



## Study on the national situation of cyberbullying – in Greece

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**Abstract:** *The present report is a study of the impact of the cyberbullying and the intervention strategies at national level, with the aim to establish the profiles of the cyberbullying aggressor-victim, for a better identification of the signs of cyberbullying per age category and distribution channels. The report is analysing statistics, support strategies, issues faced and needs of the teachers in the new digital teaching era, selection of cases of cyberbullying, best practices actions. This report is part of the TECPC project - Together Everyone can Prevent Cyberbullying, funded by the European Commission under the KA2 Erasmus+ Strategic partnership Digital Education Readiness Programme, ref.no. 2020-1-RO01-KA226-SCH-095269.*

### Part 1 – Literature online review

#### 1. The current situation of cyberbullying in Greece

Adolescents were asked how often they suffered cyber bullying, during the last 2 months of the survey, Victims: In 2018, 1 in 20 teens (5.2%) report that they suffered (electronically) cyber bullying at least 1-2 times in the last 2 months before the investigation<sup>1</sup> 0.5% of teens report that this happened several times a week.

Boys and girls report similar rates (4.8% and 5.6%, respectively) of being bullied.

The percentage of adolescents who reported being bullied did not change significantly with age (4.2% for 11-year-olds, 6.6% for 13-year-olds and 4.8% for 15-year-old students).

Perpetrators: The teens were asked how often, during the last 2 months of the survey, they themselves did cyber bullying to others.

In 2018, 3.3% of teens report doing cyber bullying themselves to other students at least 1-2 times in the last 2 months before.

<sup>1</sup> 0.4% of teens reported that this happened several times a week.

The percentage of boys who report cyberbullying to others is more than double (4.7%) girls (1.9%), while 13- and 15-year-old students reported committing cyberbullying to significantly higher percentages (3.5% and 4.8%, respectively) than 11-year-olds (1.6%).

A report by University Research Institute of Mental Health, Neuroscience and Medical Precision.

The school bullying survey was open at the School Education Gateway from March 25 to May 12 and garnered a total of 515 responses. Results (N = 515)

Answering the question “At your school or at a school you know, during the last school year, how often did you hear that a student had been bullied?”

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018\\_06\\_Bullying.pdf](https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018_06_Bullying.pdf)



According to the 515 participants in the survey, bullying is practiced once or twice a month in more than half (47%) schools of the respondents or in a school they know and regularly in almost 14% of the schools of the respondents. In 35% of schools, bullying is rare (32%) or non-existent (3%).<sup>2</sup>

<https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/el/pub/viewpoints/surveys/poll-on-school-bullying.htm>

## **2. The impact of the COVID-19 rapid shift to digital education on students and teachers at national level**

In the last two years, the impact of Covid-19 has been enormous and affects almost all sectors of society, including education from kindergarten to university.

The effects on education concern:

- Teachers
- Students General Trainees
- Knowledge Delivery Procedures.
- Examination and Evaluation Procedures

The data we quote come from research already conducted by the University of Athens, which will be published after the end of the Pandemic.

General Remark

The Greek Government decided to introduce "Distance Learning" for those periods when there were restrictions on the movement of Students and Teachers. This decision had the following consequences:

### **A) To Teachers**

Most of the teachers were not prepared, didactically and psychologically for distance learning.

Also, most of them, especially the teachers of Primary and Secondary Education, did not have the necessary knowledge to organize and implement lessons through the Internet. Many of them, especially the older ones, did not have the necessary technical infrastructure.

Therefore, the teaching work of distance learning started with several problems.

Most of these problems began to decrease, because the Ministry of Education, promptly organized intensive information seminars, in which teachers participated and at the same time made sure to have the necessary equipment.

Thus, in a very short period of time, the Teachers were able to organize their teaching online and also to implement the students' examination online.

According to unconfirmed statistics, online teaching worked satisfactorily in 70-80% of Public Schools and 85-95% of Private Schools.

