts of suicide and 39% had self-harmed. It also found that 42% of young people had had to take time off school after they had experienced bullying.”⁵

In 2019, the BBC reported that: “People being bullied for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) is more common than bullying relating to racism, sexism or religion, according to new research. A poll of more than 1,000 teachers working in UK primary or secondary schools revealed that 13% of children are bullied because of their sexuality. This is compared to 11% because of their race, 7% because of their gender and 2% because of their religion. The research also showed almost three-quarters of teachers have seen homophobic bullying in school.”⁶

The Stonewall School Report 2017 shows “anti-LGBT bullying and language has decreased across Britain’s schools since 2012. But almost half of all LGBT pupils still face bullying at school for being LGBT, and more than two in five trans young people have tried to take their own life”⁷

The following are some household services that are related to the scope of this report.

Cyberbullying and LGBTQ Youth: A Systematic Literature Review and Recommendations for Prevention and Intervention ⁸

What is homophobic bullying? Advice on LGBTQ bullying⁹

ITALY

The phenomenon of bullying is constantly evolving in Italy. A recent study, in fact, reports very worrying data, which is on the rise. In 2014, more than 50% of teens between the ages of 11 and 17 experienced episodes offensive, disrespectful or violent by other boys or girls. 19.8% are often victims of one of the “typical” bullying actions occurring several times a month. For 9.1% the acts of bullying are even repeated on a weekly basis.

The most common bullying behavior consists of offenses with bad nicknames, swear words or insults (12.1%), mockery of physical appearance or speech (6.3%), public insult (*defamation*) (5.1%), exclusion of their own opinions (4.7%), attacks with shoves, blows, kicks and punches (3.8%).

Very dangerous and widespread is what we could define as “gender bullying”: the females (20.9%) are victims of bullies more than males (18.8%). Another data indicates that 16.9% of young people were victims of direct bullying and 10.8% of indirect actions, i.e. free from physical contact.

Those who are attacked or beaten feel helpless, weak and afraid to tell/share the abuses as the victim. Fearing revenge or further mockery of bullies, the victim does not ask for help, they become silent, introverted and worried. This attitude has repercussions in life and family, in relationships with relatives, friends and professors.

Often the misconception of the meaning of strength wrong promotes bullying, causing some guys to turn into bullies and others to suffer in silence, without finding the courage to condemn the aggressors. What may seem like an isolated episode, almost a heavy joke, often becomes a starting point

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/621070/Health_behaviour_in_school_age_children_cyberbullying.pdf

⁵ <https://www.bullying.co.uk/advice-for-young-people/bullying-and-suicide/>

⁶ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/48866236>

⁷ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>

⁸ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7163911/>

⁹ <https://www.bullying.co.uk/general-advice/what-is-homophobic-bullying/>

of many small actions, which are repeated frequently and which make life of those who receive them a real hell. This phenomenon involves not only bullies and their victims, but also so-called spectators: who witnesses the violence or the offenses, they are aware of it, they know and they could easily do something. After all, just watch the news or read any newspaper to make it realize how much bullying is spreading in Italy context. This is why numerous awareness campaigns are active with the main goal to help understanding how recognize bullying episodes and how to intervene to stop them. The Ministry of Education, University and Research has set up the toll-free number 800.669.696 anti-bullying, in order to counter this phenomenon.

To find out more  <http://bit.ly/2maexJj> (short link)

Since 2017 there is also a National Day against Bullying and Cyberbullying at School (7th February).

Most common platforms used by students to use bullying behavior are:




- Facebook
- Tik-tok
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Snapchat

- Messenger
- Gaming consoles (such as games using multiplayer via PlayStation etc.)
- Others



61% of young people say they were bullied or cyberbullied in 2020, and 68% have witnessed it. This is what emerges from the data of the Terre des hommes and Scuolazoo Indifesa 2020 Observatory. Six out of 10 teens say they don't feel safe online, and the biggest nightmare for girls is Revenge porn (52.16%). Furthermore, in the year of Covid, 93% of teenagers said they felt lonely. The data of the Indifesa Observatory were collected through the responses of 6 thousand young people, aged 13 to 23, from all over Italy. Boys and girls express suffering from episodes of psychological violence suffered by peers (42.23%) and in particular 44.57% of girls report the strong discomfort felt by receiving unwelcome comments of a sexual nature online. On the other hand, 8.02% of girls admit to having committed acts of bullying, or cyberbullying, a percentage that grows up to 14.76% among boys. Among the survey participants, 6 out of 10 said they did not feel safe online. It is girls who are most afraid, especially on social media and dating apps, 61.36% of them confirm this. Among the greatest risks, both boys and girls put cyberbullying first (66.34%), followed by the loss of their privacy (49.32%), followed by Revenge porn (41.63%), the risk of enticement by criminals (39.20%), stalking (36.56%) and online harassment (33.78%). After cyberbullying, the biggest nightmare for girls is Revenge porn (52.16%) together with the risk of online harassment (51.24%), luring by criminals (49.03%) and loss of their privacy (44.73%). 1 in 3 teenagers confirm having seen intimate photos of themselves or their friends circulating on social networks. Almost all girls (95.17%) recognize that seeing their hot photos / videos circulated without their consent online, or on someone else's cell phones, is as bad as being physically abused. The percentage drops slightly for boys (89.76%). Even if they are minorities, old prejudices to be defeated persist, 15.21% of boys consider as an "easy girl" the girl who decides to share photos or videos of a sexual nature with her / his partner. While for girls this is true for 8.39% of cases.

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN ITALY TACKLING CYBERBULLYING

- Mediaset against cyberbullying, the social awareness campaign "Think before you write" for more info:  <https://redirect.is/o14wwzk>

- Spot of the institutional campaign “Stop Cyberbullismo” ¹⁰
- “Sbulloniamoci”: campaign against bullying and cyberbullying Lazio Nuoto
- As organization EUROSUD we had our contribution in the topic with two podcast
- With Italian lawyer Mario Damiani talking about bullying and cyberbullying phenomenon in region Puglia ¹¹
- With lawyer Marisa Marraffino talking about the phenomenon on national level ¹²


Useful articles:

- The use of social media during the pandemic¹³
- Different behavior in Cyberbullying ¹⁴
- Facebook’s platform against cyberbullying:  <http://bit.ly/2oZTHhN>
- Cyberbulli, Gossip - the movie online ¹⁵
- A site dedicated to a victim of bullying:  <http://bit.ly/29yECx5>
- Safer Internet Day, world day on online security¹⁶

AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS IN ITALY TACKLING BULLYING

- **Anti-bullying toll-free number 800.669.69**
- The “Generazioni Connesse” Project is co-funded by the European Commission under the “Connecting Europe Facility” (CEF) program, a program through which the Commission promotes strategies aimed at making the Internet a safer place for younger users, promoting them a positive and conscious use. ¹⁷
- A network promoted by the European Commission which takes the form of the online platform “Better Internet for Kids ”managed by European Schoolnet, in close collaboration with INSA-FE (network that gathers all European SCIs) and Inhope (network that gathers all European hotlines).
- The Ministry of Education intends to support the work of teachers, school staff and families, engaged on a daily basis in education for equal opportunities and in the training of their pupils on issues relating to all forms of discrimination. With this objective, has been created the ***www.noisiamopari.it*** web platform, which collects the experiences of schools on the theme of equal opportunities, information, exchange and support tools. Experts, associations and bodies specialized in the fight against discrimination have collaborated in the creation of the website, created to bring together didactic material, projects and initiatives carried out in schools of all levels.¹⁸

USEFUL CONTACTS AGAINST BULLYING:

- Anti-bullying toll-free number chat:  <http://bit.ly/2nd5wAh>
- Carabinieri ¹⁹
- Police ²⁰

¹⁰ <https://vimeo.com/315835580>

¹¹ <https://www.spreaker.com/user/13086191/mario-damiani?autoplay=true>

¹² <https://www.spreaker.com/user/13086191/marisa-marraffino>

¹³ <https://www.repubblica.it/argomenti/cyberbullismo>

¹⁴ <http://www.cyberbullismo.com/cyberbullismo/tipologie/>

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofpSxf75gMU&t=78s>

¹⁶ https://roma.repubblica.it/cronaca/2016/02/08/news/roma_cyberbullismo-132924190/?ref=search

¹⁷ <https://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/it/home-page/>

¹⁸ <https://www.noisiamopari.it/site/it/home-page/>

¹⁹ <http://www.carabinieri.it/cittadino/consigli/tematici/questioni-di-vita/il-bullismo/il-bullismo>

²⁰ https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/232-Bullismo_consigli_su_come_difendersi/

- A short film about bullying²¹

The “First National Day against Bullying at School” took place on 7 February 2017, coinciding with the European Day of Network Security announced by the European Commission (Safer Internet Day), where the best teaching proposals developed by the schools but, above all, all Italian educational institutions were called to say “NO” to bullying at school, dedicating the day to awareness-raising actions aimed not only at students but at the whole community. The schools were also asked to contribute to the creation of the first spot against bullying and cyber-bullying, designed and created entirely by students. The National Campaign goes under the Claim “Il Nodo Blu contro il bullismo” and all the students and schools that joined the campaign were asked to wear, hang or show the symbol of the national fight of Italian schools against Bullying, a bracelet with a Blue Knot.

MALTA

Collecting data related to Cyberbullying has never been an easy and clear task to handle, mainly because of the lack of a common definition word-wide and because of the nature of the subject, many a time data is not forthcoming from victims. There is however a general consensus that there is a rapid rise in cyberbullying mainly related to the rapid increase in online users. According to data from the European Union Statistical Agency (EUROSTAT), 97% of the EU block’s 16-24 years old accessed the internet at least once a week during 2018²².

