



Study on the national situation of cyberbullying – in Italy

Authors: *Pixel Associazione* - Elisabetta Delle Donne, Matteo Agati

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 Italy

Bullying and Cyberbullying are nowadays very widespread phenomena among young people in Italy and, certainly, among the most damaging on a social and educational level.

According to Unicef's definition [1], the term "Cyberbullying" refers to *“bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted”* [1].

Cyberbullying is defined as any form of pressure, aggression, harassment, extortion, insult, slander, defamation, impersonation, alteration, illegal acquisition, and sharing of personal data against minors, carried out by telematics way [1].

Digital media and information/communication technologies are now at the center of young people's (kids and teenagers) social lives, and this figure is steadily rising; this exposes them more to the risks of the internet and the new tools of communication and is greatly affecting the increase in cyberbullying. According to the “Cognitive investigation on the forms of violence among minors and against children and adolescents” carried out by ISTAT (Italian National Institute of Statistics) [4], in 2019, 87,3% of teens between 11 and 17 years old use a cell phone daily; 3 out of 4 teens of that age use the internet every day and this share has grown very rapidly from 56.2%to 75.0% over a four-year period.

Since 2014, the ONLUS "Terre des Hommes Italia" has been collaborating with numerous organizations to carry out a project called "Osservatorio indifesa" [2] aimed at interviewing boys and girls of Generation Z on violence, gender stereotypes, bullying, cyberbullying, and sexting. The “Osservatorio indifesa” carried out in 2019 - 2020 involved a sample of about 6,000 adolescents, aged 13 to 23, from



all over Italy; among those, 6 in 10 say they don't feel safe online [3]. The data provided by this analysis describe a decidedly worrying situation that is bound to worsen due to the consequences of the Covid pandemic.

Bullying and Cyberbullying remain, therefore, one of the most feared threats among adolescents in Italy and to confirm this there are numerous studies and updated data; according to the data provided by the analysis mentioned above, when asked *"what is the biggest threat to a boy/girl your age?"*, 28% of respondents answered Bullying (17%) and Cyberbullying (11%) [3]. Getting more specific about this analysis, we can get an idea of the extent of this phenomenon; in fact, around 61% of respondents claim to be victims of bullying or cyberbullying, while 68% claim to have witnessed it [3]. In addition, according to data collected by Istat [4], it appears that the higher risk affects younger people (11-13 years) than adolescents (14-17 years). In fact, *"around 7% of 11- to 13-year-olds have been bullied via cell phone or the Internet one or more times per month, while the rate drops to 5.2% among 14- to 17-year-olds"* [4]. In addition, 66% of respondents stated that Cyberbullying is the greatest risk that a boy/girl of this age runs online, higher than the perceived risk for "Revenge Porn" (50%), Online Harassment (47%), or Malicious Solicitation (47%) [3].

Finally, cyberbullying tends to affect girls more often than boys: according to Istat data [4], *"among 11-17-year-olds, there is, in fact, a higher proportion of victims: 7.1% of girls who connect to the Internet or have a cell phone have been subjected to continuous harassment via the Internet or cell phone, compared to 4.6% of boys"* [4].

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

The arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic forced most countries around the world into lockdowns and closures and these restrictions have obviously impacted the world of education as well; according to Save the Children's article *"Coronavirus: in some Italian cities students in the classroom less than half the time of the school year, in the world lost 112 billion school days "* [6], released in March 2021, *"91% of the world's students were forced to leave classrooms in the middle of the school year"* [6] with devastating impacts on learning.

Italy was the first European country to face such a situation and has been forced into lockdown since March 2020. Intending to make these necessary closures less impactful, schools in Italy (and around the world) have enhanced and implemented new distance learning solutions delivered through online platforms. In Italy, *"the Ministry of Education has allocated 85 million euros for distance learning activities"* and *"by March 2020, 67% of schools (including kindergartens and preschools) had moved all of their instructional activities online, potentially reaching 6.7 out of 8.3 million students"* [5. pag.6].