### **B) To Students**

The impact of online teaching on students varied depending on the age of the students, family circumstances and equipment available.

The Ministry of Education contributed in equipping those students who did not have the auxiliary equipment.

Significant difficulty incurred in students who:



- Did not have personal space in their home to isolate themselves and take online lessons
- Have other siblings, who had to take online classes at the same time
- Did not have adequate family support.

Also, most students could not easily get acquainted with the new way of teaching and learn to manage their time properly. Over time, these problems have diminished.

An important effect on students was the lack of sociability that develops between students when they are with their classmates at school, as well as the personal connection, that develops between students and teachers.

### **Covid-19 and Cyberbullying**

Students' familiarity with the use of computers has had some positive and negative consequences for some of them.

They learned to use the Computer as a means of teaching and assessing knowledge, they learned to use it to communicate more with one another, though some began to use it with malicious intent, with the result that Cyberbullying cases increased during the pandemic period.

This increase and the degree of impact are being examined in the context of research that is already underway, but its results have not yet been announced.

### **3. The current situation on the National Policies and Strategies to support the prevention of / to fight against cyberbullying.**

#### **3.1 The existent national policies and strategies**

The criminalization of bullying in Greece

Greek society has been faced in the last decade with several cases of bullying (school or not). Of course, all these cases met with intense social outcry. However, until March 2015, there was no regulatory framework to protect victims of bullying (or bullying), and over time this phenomenon grew in all social areas.

In March 2015 and specifically with Law 4322/2015, for the abolition of high security prisons, the first legislative step for the criminalization of bullying was made.

Article 312 of the Penal Code was replaced by an independent provision as follows:

"Article 312 Causing damage with constant harsh behaviour

1. Unless there is a case of a more serious criminal offense, whoever's continuous cruel behaviour causes to a third party bodily injury or other bodily harm or harm to their mental health.

If the act is committed between minors it is not punished unless during the act between them:

The age difference is greater than three (3) years, in which case only remedial or therapeutic measures are taken.

2. If the victim has not yet reached the eighteenth (18th) year of age or cannot defend themselves and the perpetrator has them in his custody or protection or belongs to them at the perpetrator's home or has an employment or service relationship with them or has left them in place of the person in charge of



his custody or entrusted to them for upbringing, teaching, supervision or custody, whether temporary, unless there is a more serious criminal offense; imprisonment of at least six (6) months is imposed. Anyone with the same sentence is punished for systematic neglect of his obligations to the aforementioned persons for suffering bodily injury or damage to their physical or mental health. "Tags: 312 PK, bullying, L.4322 / 2015<sup>3</sup>

The Cyber Crime Division of the Hellenic Police offers information on the safe use of the Internet in general and also, more specifically , resources to tackle cyberbullying.

The Cyber Crime Division also organises events with target groups of pupils, divided by age, starting at 6 years of age. The events are also targeted to parents and educators and are hosted either by schools or local municipalities.

The resources they provide:

Hotline for all Cyber Crime, including cyberbullying: 11188

Sites with information on Cyber Security , including cyberbullying :

Site for Cyber Crime: <https://cyberalert.gr/>

Site specifically for youth, parents, educators: <https://www.cyberkid.gov.gr/>

Apps with information on Cyber Security , including cyberbullying :

App for Cyber Crime: FEELSAFE

App specifically for youth, parents, educators: CYBERKID

The sites and apps directed to youth, parents and educators, are sectioned by age, have games and e-learning with pre recorded videos

### **3.2 The alignment of national policies at European level**

The Greek Safer Internet Center is the official source of educational material approved from the Ministry of Education.

It was founded in July 2016 under the Institute of Informatics, a section of the Institute of Technology and Research.

The center is the official representative in Greece of the Pan-European Organizations INSAFE / INHOPE that formulate the European strategy for a safe and quality internet as well as the recognized representative of Greece for the Expert Group on Safer Internet for Children of the European Commission.