Through communications with the National School Support Services, we got first hand data that through 2020 there were 34 referred cases for Cyberbullying from 247 opened cases from both primary and secondary schools. None of these referred cases were aimed at LGBTIQ specifically. These numbers indicate a slight increase compared to previous years. It is noted that these incidents reported, may not necessarily mean that no other incidents were present and some incidents are reported within the school senior management or guidance team, and are not referred to the anti-bullying services. It has been noted that the most common type of cyberbullying are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ name calling, ▷ harassment, ▷ threats, ▷ posting of photos with the intention to ridicule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▷ taking videos to upload on YouTube, Tik-Tok or snapchat to insult someone. ▷ in very rare instances fake profiles were created with the intention to insult someone or to create a page ridiculing a student.
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Most common platforms used by students to use bullying behavior are:



- Facebook
- Tik-tok
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Snapchat

- Messenger
- Gaming consoles (such as games using multiplayer via PlayStation etc.)
- Others

From the dissertation data study *Cyberbullying on social networking sites : its prevalence, nature and effects*, among Form 3 and 4 students in Maltese state schools (2014) This study conducted between ages 14 -15 years totaling 338 male and female respondents through a questionnaire. Out of the 98.5% of the respondents claiming that they use Social Network Services, 60.7% claimed

²¹ <https://video.repubblica.it/spettacoli-e-cultura/bullismo-cucinotta-torna-alla-regia-per-un-corto-contro-i-bulli/269707/270159>

²² As retrieved from the FACE project

they have been victims of cyberbullying. 24.4% of whom were still being bullied to that day, while 38.3% reported to have perpetrated at least one of the types of attacks listed. No particular differences by gender were noted. Teasing was the most prevalent type of cyberbullying.

64.9% of perpetrators deemed their cyberbullying actions as not being very serious. Victims who claimed to have felt ashamed, alone, and angry. A number of victims claimed to have missed school (16.1%), had thoughts of self-harm (17.3%) and suicidal ideation (13.2%). Most victims who informed someone about this bullying (58.7%) claimed to have told a friend (69.2%) or a parent/guardian (64.4%), however few informed school staff such as teachers (9.6%)

In a 2016 interview the coordinator of Kellimni.com a locally based online helpline mentions that cyberbullying victims often expressed concern and fear at their loss of control, which might be externalized self-destructive behaviour. Many a time cyberbullying is often a continuation of other forms of bullying. This has been backed by APPOGG²³ who many of the cases they encountered they often started at school or youth centres and then persisted online. In many instance the bullies know the victim very well and there were instances when the friendship ends and the cyberbullying starts. Patterns of cyberbullying are different as they can happen day and night and the victim can be reached many a time in the safety of their own home. In 2020 Kellimni.com mentioned that out of their total contacts per year an average of about 60 of these calls in the last three years were directly linked to bullying or cyberbullying.

MGRM²⁴ says that despite surveys among the LGBTIQ community consistently showing a 12% incidence of threats and violence experienced by respondents, official reports to the police are not forthcoming. To our knowledge no case has been brought forward by the police, who in Malta act as the prosecution, as a hate crime on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics since the introduction of the legal provisions.²⁵

In a study that consisted of 139 students between the ages of 13 and 22 nearly half (45.0%) of LGBTIQ students reported experiencing this type of harassment in the past year. 7.3% had experienced it often or frequently²⁶

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) recommends that teachers and educational staff should also receive training on how to deal with challenging circumstances.²⁷

SPAIN

New technologies bring opportunities for communication and learning, but they also facilitate the emergence of new forms of bullying or harassment that put young people's well-being at risk. The publication "Los Adolescentes y el Ciberacoso" in Spain lists the main risks faced by young people due to improper use of Internet-related technological tools. These risks include: peer-to-peer cyberbullying or the use of information and communication technologies to deliberately cause harm to others, sexting or the dissemination of sexual content via mobile phones, actions carried out by adults to gain the trust of a minor in order to obtain sexual images used to blackmail them, and impersonation. Of all these risks, cyberbullying is the one that causes the greatest concern among parents and institutions, due to its rapid expansion and the serious consequences it has on victims.

Rates of cyberbullying among young people in the EU countries ranged from 10% to 52%, depen-

²³ APPOGG: the National Agency for children, families and the community, safeguards and promotes the well-being of these persons through the development and provision of psycho-social welfare services.

²⁴ Malta Gay Right Movement.

²⁵ Country Report MaltaUNI.FORM by MGRM

²⁶ The 2017 Malta National School climate Survey Report by MGRM. Pg 28

²⁷ NCPE: Research Study on Violence, Harassment and Bullying in Schools

ding on the country. According to a study conducted by the International University of Valencia in 2016, cyberbullying in Spain had a rate of 10-15% over the last 10 years. This study explains that the highest incidence rate occurs at the age of 11-14 years old and that 6.9% of students have experienced cyberbullying, 3.7% have experienced traditional bullying together with cyberbullying and 3.3% have been a cyberbully.

Moreover, more than half of students report having witnessed LGBT-phobic cyberbullying because they are or “look” LGBT. Almost 70% of LGBT students experience cyberbullying based on the affective-sexual orientation and gender identity in their online environment, which means new ways of internalizing prejudices and LGBT-phobia by the same students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans.

In terms of the length of cyberbullying, Fundación Mutua Madrileña and Fundación ANAR carried out an study about cyberbullying and school bullying in 2017 and the data indicates that in 40.6% of cases it persists for more than one year and in 39.0% it does between one year and one month. The frequency is daily in 64.4% of cases and weekly in 6.8%. Therefore, it can be concluded that in most cases cyberbullying continues to be reiterative and long-term.

According to the studies carried out by Fundación ANAR the common profile of cyberbullying victims are:

- Women in 66,7% of cases.
- 13,5 years old on average; older than those students who suffer another type of bullying.
- Teenagers started experiencing bullying at the age of 12,3.

Among technological media, the smartphone is the one most used in terms of cyberbullying, being the most used in 90% of cases. Applications and Social Media such as Whatsapp, Instagram and Facebook are also the most commonly used.

According to a more recent survey conducted by Save the Children in 2019 of 400 students from all over Spain, more than three-quarters of the surveyed students experienced online violence during childhood and 47% of them, even more than one type.

Most common types in Spain were the cyberbullying with 40%, something they experienced for the first time between the ages of 8 and 9 and it mostly affects girls more than boys. Although in the majority of cases it was on the part of a friend or schoolmate, in almost 16% of cases the bully was an unknown person.

Moreover, sexting without consent affected 3.74% of the surveyed. Another form of violence which currently affects Spanish children is the sextortion, in the form of control and violence normally by a sentimental partner.

OVERALL COMPARATIVE TRENDS

Girls are generally bullied more than boys and at least 50 % of the LGBTIQ Community are victims of cyberbullying. The trends we identified show that most cyberbullying occurs between the ages of 10 - 17 but in Spain even as early as 8 to 9 years of age. Spain and Malta seem to have a higher rate than Italy and the UK based on the studies presented above. Bullying can take place from a daily to weekly basis, and at times can move onto a monthly basis and can lead up to lasting as long as approximately one year. Suicide and self-harm are often contemplated as a result. Girls report Revenge Porn to be their biggest nightmare. 8% of girls admitted that they bullied someone at some point. Most cyberbullying takes place on Whatsapp, Facebook or Instagram.

LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

In the coming section contributors were asked to give information about their National legal framework/s on cyberbullying, Legislation related to prevention and to support of victims and perpetrators. Also it was to be considered to give information on the Legal steps / actions taken by stakeholders in the case of incidents, trends etc. like Enforcement agencies example Executive Police, Juvenile Court etc.

UNITED KINGDOM

Bullying and cyberbullying in the UK are not specifically criminal offences. It only becomes a criminal offence if the bullying causes *alarm* or *distress* to the victim (under the *Harassment Act 1997*). Even though there has been discussion in the parliamentary circles of UK

to have in place laws specific to online or cyber-bullying, the prevailing view has been that the existing legal framework is appropriate to deal with the virtual *avatars* of real-life offences, and that the

existing legal framework was sufficient to deal with such eventualities. There are a number of laws that can be used to prosecute the perpetrators of cyberbullying including:

- The Malicious Communications Act 1988. Under this act: it is an offence to send an electronic communication in any form that is indecent or grossly offensive, conveys a threat, or is false, with intent to cause distress or anxiety to the recipient.
- The Communications Act 2003: it states that it is an offence to send messages using any public electronic communications network, such as Twitter or Facebook, which are grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.
- The Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015: According to this act, it is an offence to disclose private sexual images online or offline without the person's consent with the effect of causing the person distress.
- The Obscene Publications Act 1959. This act makes it an offence to publish an obscene article. An obscene article is classed as one whose effect is to deprave and corrupt persons likely to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied in the article. Publishing includes circulating, showing, playing or projecting the article or transmitting the data.
- The Gender Recognition Act 2004.: it states that it is an offence to disclose information received in an official capacity about a person's gender identity or history if the person

has, or is applying for, a Gender Recognition Certificate.

- The Protection from Harassment Act 1997:.. It contains a range of other offences including harassment, harassment when someone fears violence and stalking. Harassment is ‘oppressive and unreasonable’ behaviour that causes ‘alarm or distress’, including ‘repeated attempts to impose unwanted communications and contact upon a victim in a manner that could be expected to cause distress or fear in any reasonable person’.”²⁸

Relating to LGBTIQ+:

“LGBTIQ+ people have the right to decide who knows about their sexual orientation and gender identity, and if, when or how they choose to come out. Outing someone without their consent is wrong, and sometimes unlawful. If someone ‘outs’ you or discloses your gender history, sexual orientation or HIV status when you have disclosed these things online, it may be unlawful, if their actions are prohibited by a specific law or it is done to harass, blackmail or threaten you.”²⁹

With regards to Related to revenge porn:

In April 2015, the Criminal Justice and Courts Act made it, ‘an offence for a person to disclose a private sexual photograph or film if the disclosure is made without the consent of an individual who appears in the photograph or film, and with the intention of causing that individual distress’.

Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015: ³⁰

In April 2017, the Sentencing Council included the ‘threat to disclose intimate material or sexually explicit images’, within its guideline for offences under the Communications Act 2003. These guidelines came into effect from 1st October 2018: ³¹



One in three allegations of so-called revenge porn are withdrawn by the complainant, new figures show. [...] Some alleged victims say it is because they are not granted anonymity, while others cite a lack of police support.” ³²

As can be seen, there are no specific laws related to cyberbullying in the current legal framework, however the current provision seems to be able to deal with certain incidents of online harassment and cyberbullying. A positive step towards direct redressal of the online bullying, in the context of social media platforms, is the Digital Economy Act of 2017. The Act categorically stipulates that the “Secretary of State must issue a code of practice giving guidance to persons who provide online social media platforms for use by persons in the United Kingdom”. This provision is particularly significant as the increased instances of cyber bullying have been reported from such platforms, especially during the contemporary times where due to the prevailing pandemic the virtual world interaction may have been the only form of social interaction for many. which are known as Social Media - Guidelines on prosecuting cases involving communications sent via social media, provide a detailed guidance to the prosecution office as to how should the traditional offences which may be committed on a social media platforms be dealt with.