## **4. Support strategies in the education sector**

### **4.1 At formal level – school education sector**

For the time being there are no support strategies in the education sector at a formal level, with nationwide implementation.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://thesslawyer.gr/%CE%B7-%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%BD%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%BF%CF%80%CE%BF%CE%AF%CE%B7%CF%83%CE%B7-%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85-bullying/>



#### 4.2 At non-formal level – extracurricular activities

Greek Safer Internet Center(est July 2016) under the Institute of Informatics, a section of the Institute of Technology and Research

The center provides educational material approved by the Ministry of Education and Religions with Protocol No.: Φ.2.1 / ΠΜ / 177197 / Δ7.

The resources are divided in websites, and in each site by children's' and teens' age category, parents and educators. One site is providing information for safe social network and internet use for children teens, parents and educators:

Helpline counselling is provided through the internet, on a website and through the phone number 0030 2106007686. On the helpline, specialized psychologists provide support and advice on issues related to excessive internet use, cyberbullying, exposure to inappropriate content and other, including mobile phone and online games.

Lastly, there is an Open Line of Complaints for Illegal content of the internet, which cooperates with both the Greek police and INTERPOL through the European Agency INHOPE, called SafeLine. Safeline suggests that it "is a piece of a big puzzle, since the fight against illegal Internet content is a global issue and is not limited by national borders" ..

#### 5. Cases of cyberbullying

<b>Title of the case</b>	Cyberbullying that involved the Police
<b>Country</b>	Greece
<b>Actors involved</b>	Two teen girls unspecified age and a 15 year old girl
<b>When happened?</b>	2015, published in January of 2016
<b>Brief description of the case</b>	A cyberbullying case against two underage girls was investigated by the Cybercrime Prosecution Directorate, and a case was filed for causing harm with continuous cruel behavior against a 15-year-old minor.



<p><b>Mention the interventions done, if the case</b></p>	<p>The investigation of the case started after a complaint was submitted to the Directorate of Cybercrime Prosecution by the Principal of the school where the two minors were studying, against unknown perpetrators.</p> <p>According to the complaint from the school principal, an unknown perpetrator via email, repeatedly sent a number of messages with the content of cyberbullying, bullying, through an online application to underage schoolgirls.</p> <p>The complaints were brought to the attention of the Athens Prosecutor's Office and for the full investigation of the case, a preliminary examination was ordered by the Cybercrime Prosecution Directorate.</p> <p>As part of the preliminary examination, a thorough police investigation of the digital data was carried out, as well as communication with the competent management company, internet service provider, which resulted in the identification of the involvement of a 15-year-old student of the same school. case.</p> <p>The telephone device he used to send the messages was sent to the D.E.E. for laboratory examination.</p>
<p><b>Impact, results achieved</b></p>	<p>The case file was submitted to the competent prosecutor's office.</p>
<p><b>Link, if the case was public</b></p>	<p><a href="https://www.enikos.gr/society/aniliki-ekfovize-diadiktyaka-symmaitries-tis/794940/">https://www.enikos.gr/society/aniliki-ekfovize-diadiktyaka-symmaitries-tis/794940/</a></p>

<p><b>Title of the case</b></p>	<p>Teen boy blackmailed by a 52 year old man</p>
<p><b>Country</b></p>	<p>Greece</p>
<p><b>Actors involved</b></p>	<p>15 year old boy, 52 year old man</p>
<p><b>When happened?</b></p>	<p>2019-2020, published in July 2021</p>



<p><b>Brief description of the case</b></p>	<p>15-year-old Lefteris made friend requests on Facebook to many people, all unknown. He had 1,200 friends and I planned to exceed two and a half thousand by March because of a bet with a friend.</p> <p>One of the unknown people he added, started talking to him. He politely asked me how old he was and what he was looking for on facebook. Th. was 52 years old. Then he asked why he requested him specifically and he told him "accidentally". He asked what music the teen was listening to and started sending videos and links to tracks.</p> <p>"He looked like a good person to me, he looked a bit like my uncle and so in the following days we continued talking about games and music. We talked for more than a month, I told him a lot about me and the girl I liked and he gave me tips on how to "throw" her. I did what she told me and I really did much better with her. One night he asked me if I had any nude photos of me. Not naked, but showing no clothes, to see if I need exercise. I sent one to him and he told me I didn't need anything, I had the perfect body. He also sent me one of his own and for many days we exchanged nude photos of ourselves. I do not know why I did it. At first he was funny, but then he started asking to see me on skype and talk without wearing our clothes.</p> <p>One night when he started stroking himself I told him I was bored and I wanted to stop talking. He acted like crazy, showed me a video he had taken from our other conversations and told me that if I stopped, he would fill the internet with nude photos of me and videos of me doing nonsense without clothes. He wanted me to meet him, otherwise my parents and friends would find out about me. I lost sleep, I thought I was stuck in a shit, doing nothing, and that if he put my pictures, no one would think it was just nonsense. I met him at a fast food restaurant in the center and I was even more scared. It had nothing to do with his facebook profile, only the age must have been the same. He asked me to go to his house to talk and he showed me my photos on his cell phone. I told him I was going to the bathroom, I left the store and put it on my feet. I spent a nightmarish week with threatening messages and phone calls overnight. At school I was not in a good mood, I stopped seeing my friends and girlfriend, I had no appetite for food and my parents realized that something was bothering me.</p>
<p><b>Mention the interventions done, if the case</b></p>	<p>The teen suggests that after the torment, he decided to tell his mother and she immediately called the Cybercrime Prosecution.</p>



<b>Impact, results achieved</b>	The case file was submitted to the competent prosecutor's office.
<b>Link, if the case was public</b>	<a href="https://www.lifo.gr/now/greece/7-istories-efibon-stin-ellada-poy-ypestisan-bullying-kai-tis-perigrafoyn-etsi-opos-tis">https://www.lifo.gr/now/greece/7-istories-efibon-stin-ellada-poy-ypestisan-bullying-kai-tis-perigrafoyn-etsi-opos-tis</a>
<b>Title of the case</b>	Cyber sex between underage pupils, turns to cyber rape and distribution of child porn
<b>Country</b>	Greece
<b>Actors involved</b>	13 year old girl, 14 year old boy
<b>When happened?</b>	published in July of 2018
<b>Brief description of the case</b>	A 13-year-old schoolgirl had online sex with a 14-year-old boy she knew from her school. The girl was in love and did what the minor told her. He, however, recorded the scenes depicting the schoolgirl naked doing the so-called "cyber sex" and then uploaded the video on the internet for their classmates to see.
<b>Mention the interventions done, if the case</b>	The result was that the 13-year-old suffered a psychological shock. She even asked her parents to change their place of residence and school.
<b>Impact, results achieved</b>	Information states that the girl lives today in a city in the province and has not yet overcome what happened to her.
<b>Link, if the case was public</b>	<a href="https://www.tanea.gr/2018/07/09/greece/xarakteristikies-periptwseis-bullying-stin-ellada/">https://www.tanea.gr/2018/07/09/greece/xarakteristikies-periptwseis-bullying-stin-ellada/</a>

<b>Title of the case</b>	Personal photo on Social Media, turned into Deepfake video by her classmate
<b>Country</b>	Greece
<b>Actors involved</b>	16 year old girl, 16 year old boy
<b>When happened?</b>	published in July of 2018
<b>Brief description of the case</b>	At a school in a large city in the North part of Greece, a 16-year-old complained that a classmate took a photo she had on her profile on a social media page and after editing it showed her participating in a porn movie.
<b>Mention the interventions done, if the case</b>	The Greek Police undertook the investigation of the case, finding the electronic traces of the 16-year-old perpetrator and downloading the disputed material from the internet.
<b>Impact, results achieved</b>	The video was seen by the victim's friends and girlfriends, as a result of which he was subjected to enormous psychological pressure
<b>Link, if the case was public</b>	<a href="https://www.tanea.gr/2018/07/09/greece/xarakteristikies-periptwseis-bullying-stin-ellada/">https://www.tanea.gr/2018/07/09/greece/xarakteristikies-periptwseis-bullying-stin-ellada/</a>