²⁸ <https://www.galop.org.uk/what-is-online-anti-lgbt-hate-speech-and-hate-crime/>

²⁹ <https://www.galop.org.uk/what-is-online-anti-lgbt-hate-speech-and-hate-crime/>

³⁰ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2015/2/section/33/enacted>

³¹ <https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/information-and-advice/about-intimate-image-abuse/the-law-in-england-and-wales/>

³² <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-44411754>

The growing concern about the outbreak episodes of cyberbullying led the government to address the issue and after a long process, in 2017 the Law of 29 May 2017, n. 71, containing “Provisions for the protection of minors for the prevention and contrast of the phenomenon of cyberbullying”. The government intention immediately emerged to prepare a broadest possible definition of cyberbullying, including “any form of pressure, aggression, harassment, blackmail, insult, denigration, defamation, identity theft, alteration, illicit acquisition, manipulation, treatment unlawful personal data to the detriment of minors, carried out electronically, as well as the dissemination of online content relating to one or more members of the minor’s family whose intentional and predominant purpose is to isolate a minor or a group of minors engaging in serious abuse, a harmful attack, or ridicule them”. During the current government, there have been various parliamentary initiatives concerning interventions to tackle the phenomenon of bullying. However, since most of these suggestions are still in the preliminary stages of their process, attention will focus here on two initiatives whose examination has become more relevant: on the one hand, it is a proposed law presented to the Chamber and already approved by it in the last days of January 2019 (no. C-1524, S-1690)³³ and, on the other hand, a more recent bill presented to the Senate (no. S- 1743)³⁴.

Treating the same issue, the two initiatives are currently under joint discussion before the Senate’s Constitutional Affairs and Justice Committees. The draft law already examined by the Chamber, consisting of nine articles, first of all makes a series of additions to art. 612-bis cod. pen.

In order to extend the objective scope of application of the crime of persecutory acts, we would like to introduce the “condition of marginalization of the victim” as a further possible event resulting from the repeated conduct of harassment or threat. In order to target the events in which the bullies are more than one, it is suggested the inclusion among the aggravating circumstances with a special effect, implying a possible increase of the penalty up to half, of the hypothesis in which the persecutory conducts have been placed in by several people. Finally, with a provision aimed at combating in particular those forms of bullying that make use of the web or other means of communication, we would like to establish the mandatory confiscation of the IT and digital tools that may be used to commit the crime.

The current sanctioning framework is recently tightened as a result of the so-called “law on the red code”, no. hypothesis, the persecutory acts are committed against a minor - evidently frequent circumstance in the phenomenon under analysis. A further intervention on the criminal side concerns art. 731 cod. pen., which sanctions the conduct of those who - having responsibility for a minor - fail to provide him with the necessary school education.

On the one hand, the proposed changes would entail an increase in the legal framework (with a dizzying leap that would lead the current fine of no more than 30.00 euros to be imposed instead between a minimum of 100.00 and a maximum of 1,000.00 euros); on the other hand, they would determine the extension of the scope of application of the rule, through the elimination of the reference to “elementary” education only, with consequent relevance of the entire path of compulsory education.

Further changes would then be introduced to the aforementioned Law 71/2017: originally dedicated only to the phenomenon of cyber-bullying, the law in question would see its field of application also extend to the contrast of all other forms of bullying that occur outside the web and digital communication media (with the consequent possibility of applying, for example, the measure of the warning

³³ Draft Law C-1524, presented on 23 January 2019 to the Chamber of Deputies, concerning “Amendments to the Criminal Code, to Law no. 71, and to the royal decree-law of 20 July 1934, n. 1404, converted, with modifications, by law May 27, 1935, n. 835, on the subject of preventing and combating the phenomenon of bullying and re-education measures for minors”; text of the draft law and further details at the address <https://www.camera.it/leg18/126?leg=18&idDocumento=1524>

³⁴ Law draft S-1743, presented to the Senate on 27 February 2020 by Sen. Ronzulli, concerning “Amendments to law no. 71, and other provisions for combating bullying and cyberbullying phenomena”; text of the law draft and further details at <http://www.senato.it/leg/18/BGT/Schede/Ddliter/52825.htm>

of the police, provided for in this law).

Among the further changes envisaged, worthy of note are the provision of the possibility for the Regions to establish psychological support services in the school environment and the more analytical indication of the measures that each school manager can be called upon to adopt when he becomes aware of episodes of bullying in school.

MALTA

Malta extended its hate crime and hate speech provisions to also include sexual orientation and gender identity in 2012 through amendments to Malta's Criminal Code and further extended to include gender expression and sex characteristics through the Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act in 2015 from the Country Report Malta UNIFORM by MGRM.

Article 82 A of the Criminal Code states: "(1) Whosoever uses any threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour, or displays any written or printed material which is threatening, abusive or insulting, or otherwise conducts himself in such a manner, with intent thereby to stir up violence or racial or religious hatred against another person or group on the grounds of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, ethnic origin, religion or belief or political or other opinion or whereby such violence or racial or religious hatred is likely, having regard to all the circumstances, to be stirred up shall, on conviction, be liable to imprisonment for a term from six to eighteen months."

Cyberbullying falls under the misuse of electronic communications equipment that falls under the Criminal Code of 2007 the Electronic Communications (Regulation) Act, with offences that carry a maximum fine of over €23,000.³⁵

Since there is bullying involved any action taken in the preventing and tackling bullying and aggression especially if it is related to schools it is overseen by the Ministry for Education and Employment, under the Directorate for Educational Services as stated in the Education Act, Chapter 327 of the Laws of Malta. The mentioned Directorate for Educational Services has a department called the Student Services Department (SSD) aimed to support all students undergoing compulsory education. Under the SSD falls the Anti-Bullying Services as part of the Safe Schools Programme.³⁶

In 2015 the Ministry of Education and Employment issued 'The Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools Policy' aims to provide guidelines to enable Trans, gender variant and intersex students to benefit from a learning environment that helps them thrive. It also promotes a safe and free from harassment environment for all the school community, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender identity gender expression and/or sex characteristics. It does so by including and offering a clarification regarding notions, terminology, issues and problems that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Questioning (LGBTIQ) students might have and most importantly their needs both to deal with those issues and to avoid any other problems in their school life.

The Ministry of Education and Employment also issued a guidelines booklet aimed for the senior management team under the name *How to Deal with Cyberbullying* that helped to give a better service by dealing effectively with this phenomena.

The same ministry in 2012 issued a policy under *The Managing Behaviour and Addressing Bullying Behaviours in Schools Policy* as part of the *Framework for the Education Strategy 2014-2021*. The philosophy aims to adopt a whole school approach philosophy and views positive behaviour management to be an opportunity for values based learning as well as a means of maximising the success of academic education programmes.

The Anti-Bullying team receive referrals from schools of parents who have situations of bullying,

³⁵ Cybercrime Law

³⁶ Addressing Bullying Behaviour in Schools, Policy

and that (in most cases) the guidance team at the schools have already worked with. The way the Anti-Bullying (AB) team works is that when there is a situation of cyberbullying, which is only online, the parents are guided towards opening a police report at their local police station, and from there the cyber-police will take over the situation. The victims are supported via the guidance team or the anti-bullying team at school for any emotional support needed.

If the cyberbullying also spills over at school, additional anti-bullying interventions by the AB team will intervene either via class sessions or one to one sessions.

Since a police report has been filed, this in itself is the legal action taken. There have been very few instances where parents have sought additional legal consultations such as: getting a “guarantee” by the courts, or legal advice from lawyers.

When the cybercrime unit (cyber police) have intervened, they will usually recommend that the alleged perpetrator is spoken to by the police. After their investigations have been carried out, the AB team would intervene if any additional instances occur, within school premises.

Schools all have a behavior policy which has been produced by the National School Support Services (NSSS), and the schools have also been given a document that outlines the procedures required from their end when cyberbullying is reported.

As part of the Action Plan under Health and well-being, The National Youth Policy Towards 2020: A shared vision for the future of young people; seeks to develop and implement initiatives that seek to improve the physical, mental and emotional health and well-being of young people. Young people will be helped to confront cyberbullying and other anti-social behaviours.

SPAIN

Cyberbullying can manifest itself in different manners and it can affect the victim in a physical, psychical or sexual way. Regardless of the effects of the received bullying, it is necessary to take the necessary legal actions as a consequence for such behaviour.

The violence in such behaviour is by itself a violation of the law. Attacking minors either physically, psychologically or sexually can lead to prison sentences depending on the seriousness of the actions. If the bully is an adult trying to practise cyberbullying to minors, this will be sentenced as pedophile offences, which, as mentioned before, will pose prison sentences

Cyberbullying has been typified on the Spanish Penal Code since 2013, date on which an specific article to regulate any type of online sexual harassment was included. However, it is true that the laws in the Spanish Penal Code regarding cyberbullying are not comprehensive enough, because they only typify those acts with sexual aims.

However, Spain is the only country in the European Union with a text the Penal Code about cyberbullying and which makes cyberbullying a criminal offence, specially those acts regarding sexual harassment to minor. The Spanish Penal Code includes all criminal acts related to this type of violence and the applicable sentences in the case some of them happen.

A reform of the Spanish Penal Code was made and it included in the Organic Law 1/2015 the regulation for stalking and sexting. Stalking is regulated in the article 127, which penalizes these acts with a prison sentence that goes from 3 months to 2 years, or a fine that goes from 6 to 24 months in prison.

On the other hand, the heavy consequences of sexting for assaulting the privacy and dignity of a person are typified in the article 197.7. The sentence for these actions goes from 3 months to 1 ye-

ars in prison or a fine that goes from 6 to 12 months in prison. In the case of dissemination of images taken without the victim's consent, the sentence can go from 2 to 5 years in prison.

School cyberbullying also represents a violation of the basic rights of the minor suffering it and it produces psychological traumas or damages in the victim. On several occasions, these can also affect their relatives. To fight this damage, parents of those victims under age may start the necessary civil liability actions to seek a remedy for such damages through the applicable compensation.