## 6. Best practices actions to support the prevention of / to fight against cyberbullying

<b>Title of the practice</b>	Mini-Seminar on Cyberbullying online through the publicly owned Educational TV Site
<b>Country</b>	Greece
<b>Actors involved</b>	The Greek Safer Internet Center
<b>Link</b>	3-4 Διαδικτυακό σεμινάριο για το cyberbullying (διαδικτυακός εκφοβισμός)
<b>Brief description of the best practice</b>	The Greek Safer Internet Center offers a mini course about cyberbullying in the context of the available educational material that they provide. The mini course is a part of their e-learning multimedia material and is offered on their youtube channel and the educational TV channel, which is an internet resource, a part of the Parliament TV television channel.
<b>Why is it a successful intervention?</b>	If parents and students want to educate themselves in the comfort of their own home, through their computer, they are able to do it through an official source and in a kid-friendly environment

<b>Title of the practice</b>	Proposal for a lesson in class on Cyberbullying through social media
<b>Country</b>	Greece
<b>Actors involved</b>	Smile of a Child NGO in collaboration with the European Anti Bullying Network
<b>Link</b>	<a href="https://www.hamogelo.gr/files/PDF/EAN/EAN_30_07_2015.pdf">https://www.hamogelo.gr/files/PDF/EAN/EAN_30_07_2015.pdf</a> pages 349-354
<b>Brief description of the best practice</b>	At the 1st SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE OF THE EUROPEAN NETWORK AGAINST SCHOOL BULLYING"THE PHENOMENON OF BULLYING AT SCHOOL AND INTERNET ENVIRONMENT. LOOKING AT EUROPE" that was held in the 11th and 12th of June 2014, there was a lesson suggested, with duration of 10 hours. It was applied to the group of students of the 3rd Evening EPAL. Agioi Anargyroi who participated in 2012 -2014 in the OP Comenius with the title "Bullying and media"
<b>Why is it a successful intervention?</b>	The students are able to learn in a formal environment, with a blend of formal and non-formal education, the context in which cyberbullying is done, the consequences for the perpetrators and the victims and learn how deal with it as an active actor or bystander.

## 7. Relevant links (resources)

A report by University Research Institute of Mental Health, Neuroscience and Medical Precision.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018\\_06\\_Bullying.pdf](https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018_06_Bullying.pdf)



[https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018\\_06\\_Bullying.pdf](https://www.epipsi.gr/images/Documents/imera-kata-bulling/HBSC2018_06_Bullying.pdf)  
<https://www.schooleducationgateway.eu/el/pub/viewpoints/surveys/poll-on-school-bullying.htm>  
<https://eproceedings.epublishing.ekt.gr/index.php/online-edu/article/view/3215>  
[http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=135&Itemid=128&lang=](http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=135&Itemid=128&lang=)  
<https://cyberalert.gr/>  
<https://www.cyberkid.gov.gr/>  
<https://www.saferinternet4kids.gr>  
<https://www.help-line.gr>  
<http://www.safeline.gr>  
<https://saferinternet4kids.gr/poioieimaste/>  
[http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo\\_content&perform=view&id=135&Itemid=128&lang=](http://www.astynomia.gr/index.php?option=ozo_content&perform=view&id=135&Itemid=128&lang=)  
<https://www.cyberkid.gov.gr/>  
<https://edutv.minedu.gov.gr/index.php/documentaries/cyberbullying>  
[https://www.hamogelo.gr/files/PDF/EAN/EAN\\_30\\_07\\_2015.pdf](https://www.hamogelo.gr/files/PDF/EAN/EAN_30_07_2015.pdf)  
<http://stop-bullying.sch.gr/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/goneis.pdf>

## **Part 2 – Practical review**

### **1. Methodology applied in the interview questionnaires research**

We contacted the Heads of the Public schools and the owners of the Private Schools, 5 in total, to inform them about the project and its aims. We asked from them to support our efforts to develop a final handbook. We asked from them to also inform teachers and students to complete the questionnaires. Their reaction was positive, but the majority of them refused to spend free time to complete it online. They proposed to complete the questionnaires on paper, in groups, in a classroom under our presence and we did it this way.