Legal steps / actions:

If the victims experience the lowest presence of violence or the violation of any of these rights, they must collect all possible evidence to justify and show the bullying they suffered. These evidence may be provided at the moment of lodging the pertinent complaint against the bully.

In any case, it is always recommended acting with caution and prudence and never following the game of the bully. If you experience any little sign of bullying, violence, blackmail or insults, among other actions, it is always recommended reporting these acts to avoid the bully to go unpunished and the acts to be repeated with other people. In order to do that, it is also recommended to ask an adult for help, so they can guide you in the process of giving notice of complaint.

You also must be careful on social media. It is advisable, before reporting, that you certify the bully's messages with a timestamping, give awareness of all the actions to the Police Department for Cybercrime, and do not eliminate any evidence.

Other relevant information:

Aspectos jurídicos del acoso y ciberacoso escolar:³⁷

El ciberacoso en el código penal: ³⁸

Revista de estudios de juventud- Jóvenes: bullying y cyberbullying:³⁹

Cyberbullying and Sexting. New Open Frontiers of Criminal Law: The case of Spain:⁴⁰

³⁷ http://www.injuve.es/sites/default/files/2017/42/publicaciones/documentos_1._aspectos_juridicos_del_acoso_y_ciberacoso_escolar.pdf

³⁸ <https://ciberintocables.com/ciberacoso-codigo-penal/#el-ciberacoso,-presente-en-el-codigo-penal>

³⁹ http://www.injuve.es/sites/default/files/2017/42/publicaciones/revista_completa_injuve_115.pdf

<https://www.elperiodico.com/es/extra/20180212/acoso-internet-delito-6618285>

⁴⁰ <https://www.ejc-reeps.com/LIAKOPOULOS.pdf>

SUMMARY OF OVERALL TRENDS IDENTIFIED FROM LEGAL FRAMEWORKS



Cyberbullying is described as: the misuse of electronic communications equipment that falls under the Criminal Code.

The general definition tends to include: any form of pressure, aggression, harassment, blackmail, insult, denigration, defamation, identity theft, alteration, illicit acquisition, manipulation, treatment unlawful personal data to the detriment of minors, carried out electronically, as well as the dissemination of online content relating to one or more members of the minor's family whose intentional and predominant purpose is to isolate a minor or a group of minors engaging in serious abuse, a harmful attack, or ridicule them. The UK's legislative system has been covering this since 2003 with updates to include LGBTIQ in 2015 and their Communications Act was updated to include twitter or FaceBook in 2015. Revenge Porn is included. Italy started addressing this issue in 2017 and is currently improving and testing the draft. The mandatory confiscation of IT and digital tools used to commit the crime is introduced together with a fine of €100 - €1000. Psychological support services are also available. Malta started addressing this issue in 2012 and crimes can be punished with imprisonment from 6 - 18 months whilst fines can go up to €23,000. The Transgender variant and Intersex students was added in 2015. School policy provides guidelines and senior management are provided with a booklet to give a better service to deal with this phenomenon. Malta has an anti-bullying team where if a child is bullied, parents are asked to file a report with the cyber police department and this is considered to be a legal action which can be used against the perpetrator who is then approached by the police. Victim Support is also provided to help them with emotional support. In Spain a more general overview towards bullying was illustrated and a legal framework was set up in 2013 where violence is seen as a violation of the law which can also lead to prison sentences. In 2015 the organic law regulating stalking and sexting was introduced, whilst cyberbullying in schools is also considered a violation of the law. To fight this damage, parents of those victims under age may start the necessary civil liability actions to seek a remedy for such damages through the applicable compensation.

EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS ON CYBERBULLYING

In the coming section participants researched what agencies, services, Government and third sector/civil society interventions and good practices to tackle cyberbullying are present in their countries. They also identified services and Youth agencies and initiatives to educate youth leaders and youths, Education authorities including counsellors, teacher education, personal development in school.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

In the UK there are several organisations and agencies that work on tackling cyberbullying and providing the adequate support to the victims. The UK Government is at the forefront in the fight against cyberbullying. The Government website (<https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/reporting-bullying>) contains useful information on the legal framework, how to report incidents and also lists a number of organisations providing guidance and support.

The main organisations in the UK are the following:



CHILDNET

Childnet International is a non-profit organisation working with others to help make the internet a safe place for children. They work directly with children and young people from the ages of 3 to 18 on a weekly basis, as well as parents, carers, teachers and professionals, finding out about their real experiences online, and the positive things they are doing as well as sharing safety advice. This also helps to inform how they develop and respond to policy issues and the messages that they take to government and the internet industry about the real experiences of children and young people, and what needs to be done to make them safer.⁴¹



ANTI-BULLYING ALLIANCE

The Anti-Bullying Alliance is a coalition of organisations and individuals that are united against bullying.⁴²



BETTER INTERNET FOR KIDS

The Better Internet for Kids portal provides information, guidance and resources on better internet issues from the joint Insafe-INHOPE network of Safer Internet Centres in Europe, and other key stakeholders.⁴³

⁴¹ <https://www.childnet.com/>

⁴² <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/>

Core members: <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/aba-our-work/our-members/core-members>

Associate members: <https://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/aba-our-work/our-members/associate-members>

⁴³ <https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/home>: Resources: <https://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/resources>



KIDSCAPE

A charity committed to helping all children grow up in safe communities, through training, awareness, and advice.



REPORT HARMFUL CONTENT

Report Harmful Content is a national reporting centre that has been designed to assist everyone in reporting harmful content online.

Empowering anyone who has come across harmful content online to report it by providing up to date information on community standards and direct links to the correct reporting facilities across multiple platforms.⁴⁴



REVENGE PORN HELPLINE

“We are a UK service supporting adults (aged 18+) who are experiencing intimate image abuse, also known as revenge porn.

The Helpline was established in 2015 alongside the legislation which made it an offence to share intimate images or videos of someone, either on or offline, without their consent with the intention of causing distress. The Helpline is run by a small team of passionate and motivated individuals who are here and ready to help.”⁴⁵



POSH HELPLINE (PROFESSIONALS ONLINE SAFETY HELPLINE)

Supporting professionals working with children and young people. Co-funded by the European Commission, The Professionals Online Safety Helpline (POSH) was set up in 2011 to help all members of the community working with or for children in the UK, with any online safety issues they, or children and young people in their care, may face.⁴⁶



THE CYBERSMILE FOUNDATION

A charity committed to digital wellbeing and tackling all forms of bullying and abuse online. Through education, research, awareness campaigns and the promotion of positive digital citizenship they reduce incidents of cyberbullying and through their help and support services they empower those affected and their families to regain control of their lives.

ITALY

Anti-bullying Service. EduServices. Forms part of the Safe Schools Programme in the Education Psychosocial Service within the National School Support Services Department. Aims to support staff to implement the Anti-bullying Policy. Support and coordinate initiative and efforts to deal with bullying incidents. Deliver prevention programmes. Offer training and support to all related parties in bullying incidents. Anti-bullying initiatives have also been carried out in various schools and colleges, and also on a national level. Such as:

- Anti-bullying weeks
- Friendship Clubs
- Restorative practice training

⁴⁴ <https://reportharmfulcontent.com/>

⁴⁵ <https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/>

⁴⁶ <https://swgfl.org.uk/services/professionals-online-safety-helpline/>

- Peer Mentoring Programs
- Friendship circles



LA CAMPAGNA INDIFESA ⁴⁷

The “Campagna indifesa” of Terre des Hommes was created to guarantee education, health, protection from violence, discrimination and abuse to girls all over the world. With this major awareness campaign, Terre des Hommes has put the promotion of the rights of girls in the world at the center of its intervention, committing itself to defending their right to life, freedom, education, equality and protection. All this starting from field interventions aimed at giving concrete results to break the cycle of poverty and offer better life opportunities to thousands of girls and boys around the world.



SCUOLAZOO ⁴⁸

ScuolaZoo project puts the new generations at the center, is the media brand of Italian students and interfaces daily with 4 million followers. Born in 2007 from an idea of Paolo De Nadai. With the aim to counter the episodes of bad education; ScuolaZoo is today a media brand that acts as an interlocutor with students. All of them communicating with their unfiltered language, through their social channels of reference. ScuolaZoo aims to inspire the new generations, living the kids, telling their dreams and needs and giving life to WOW contents and experiences that unite, and release everyone’s potential. ScuolaZoo is also the third best-selling school diary in Italy and the first national network of Institute Representatives who collaborate for a better school with and for students.

MALTA



CYBER CRIME UNIT

is a specialised section with the Malta Police Force set-up in 2003, with the primary role to provide technical assistance in the detection and investigations of crimes related to the internet or through the use of a computer.



AGENZIA APPOGG

is the national agency for children, families and the community. It aims to safeguard and promote well being through psycho-social welfare services. This agency has two services aimed at supporting and reducing cyberbullying.



ANTI-BULLYING SERVICE EDUSERVICES

Forms part of the Safe Schools Programme in the Education Psychosocial Service within the National School Support Services Department. Aims to support staff to implement the Anti-bullying Policy. Support and coordinate initiative and efforts to deal with bullying incidents. Deliver prevention programs . Offer training and support to all related parties in bullying incidents.

Anti-bullying initiatives have also been carried out in various schools and colleges, and also on a national level. Such as:

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- Friendship Clubs
- Restorative practice training
- Peer Mentoring Programs
- Friendship circles

⁴⁷ <https://terredeshommes.it/indifesa/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.scuolazoo.com/>



CHILD WEB ALERT

an online reporting system which provides a secure and confidential environment to report website or online content that falls under child abuse.



SUPPORTLINE 179

national helpline which offers support , information and as a referral service.



BESMARTONLINE

BeSmartOnline is a project financed through the European Union, coordinated by the Malta Communications Authority(MCA) as part of a consortium. Main objective of this project is to raise awareness and educate on safe use of internet. The project include reporting facilitate for internet abuse and support service for respective victims.



BBRAVE

BBrave is the first anti-bullying NGO in Malta. Primary aims are to create awareness and support through sharing of knowledge information and direct support and assistance.⁴⁹

SPAIN

In Spain many educational initiatives against cyberbullying have arisen by the hand of public and private bodies. The most relevant are listed below.



ASEGURATE PROGRAM

It is an initiative developed with funding from the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness together with the Sexting, Cyberbullying and Emerging Risks on the Network project (EDU2013-44627-P). The platform PDA BULLYING has been developed by this project as a proposal of good practices for bullying and cyberbullying prevention, detection and intervention within educational environments as well as other forms of peer violence (childhood and adolescence). This collaborative platform brings together resources and assets, thus joining strengths to overcome bullying.⁵⁰



CONRED ANDALUCÍA

It is a programme for the prevention of school bullying and cyberbullying in the classroom developed by the regional government of Andalusia. The goals of this programme are to boost and support educational centers in building awareness among the school community of the importance of preventing and eradicating peer bullying and cyberbullying, and to train in developing strategies which facilitate positive relationships, early detecting any form of bullying cases and responding to any possible situation of this type. This initiative offers a specific training for teachers and it is available for primary and secondary education centers in Andalusia for its implementation and dissemination.⁵¹

⁴⁹ <https://bbrave.org.mt/>

⁵⁰ <https://pdabullying.com/es/resource/programa-asegurate>

⁵¹ <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/convivencia-escolar/inicio/-/novedades/detalle/yWgyel-IFzPWk/curso-a-distancia-programa-de-prevencion-del-acoso-escolar-y-ciberacoso-conred-1wpixmsedlbzc5>



INSTITUTO DE LA JUVENTUD

This is a public body attached to the Ministry of Social Rights and 2030 Agenda with the main activity of promoting actions to benefit youths. In 2013 it developed the guide to proceeding against cyberbullying in order to help parents and educators to detect possible cyberbullying cases.⁵²



ZEROACOSO PROGRAMME

It is a platform developed in Spain to prevent, persuade and support the fight against school bullying and cyberbullying. The Zeroacoso functioning is based on communication through anonymous messages and privacy which makes tackling the problem from different points feasible, and combating each of the factors that allow school bullying to happen.⁵³



B-RESOL

It is an application that works like a communication channel between the student who suffers or witnesses school bullying or cyberbullying and the teaching staff from their education center, so the teachers receive the information and can manage it in order to act against this type of cases. The application is free for students, but it is necessary that the school or high school pays for it.⁵⁴



GUIDE FOR THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY TO PREVENT AND SUPPORT THE VICTIMS OF CYBERBULLYING IN A SCHOOL CONTEXT

It is a guide elaborated by the Centro Nacional de Innovación e Investigación Educativa and focused on a series of general orientations which allow a general analysis of school bullying. In second place, it also focuses on specific orientations to tackle bullying practised through Information and Communication Technologies.⁵⁵



ACTION GUIDE FOR FAMILIES AND EDUCATORS AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

developed by Red.es, a public entity attached to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation and through the Secretary of State for Digitalization and Artificial Intelligence. The guide deals with the necessary educational, preventive and intervention aspects to fight school cyberbullying and sexual cyberbullying to minors (grooming).⁵⁶



!EN NUESTRO INSTITUTO NO! PROJECT

a Coalition of EDUCATION CENTERS against LGBT bullying. It is an initiative created by the Spanish State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Trans and Bisexuals (FELGTB) and the entities belonging to the RED EDUCA project, and developed in June 2017. The main objective of this project is to create a coalition of safe schools in order to lead the efforts against school bullying. The alliance involves students, social professionals, teachers, families, maintenance and administrative staff.⁵⁷

⁵² <http://www.injuve.es/convivencia-y-salud/guia-de-actuacion-contr-el-ciberacoso>

⁵³ <https://www.zeroacoso.org/>

⁵⁴ <https://b-resol.com/>

⁵⁵ <https://www.educacionyfp.gob.es/mc/sgctie/inicio.html>

Resource: <http://blog.intef.es/cniie/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2017/05/Gui%CC%81a02.pdf>

⁵⁶ <http://www.injuve.es/sites/default/files/2013/46/publicaciones/Gu%C3%ADa%20de%20actuaci%C3%B3n%20contra%20el%20ciberacoso.pdf>

⁵⁷ <https://www.felgtb.com/ciberbullying/materiales/lineasgeneralesproyectoES.pdf>



APP DELINTEST

It is an educational project carried out by the Pantallas Amigas association and aimed at secondary education students to foster the awareness of the boundaries and legal consequences of what we do on the Internet, so we can prevent the cyber crimes committed by teenagers and also their effects on the victims, the authors of the crime and their environments. It also pays special attention to aspects related to gender-based violence and hate crimes.⁵⁸



CRECER UNIDOS

It is a platform for online audiovisual training with theoretical information, practical tools and expert advice in order to teach families how to prevent school bullying, detect whether his or her child is experiencing bullying at school and, specially, it teaches how to act in the case there are evidence of an existing school violence situation.⁵⁹



‘EL CONTROL ES TUYO, QUE NO TE CONTROLLEN’ CAMPAIGN

It is a campaign for building awareness among young people on digital bullying and gender-based violence and carried out by the Spanish Data Protection Agency, the Ministries of Education and Vocational Training and of Equality, and the Pantallas Amigas association.⁶⁰



“TE PONGO UN RETO”

This project was developed by the Gestión y Participación Social Foundation and it aims to prepare the whole education community (students, teaching staff and families) to prevent the risks of the Internet. In order to do that, a center with resources for educators, families and youths has been created, and work is carried out in education centers and associations through training and awareness sessions. These resources include the Guide of Good Practices for the Prevention of Cyberbullying, Online Violence and other Risks.⁶¹



THE REGIONAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SPORT IN ANDALUSIA

It is a body that offers a wide range of resources on cyberbullying like guides for the education community, intervention protocols, teaching guides, etc.⁶²

OTHER RELEVANT STUDIES:

Acoso escolar y ciberacoso-Prevención, Detección y Recuperación de las víctimas:⁶³

Diez líneas de actuación estratégicas para combatir el ciberbullying:⁶⁴

Ciberbullying, prevenir y actuar- Guía para centros educativos:⁶⁵

⁵⁸ <https://www.delintest.com/app-y-guia/>

⁵⁹ <http://crecerunidos.com/>

⁶⁰ <https://www.aepd.es/es/prensa-y-comunicacion/blog/campa%C3%B1a-el-contrlo-es-tuyo-que-no-te-controlen>

⁶¹ <http://www.tepongounreto.org/>

⁶² <https://www.juntadeandalucia.es/educacion/portals/web/convivencia-escolar/ciberbullying>

⁶³ http://www.defensordelmenordeandalucia.es/sites/default/files/00_informe_definitivo_acoso_escolar.pdf

⁶⁴ <https://www.pantallasamigas.net/diez-lineas-actuacion-estrategicas-combatir-ciberbullying/>

⁶⁵ <http://www.copmadrid.org/webcopm/recursos/CiberbullyingB.pdf>



REVIEWING EXISTING LOCAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND TRAINING AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

SUMMARY OF OVERALL TRENDS IN RELATION TO EXISTING SUPPORT SYSTEMS

All 4 Countries have support initiatives for youths at school. Parents, and educators and also targeted and reached in various ways. Anti-bullying setups have been created. Awareness campaigns take place in all Countries in different ways aimed at educating individuals to unite against bullying. Structures are available to report abuse from online platforms or by filing official reports with the police. Monitoring on what needs to be done takes place across the board. Support Systems are found with National reporting centres and a Revenge Porn Helpline in the UK, whilst a Cyber Crime Unit and Edu Services, Safe School Programme, delivery of prevention programs and training and support to related parties in bullying incidents take place in Malta.

A Child Web Alert is an online reporting system which provides a secure and confidential environment to report website or online content that falls under child abuse.

BeSmartOnline is a project financed through the European Union, coordinated by the Malta Communications Authority(MCA) Malta and Italy run Anti-bullying weeks in:

- Friendship Clubs
- Restorative practice training
- Peer Mentoring Programs
- Friendship circles

In Spain many educational initiatives against cyberbullying have arisen by the hand of public and private bodies.

- platform PDA BULLYING has been developed This collaborative platform brings together resources and assets, thus joining strengths to overcome bullying.⁶⁶
- prevention of school bullying
- proceeding against cyberbullying in order to help parents
- LGBT bullying.

UNITED KINGDOM

As mentioned before, many organisations providing guidance and support also make available a vast array of educational tools such as online courses, toolkits, guides for schools and parents, or other types of resources that can be downloaded and used for free.

The Anti-Bullying Alliance, a London-based organisation, have a dedicated learning platform where they have developed a rich catalogue of online courses providing a thorough overview of all issue related to bullying including recognition, prevention and response.

⁶⁶ <https://pdabullying.com/es/resource/programa-asegurate>

OTHER RESOURCES INCLUDE:



UK SAFER INTERNET CENTRE

“a partnership of three leading organisations: **Childnet International**, **Internet Watch Foundation** and **SWGfL**, with one mission - to promote the safe and responsible use of technology for young people.”



CHILDNET INTERNATIONAL:

Childnet’s mission is to work in partnership with others around the world to help make the internet a great and safe place for children. ⁶⁷



INTERNET WATCH FOUNDATION

“We minimise the availability of online sexual abuse content.

Specifically:

- Child sexual abuse content* hosted anywhere in the world.
- Non-photographic child sexual abuse images hosted in the UK.

The majority of our work focuses on the removal of child sexual abuse images and videos. ”⁶⁸



SWGFL (SOUTH WEST GRID FOR LEARNING)

SWGfL are a not for profit charity ensuring everyone can benefit from technology free from harm. Forming 1/3 of the UK Safer Internet Centre, our experts advise schools, public bodies and industry on appropriate actions to take in regards to safeguarding and advancing positive online safety policies. ⁶⁹

The partnership of these 3 organisations was appointed by the European Commission as the **Safer Internet Centre for the UK** in January 2011 and is one of the 31 Safer Internet Centres of the Insafe network. The centre has three main functions:

- Awareness Centre: to provide advice and support to children and young people, parents and carers, schools and the children’s workforce and to coordinate Safer Internet Day across the UK.
- Helpline: to provide support to professionals working with children and young people with online safety issues.
- Hotline: an anonymous and safe place to report and remove child sexual abuse imagery and videos, wherever they are found in the world.