### **2. Target group**

The schools involved are all located in the Athens area, the total number is (5), three (3) of them are private and two (2) are public. The total number of teachers is two hundred and twenty-five (225) and of the students three thousand two hundred seventy (3270)

The questionnaires completed by sixty (60) teachers and seventy-five (75) students (responders)

While the number of responders is small, the majority of teachers and students of the schools, asked from us to remain in contact with them and to inform them about the next steps of the project.

### **3. Summary of the results of the questionnaires:**



### A. Teachers:

Profession:

- 42 teacher
- 18 counselor

I teach in a:

- 38 public school
- 22 private school
- 0 special-need school

I have attended antibullying training

- 2 yes
- 58 no

I teach students how to handle being bullied online

- 5 yes
- 51 no
- 4 this is not my problem

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Cyberbullying is a problem in my school	2	8	8	37	5
I am concerned about cyberbullying	2	8	15	30	5
I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying	17	16	23	4	0
I feel confident in managing cyberbullying	17	16	23	3	1
Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying	0	0	5	40	15
Schools should link with community resources to deal with cyberbullying	6	8	16	16	14
I want to learn more about cyberbullying in my continuing education	0	0	10	35	15
It is my duty to intervene in cyberbullying incidences happening to students	2	4	14	22	18
	always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
Teachers should implement a program for students in order to prevent cyberbullying	32	22	6	0	0



**B. Students:**

Sex:

- 48 Male
- 28 Female

Age:

- 13 years old:15
- 14 years old:20
- 15 years old:21
- 16 years old:20

	Very unsatisfied	Unsatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied
How satisfied are you with the relationship with your classmates?	5	25	19	21	6
	Yes	No			
Do you have classmates that cyberbullied other colleagues?	13	63			
	Boys	Girls			
Who are the most frequent victims of cyberbullying?	4	72			
	Never	A few times	Many times	Very frequent	
Have you ever been bullied online (e.g. via email, chatroom, cellphone)?	45	15	8	8	
Have you ever bullied others while online?	60	16	0	0	
	Yes	No			
Have you ever seen other kids being bullied online	15	61			
	Never	Occasionally	Sometimes	Often	Always
My parents helped me reflecting on the consequences of my actions by inviting me to talk about them	2	8	10	20	36

	Yes, to my parent	Yes, to the kid's parent	Yes, to a teacher	Yes, the school psychologist	Yes, to the principal	To other adult	I did not report any incident	No, I did not report any incident because I did
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	nt			ogist				not see any.
Have you ever report to an adult when you saw a kid being bullied online (messages, social media, email, chatrooms etc)?	5	2						69

#### 4. Conclusions

After having contacting many teachers and students, we may conclude the following:

- A. The majority of the teachers were little or very little informed, on how to react if they understand bullying or cyberbullying cases in their school environment. After our discussions they realised how important it will be for them to create the proper personal behaviour against cyberbullying.
- B. Most of the students believed that cyberbullying is like a “game”. They had not realised how important is, not to be part of such a “game”. They had not realised also how bad could be the effects of cyberbullying to their friends or classmates.
- C. The great majority of all the teachers we have contacted, expressed a wish to keep them informed about the results of or project and to help them in organising info days on Cyberbullying for students, teachers and parents of their school.
- D. We have received requests from several schools, about ten (10), who asked from us to keep them informed about the project and its results.