⁶⁷ <https://www.childnet.com/>

⁶⁸ <https://www.iwf.org.uk/>

⁶⁹ <https://swgfl.org.uk/>

ALSO, RELATED TO EXTREMISM:



MOONSHOT CVE

Social enterprise using technology to disrupt violent extremism and other global problems. “We reach people at risk of violent extremism and offer them an alternative path. Our work is rooted in evidence, ethics and the fundamental belief that people can change.”⁷⁰



YOUTH CAN

A network of activists created to inspire, engage and amplify young positive voices against extremism ⁷¹

ITALY

As regards Italy, nine good practices were collected, all implemented at national level.

THESE PRACTICES ARE THE FOLLOWING:



THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN TELEFONO AZZURRO AND THE MINISTRY

of Education (for carrying out joint teaching and training activities to promote education for digital citizenship and the conscious use of digital technologies and social media); ⁷²



THE TELEFONO AZZURRO FACEBOOK APP (a chat, an Application, a page on the main Social Networks and everything necessary to ensure listening and support to those who request it); ⁷³



“TELEFONO AZZURRO AND LA BARACCA THEATER”：“FUORIGIOCO, A STORY OF BULLYING”

(theater show for children from 8 years old);⁷⁴



TELEFONO AZZURRO AND NICKELODEON: “ANTI-BULLYING MISSION: WHO SPEAKS, WINS”;

Training of teachers and non-teaching staff; the annual fact-finding survey on the condition of childhood and adolescence in Italy; “The boys’ table”; “Italian L2: student = school: family”; ⁷⁵



THE FORUM THEATER for the training of teachers and parents. ⁷⁶

FURTHERMORE, ITALY IS A PARTNER COUNTRY IN BEST PRACTICES ON TRANSNATIONAL LEVEL:

⁷⁰ <https://moonshotcve.com/>

⁷¹ <https://www.youthcan.net/>

⁷² <https://www.miur.gov.it/documents/20182/0/PI+MIUR+-+Telefono+Azzurro.pdf/022f082f-8c22-4382-bbb1-e-980296ac432?version=1.0>

⁷³ <https://www.mediakey.tv/leggi-news/facebook-e-telefono-azzurro-insieme-per-la-sicurezza-dei-bambini-in-rete>

⁷⁴ <https://www.mediakey.tv/leggi-news/facebook-e-telefono-azzurro-insieme-per-la-sicurezza-dei-bambini-in-rete>

⁷⁵ <https://doczz.it/doc/1187488/la-creazione-di-una-guida-che-racchiuda-tutti-gli-esempi-...>

⁷⁶ http://moodle.mce-fimem.it/pluginfile.php/1627/mod_resource/content/1/Quaderno%20Forum%20Sesta%20conferenza.pdf



“TOOLKIT: DIGITAL & MEDIA LITERACY EDUCATION”

This toolkit, realized within the project VSAV, represents how CESIE and the Partner organizations operate, locally and internationally, to promote cultural and educational development through the use of “non-formal “ education tools.⁷⁷



“PROSAVE”

project aims to study and activate innovative actions and strategies, applied on a trans-national level and focused on the concept of Prosociality. ProSAVE intends to develop European cooperation with the aim of organizing concrete paths for the creation of particular “educating communities”, the “educational caring communities”, in which the members have developed an adequate awareness of their being educators and to have a fundamental role in the prevention of social violence between peers.⁷⁸



“SAFE SOCIAL MEDIA”

(Safe social media, an international project to raise awareness of the safe and conscious use of social media funded by the European Union as part of Daphne III, a program aimed at preventing and fighting all forms of violence.),⁷⁹



“PEAB - PEER EDUCATION AGAINST BULLYING”,⁸⁰

In Italy, the ministerial directive n. 16/2007 on general guidelines and actions at national level for the prevention and fight against bullying (“General guidelines and actions at national level for the prevention and fight against bullying”) set up the national campaign against bullying (from 2007 to today). Its objectives are a) to record and study school violence and bullying; b) develop general strategies at national level for the prevention and fight against bullying; c) provide useful information for the prevention and fight against bullying; d) coordinate and facilitate targeted interventions at the local level. Each Region has its own observatory, which is made up of academics, school members, local authorities and civil society.

In general, the campaign includes activities and actions, such as a toll-free number, an email address, a website, the Permanent Regional Observatories on Bullying in the framework of regional schools, other European projects, national and regional projects and initiatives for prevention and the fight against bullying.

MALTA

The Anti-bullying team has also worked hand in hand in some instances with other organizations and entities such as BeSmartOnline, and the ASAP project with SOS Malta, job shadowing of anti-bullying services in Ireland with ABC Dublin.

⁷⁷ https://cesie.org/media/VSAV-toolkit_en.pdf

⁷⁸ <http://www.era-edu.com/csfrm/ProSAVE/>

⁷⁹ http://www.istituto-albert.it/progetti/lettera_scuole_ssm_ott11.pdf

⁸⁰ <https://doczz.it/doc/1187488/la-creazione-di-una-guida-che-racchiuda-tutti-gli-esempi-...>



STOPHATERS

It is the first association against cyberbullying in Spain. It was created with the objective of offering comprehensive support and assistance to all those people who suffer any type of online crime; always seeking the best solution to their problems.

Website: <https://www.stophaters.es/>



PANTALLAS AMIGAS

It is an association to promote the safe and healthy use of the Internet and other ICT, as well as fostering digital citizens who are responsible in childhood and adolescence. They develop projects and educational resources aimed to prepare children and teenagers in a way they can manage on the Internet on their own and with the final objective of developing in them the digital skills and competences which allow them to participate in the network in an active, positive and healthy way.

Cyberbullying, sexting, sextortion, grooming, security and privacy are some of the main topics with which this association deals.

Website: <https://www.pantallasamigas.net/>



ASOCIACIÓN NACE

It is a Spanish association made up of psychologists, teachers, lawyers and experts in different fields and engaged with the victims of school bullying and their families. The main objective is to offer support and advice to those suffering bullying, including the victims and their families, but also the teachers in the education center where bullying situations occur. This is achieved by developing training projects adapted to teachers, families, children and youths. Psychological and/or legal advice is also offered to the victims of bullying and their families. An intervention line (Internet, telephone...) is available for affected people and the families to contact the association. They elaborate and analyse questionnaires of sociological research.

Website: <https://www.noalacoso.org/>



ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA PARA LA PREVENCIÓN DEL ACOSO ESCOLAR

It is a non-governmental and non-profit entity. It is formed by professionals of different fields: psychologists, educationalists, social educators, lawyers, experts in self protection, drama teachers, experts in cyberbullying, and parents of school bullying victims. All these people are engaged with the prevention of school bullying.

Website: <https://aepae.es/>



FUNDACIÓN MUTUA MADRILEÑA

This foundation has operated since 2016 to eradicate school bullying and cyberbullying in Spain. To achieve this, it has launched an action plan to educate young people. It has been developed through three lines of action: on one side, in cooperation with the foundation ANAR, it carries out speeches in spanish schools and studies that show the reality of this problem. Moreover, it develops different communication initiatives to involve the society and achieve the commitment from young people.

Website: <https://www.fundacionmutua.es/>



FUNDACIÓN ANAR

The ANAR foundation (helps children and teenagers at risk) is a non-profit organization engaged with the promotion and defense of the rights of children and teenagers who are at risk and helpless. This is achieved through the development of projects in Spain as well as in Latin America, and within the framework of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. ANAR has a free and confidential telephone number which operates in the whole national territory, 24 hours a day and the whole year, and it immediately offers psychologic, social and legal help to minors with problems or at risks, such as cyberbullying situations. This foundation carries out crucial and well-known reports and studies on the situation of children and teenagers in Spain.

Website: <https://www.anar.org/>



STOP AL ACOSO ESCOLAR LGTB

The Spanish State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Trans and Bisexuals has built a team of professionals who, together with the education group, work on the prevention of school bullying and LGBT-phobic cyberbullying, offering advice, help and educational resources to work on the diversity in the classroom and at home, and fight against school bullying and cyberbullying.

Website: <https://felgtb.com/stopacosoescolar/>



INTERNET SEGURA FOR KIDS

Internet Segura for Kids (IS4K) is the Center for Internet security for people under age in Spain and it has the aim of promoting the safe and responsible use of Internet and new technologies among children and teenagers. Their main tasks are: aware and train minors, youths, families, educators and professionals treating with minors through developing campaigns, initiatives and programs at a national level; offering a helpline service to give advice and assist minors, families, educators and professionals treating with minors on how to face the risks of the Internet: harmful content, dangerous contacts and inappropriate behaviours; organizing the Safer Internet Day in Spain, and reducing the availability of criminal content on the Internet (mainly of child sexual harassment).

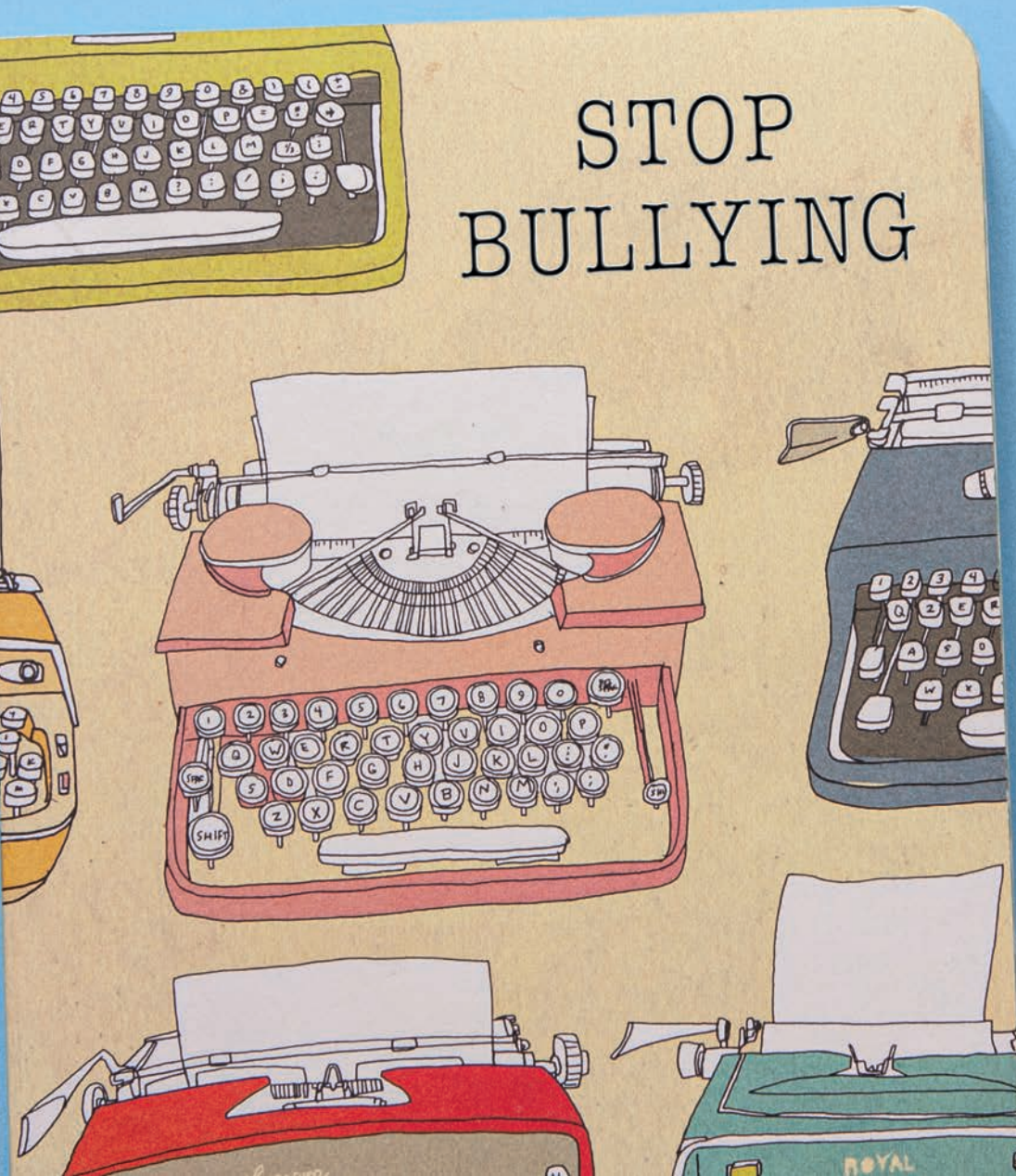
Website: <https://www.is4k.es/>

COLLECTIVE TRENDS IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL TRAINING / SELF-HELP TOOLS

All 4 countries have shown that systems are in place to record and study school violence and bullying, develop general strategies at national level for the prevention and fight against bullying, to provide useful information and to coordinate and facilitate targeted audiences. They all have local trainers with experts advising schools, public bodies and industry on appropriate actions to take in regards to safeguarding and advancing positive online safety policies. They strive to make the internet a great and safe place for children. Government entities, private organisations and NGOs are active in providing these services.

The UK has a partnership of 3 organisations, appointed by the European Commission as the Safer Internet Centre for the UK in January 2011. Here an awareness centre, helpline and hotlines are available. Italy, has numerous good practices all implemented at national level, involving the Ministry of Education, private organisations and also theatre is used to train teachers and parents. Furthermore, Italy is a partner country in best practices on transnational levels where Partner organizations operate, locally and internationally, to promote cultural and educational development through the

use of “non-formal “ education tools. **“ProSAVE”** project aims to study and activate innovative actions and strategies, applied on a transnational level and focused on the concept of Prosociality. **“Safe social media”** (Safe social media, an international project to raise awareness of the safe and conscious use of social media funded by the European Union as part of Daphne III, a program aimed at preventing and fighting all forms of violence. Spain has associations made up of psychologists, teachers, lawyers and experts in different fields and engaged with the victims of school bullying and their families. The main objective is to offer support and advice to those suffering bullying, including the victims and their families, but also the teachers in the education center where bullying situations occur. This is achieved by developing training projects adapted to teachers, families, children and youths. Psychological and/or legal advice is also offered to the victims of bullying and their families. An intervention line is available for affected people and the families to contact the association. The Spanish State Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Trans and Bisexuals at a national level; offers a helpline service to give advice and assist minors, families, educators and professionals treating victims.



EXISTING BEST PRACTICE AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

UNITED KINGDOM

Below is a list of projects and initiatives, initiated by UK organisations, aimed at raising awareness on the dangers associated with the wrong use of the Internet and providing the necessary technical and emotional skills to deal with unpleasant situations that may occur online.



SOCIAL MEDIA INCLUSION

Erasmus+ project: The project looks at: Social Media Education and Digital Divides; The Digital Identity; Digital Dangers; Online Perceptions and Discrimination; Social Media, Cultural Heritage and Social Inclusion⁸¹



CRITIC (CRITICAL INTERNET USAGE)

Erasmus+ project: Cybersecurity starts with critical thinking, thus the aim of the “crITic – Critical Internet usage” project is to strengthen the self-confidence of Internet users and influence their awareness of the risks they may encounter. ⁸²



ANTI-DISCRIMINATION PACK 2.0

Erasmus+ project: Anti-discrimination Pack 2.0 is aimed at educators, trainers and facilitators who work with people and organizations that fight against discrimination, and who integrate and provide resources and instruments to tackle and combat the growing discrimination in social networks. It has created a practical guide, including tools and resources to tackle and combat increasing discrimination online ⁸³



DIGITAL COMPETENCY WHEEL

The Digital Competency Wheel is an interactive diagram that visually illustrates the strength of different aspects of digital competency. Each column represents a competency with a possible score between 0 and 100%. The higher the score the stronger is the competence. The purpose of the Digital Competency Wheel is to support the development of digital competencies. The Digital Competency Wheel helps to structure and provide an overview of what digital skills are available and need to be better. ⁸⁴

⁸¹ <https://smiproject.eu/>

⁸² <http://criticproject.com/about>

⁸³ <https://antidiscriminationpack.eu/>

⁸⁴ <https://digcomp.digital-competence.eu/digcomp/>



STAND UP 2 HATE SPEECH

Erasmus+ project: The general objective of this project is to fight against all forms of discrimination and human rights violation as well as extremism and hate speech online. ⁸⁵



DIGITAL COMPETENCY COOKBOOK

Erasmus+ project: educators lack the necessary skills and competences to apply digital pedagogy, so there is a need for programmes for educators to develop those skills, especially for those who work in non-technological subject areas. There is a lack of practical knowledge and solutions on how to implement digital pedagogy in adult classes. ⁸⁶

ITALY&MALTA

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST VIOLENCE AND BULLYING AT SCHOOL INCLUDING CYBERBULLYING

UNESCO Member States declared the first Thursday of November, the International Day against Violence and Bullying at School Including Cyberbullying, recognizing that school-related violence in all its forms is an infringement of children and adolescents' rights to education and to health and well-being as retrieved on 29th January 2021: ⁸⁷



FACE project: ⁸⁸

As part of the recommendations mentioned in the FACE project:

- Support initiatives which allow minors to discuss and explore the issue of cyberbullying on a peer-to-peer basis;
- Partner with all relevant stakeholders, such as the state, law enforcement, university and regional actors for an effective holistic approach to combatting cyberbullying, sustainable in the long term;
- Local authorities should facilitate and support services offered by charities dealing directly with cyberbullying by financing such initiatives through donations and by raising awareness about them;
- Develop interactive methods of engaging with minors to understand the specificities of cyberbullying, how to combat it and to raise awareness about it effectively;
- Governmental authorities, especially at regional and national level, and other stakeholders should encourage and finance the diffusion of specialised units in hospitals to assess the problem of cyberbullying from a healthcare perspective;
- Foster cross-country collaboration between authoritative bodies to allow for a robust and effective support network for victims of cyberbullying;
- Launch initiatives which promote group cohesion, foster a friendly, respectable atmosphere among students of all ages and help create a positive school environment for all;
- Form and utilise international relations to strengthen local cyberbullying legislation and specialised services within public and private corporations;
- Supply minors the tools they require to create effective strategies to combat cyberbullying and work closely with them to launch these initiatives.

Cyber bullying legislation in the EU compromises from directives set as a binding minimum standard. Directive 2011/93/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 establi-

⁸⁵ <https://hors-pistes.org/en/2019/09/20/standup2hatespeech/>

⁸⁶ <http://digitalpedagogycookbook.eu/>

⁸⁷ <https://en.unesco.org/commemorations/dayagainstschoolviolenceandbullying>

⁸⁸ <https://face.oonion.eu/recommendations-for-local-politicians-and-stakeholders/>

shes concrete standards that member states must adopt to protect children from sexual harm online. Although not mentioned explicitly, any cyberbullying activities involving sexual exploitation and pornography of minors, for example posting naked and/or pornographic images of someone on social media, fall under this directive. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 obliges member states to create “specific protection with regard to” minors’ “personal data, as they may be less aware of the risks, consequences and safeguards concerned and their rights in relation to the processing of personal data.” In addition, this regulation obliges member states to promote cyber literacy among minors.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) establishes that children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence. Particularly Article 19 affirms that states: 1. 2. These points establish the fundamental principles for child-protection legislation in all UN Member States, apart from the US who have not ratified the convention. Building on these principles, the UN General Assembly adopted the non-binding Protecting children from bullying resolution in 2014.⁸⁹

SPAIN



AWARENESS AND PREVENTIONS SKILLS ON CYBERBULLYING AND ONLINE HATE SPEECH FOR SCHOOLS CHILDREN (CYBERAWARE) PROJECT

It is an Erasmus+ project and its aim is to raise awareness on children’s cyberbullying and hate speech and to provide a widely usable training solutions and cyberbullying prevention and critical thinking skills through partner cooperation and exchange of expertise, methodologies and good practices in order to reduce the effects and consequences in the EU.

The project will be carried out with the participation of Inercia Digital (Spain) and other 3 partner organisations from Romania, Turkey and Lithuania to enforce the quality of the results and the exchange of best practices, as well as to foster the positive impact of the project at an European level.

Website: <https://cyberaware.inerciadigital.com/>



KIVA PROGRAM

KiVa is an anti-bullying programme that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. The programme is evidence-based which means that the effectiveness of KiVa has been proven scientifically. KiVa offers a wide range of concrete tools and materials for schools to tackle bullying.

Website: <https://www.kivaprogram.net/>



OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAMME

The Olweus Programme (pronounced Ol-VAY-us) is a comprehensive approach that includes schoolwide, classroom, individual, and community components. The programme is focused on long-term change that creates a safe and positive school climate. It is designed and evaluated for use in elementary, middle, junior high and high schools (K-12). The programme has been found to reduce bullying among children, improve the social climate of classrooms, and reduce related antisocial behaviors, such as vandalism and truancy. The Olweus Programme has been implemented in more than a dozen countries around the world, and in thousands of schools in the United States.

Website: <https://olweus.sites.clemson.edu/index.php>

⁸⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text>



SPORT TO COMBAT VIOLENCE AND CYBERBULLYING

It is an Erasmus+ project with the aim of involving other young people from all over Europe to raise awareness of the problem and highlight a solution: sport as a factor in building character, promoting tolerance and solidarity and the union of people. The main objective of the project is to make young people aware of the problem of violence and cyber bullying and its implications for young people and society, stimulating them to tackle the problem by using the power of sport as a unifying factor. The project will be carried out with the participation of the partner organisations from 6 countries (Italy, Romania, Latvia, Spain, Bulgaria and the United Kingdom) to enforce the quality of the results and the exchange of best practices, as well as to foster the positive impact of the project at an European level.

Website: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2019-3-IT03-KA105-017608>



TOOL AND GAMES AGAINST CYBERBULLYING

It is an Erasmus+ project developed by 4 european partners and Inercia Digital from 2016 to 2018, the main priorities of the project was sharing, creating, and innovating new methods and tools in the field of adolescent education and their risk behavior in the virtual world with emphasis on the dangers of cyberbullying and irresponsible use of social media. The project was focused on preventive education of the use of the internet and communication technologies. Many interesting games and tools like webinars against cyberbullying can be found in the publication. The script is interesting for teachers, managers, parents and for all who are concerned with the topic.

Resource developed: http://www.art-web-design.eu/tgac_publication.pdf

COLLECTIVE TRENDS IDENTIFIED IN INITIATIVES ENCOUNTERED

In the UK numerous Erasmus+ projects were encountered such as: Social Media Inclusion, Critic (Critical Internet Usage), Anti-discrimination pack, Digital Competency Wheel to support the development of digital wheel which helps to structure and provide an overview of what digital skills are available and where improvement is necessary, Stand Up 2 Hate Speech - to fight against all forms of discrimination and human rights violation as well as extremism and hate speech online and digital Competency Cookbook to apply digital pedagogy to adults.

Italy & Malta, founded an International day against violence and bullying at school including cyberbullying.

UNESCO and Member States declared the first Thursday of November, recognizing that school-related violence in all its forms is an infringement of children and adolescents' rights to education and to health and well-being. FACE project is an effective holistic approach to combating cyberbullying. The EU and The United Nations also established foundation principles.

More Erasmus projects are seen in Spain together with partners in Romain Turkey and Lithuania also show Erasmus projects: Awareness and Preventions Skills on Cyberbullying and Online Hate Speech for schools children (Cyberaware) project: aiming to to raise awareness on children's cyberbullying and hate speech, Kiva Program: an anti-bullying programme that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland, with funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture. Olweus Bullying Prevention Programme: is a comprehensive approach that includes schoolwide, classroom, individual, and community components. The program is focused on long-term change that creates a safe and positive school climate. Sport to combat violence and cyberbullying: aiming to raise awareness of the problem and highlight a solution: sport as a factor in building character, promoting

tolerance and solidarity and the union of people. Tools and Games Against Cyberbullying: main priorities of the project was sharing, creating, and innovating new methods and tools in the field of adolescent education and their risk behavior in the virtual world with emphasis on the dangers of cyberbullying and irresponsible use of social media.



CRITICAL REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

REFLECTIONS MADE FOLLOWING DESK RESEARCH AND ENCOUNTERS WITH STAKEHOLDERS OR OTHER INTERESTING COMMENTS THAT MAY BE RELEVANT TO THE SIAC PROJECT.

UNITED KINGDOM

Statistics show that cyberbullying is widespread among young people in the UK. As kids spend more and more time online, and have increased access to mobile devices, the risks of being subject to online harassment significantly increase. This was certainly exacerbated by the pandemic and the fact that during lockdowns kids spent many hours online, mostly unsupervised. The consequences of this

Although the current legal framework seems to be sufficient to cover the occurrence of episodes of cyberbullying, there is no legal definition of cyberbullying in the UK, and cases are dealt with using legislation that was approved before the emergence of social media platforms. It therefore appears that there are some areas where more specific legislation would be required, to reflect the role that technology plays in cases of bullying, and also to reflect online behaviours, as new forms of bullying and harassment emerge, which the current law might not be appropriate to address.

There are many organisations providing support and guidance to both the victims of cyberbullying and to parents and teachers. Most of them do not exclusively work with LGBTQ+ people, but aim to provide them with the necessary support. Schools play an important role in developing a supporting environment where students can thrive and receive support where needed.

As far as government initiatives there are not many notable ones which may be mentioned here, thus, government should try and ensure that it can even help to provide support groups to the members of the community, especially the members identifying as LGBTQ+, even outside of the law, to tackle the evil of bullying in the cyberspace.

ITALY

The trend of increasing development of cyberbullying finds its genesis in the exponential growth in the use of IT tools. Just think how in Italy alone, the *We Are Social report* estimated that internet use, from 2018 to 2019, increased by 27%. At the same time, the age group that uses smartphones and surfs the internet daily has also decreased, so much so that among adolescents aged

15-17, the percentage of those who use the internet every day has risen to 74%.

The indiscriminate use of this tool has determined, as indicated by the Italian Society of Preventive and Social Pediatrics (Sipps), on the occasion of the National Day against Bullying and Cyberbullying which is celebrated on 7 February, that over 50% of children between 11 and 17 years of age have been bullied, and among those who use cell phones daily (85.8%), as many as 22.2% report having been a victim of cyberbullying. Statistics confirm that cyberbullying affects girls more, so much so that 12.4% of young people admitted to having been a victim, compared to 10.4% of boys. This difference is in particular determined by the suffering caused by comments of a sexual nature, suffered by 32% of the girls, compared to 6.7% of the boys. Conversely, the online provocations that disturb 9.5% of adolescents affect males (16%) more than females (7.2%). Very high and constantly growing numbers that have activated a serious alarm bell on cyberbullying. In fact, online violence is currently perceived by 4 out of 10 adolescents (39.7%) as extremely dangerous. But this is not just a mere perception. In fact, in 2019 there were 460 cases of bullying treated by the Postal Police that saw a minor victim (52 were less than 9 years old), 18% more than in 2018, when 389 cases were treated.

MALTA

The Ministry of Health (MoE) mentioned that digital technologies, including social media, have impacts on mental health such as the problems associated with cyber-bullying. As part of the proposed actions for the national strategy Building Resilience, Transforming Services, A Mental Health Strategy for Malta 2020-2030 Public Consultation Document December 2018, MOE would like to offer universal and targeted mental health promotion programmes in schools, including early identification of emotional problems and addictions as well as identification and action on bullying including cyber-bullying, and recognition and referral of intentional self-harm.⁹⁰

In her study *Ask.fm : a cyberbullying tool? : a Maltese perspective*, Nadine Fabri concluded that Cyberbullying represents the migration of conventional bullying into a virtual environment and there is a collective agreement amongst participants with regards to increasing awareness and safety among the general public, parents and students. In addition her study also showed that educators are showing enthusiasm and willingness to be more trained and informed about the subject.

From pg 14 of the MGRM UNIFORM report about phenomenon of underreporting and needing of an APP

SPAIN

This report shows how cyberbullying is still present in Spanish society. Currently there is a growing concern about a possible increase of cyberbullying due to the global pandemic of COVID-19. In the last months, our dependence on digital media has highly increased and this can generate a negative effect in terms of cyberbullying.

Hate messages on social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, etc. are becoming more and more frequent. An insult or humiliation can reach several people in a short period of time. It is really difficult, at the same time, to eliminate the mark it leaves on the digital environment, but also in the life of the affected person.

Threatening and cyberbullying feed each other and they generate a growing dangerous behaviour. Cyberbullying victims are more likely to consume alcohol and drugs and to miss school than other students. They are also more likely to get worse marks and suffer from low self-esteem and health

⁹⁰ https://meae.gov.mt/en/Public_Consultations/MEH-HEALTH/Documents/Mental%20Health%20Strategy.pdf

problems. In extreme situations, cyberbullying has taken the life of the victims. Lately, several influencers and famous people also had the courage to share the hate messages they daily receive in order to try to make citizens aware of the damage they create.

There is also good news about fighting cyberbullying in Spain. Several initiatives by public bodies and organizations have arisen in the last years. This means that society is now more aware of the damage cyberbullying can produce. We can stop it little by little. The SIAC project connects with all organizations to make all the resources developed through the project available for them.

COLLECTIVE TRENDS IDENTIFIED

In Italy 'We Are Social Report' estimated that internet use, from 2018 to 2019, increased by 27%. At the same time, the age group that uses smartphones and surfs the internet daily has also decreased, so much so that among adolescents aged 15-17, the percentage of those who use the internet every day has risen to 74%. We also see trends showing that over 50% of children between 11 and 17 years of age have been bullied. Statistics confirm that cyberbullying affects girls more, this difference is in particular determined by the suffering caused by comments of a sexual nature. Online violence is currently perceived by 4 out of 10 adolescents (39.7%) as extremely dangerous.

Malta's Ministry of Health (MoE) mentioned that digital technologies, including the social media, have impacts on mental health such as the problems associated with cyber-bullying. Actions for the national strategy Building Resilience, Transforming Services, and a Mental Health Strategy for Malta 2020-2030 has been addressed. MOE would like to offer universal and targeted mental health promotion programmes in schools, including early identification of emotional problems and addictions as well as identification and action on bullying including cyber-bullying, and recognition and referral of intentional self-harm.

Spain highlights that hate messages on social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, etc. are becoming more and more frequent. Cyberbullying victims are more likely to consume alcohol and drugs and to miss school than other students. Finally it is clear that several initiatives by public bodies and organizations have arisen in the last few years.

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This timely e-book summarises the current state of the art in relation to cyberbullying, legal initiatives and best practice in the UK, Malta, Spain and Italy. It highlights the significance of the issue as well as the gaps in addressing it. The ebook is prepared as part of the Erasmus+ funded project “Safe Internet Against Cyberbullying” (SIAC) coordinated by the Restorative Justice for All International Institute and delivered in partnership with Eurosud, Kairos Europe, Inercia Digital and Vismednet.

WWW.SIACPROJECT.ORG



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