This rapid transition has certainly highlighted numerous issues from both student and teacher perspectives. From the students' point of view, the pandemic and the consequent development of an educational system based on distance learning has affected several aspects: firstly, it has negatively



affected the accessibility/quality of education by leading many students to have more difficulty in educational activities or, more drastically, to drop out of school [5]. These effects have been observed at higher rates in schools with a majority of low-income students, further influencing the widening of disparities at the educational level. Secondly, the consequences of the pandemic have meant that the time spent online (both for study and for "fun") has exponentially increased along with a worrying increase in a sense of loneliness among Italian teenagers. According to "Osservatorio indifesa" [3], *"in the Covid-19 year, 93% of teens said they felt lonely, a 10% increase over 2019"* [3].

The too much time spent online, the psychological effects of the pandemic, and the growing sense of loneliness among teens have made the phenomenon of cyberbullying even worse, also in the virtual classrooms in Italy.

The affirmation of the same digital platforms that provide access to distance learning is giving rise to an increasing number of episodes of cyberbullying; as pointed out by the articles "Cyber-Bullying: how to combat the cowards of social media (and school hallways)" [8] and "Coronavirus does not stop cyberbullying: inadequacies and consequences for families even with distance learning" [9], events of "zombombing", "incursions during meetings/lessons aimed at insulting and teasing", "insults and vulgarity in chats", "obscenities and hateful phrases in chats or Whatsapp groups of students", "cases of sexting by teens" or acts against teachers have been multiplying. For example, as reported in the article by Ilaria Myr [8], Ivano Zoppi, president of Pepita Onlus and secretary general of Fondazione Carolina states that *"while before the advent of the virus Fondazione Carolina received an average of 50-60 reports per month of bullying and cyberbullying incidents, since the first lockdown it has become 300"*.

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

As previously described, in Italy cyberbullying is a widespread phenomenon with devastating negative social and educational consequences for many young people; *"it is one of the main discussed topics among middle and high school students"* [11]. As Unicef points out in its article entitled "Bullying and Cyberbullying" [10], *"bullying and cyberbullying are phenomena that require effective and measured policy intervention precisely because their spread causes such detrimental effects on the learning and behavior of minors as to reduce the effectiveness of public investment in the education and well-being of children in every country"* [10].

With this aim, in 2017, Italy became the first European country to introduce a law aimed at combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying and that recognizes, therefore, this phenomenon as a crime [12]. This law provides, first of all, a definition of cyberbullying by identifying and emphasizing each expression/form that characterizes it (art.1) and it indicates educational measures for the prevention and contraction of the phenomenon of cyberbullying to be implemented in the school environment and beyond. With this aim, it tends to promote an approach aimed at increasing education and awareness trying to involve in this process not only institutions but also schools and parents. For example, this law



requires each school to engage in training for school staff on issues related to cyberbullying prevention, such as legality and informed use of the Internet. In addition to this, each institute must identify among its teachers a "school contact person against cyberbullying" who is responsible for coordinating all educational activities aimed at preventing the phenomenon [13].

Secondly, the law also intervenes outside the school environment, ensuring the application of a specific procedure for the removal of online content harmful to the dignity of the child and extending to the phenomenon of cyberbullying the application of an administrative sanction introduced in Italy for the crimes of stalking. [14]. Therefore, according to the Law n. 71/17 of 29/05/2017, this new procedure *"allows that a minor over 14 years victim of cyberbullying (or parent) asks the responsible of the website or data owner to obscure, remove or block the harmful content published on the network. In the event that the holder does not provide within 48 hours, the person concerned may apply to the Italian Data Protection Authority, who will have to intervene within the next 48 hours"* [14].

In addition to the introduction of the law against cyberbullying, Italian institutions are approving over the years several regulations, tools, and actions to prevent and combat bullying and cyberbullying. To mention a few, the Department of Education has published the following intervention strategies useful for this purpose:

- The publication (with a 2021 update) of the "Guidelines for the prevention and countering of bullying and cyberbullying": the guidelines provide updated tools, e-learning courses, access to new projects, operating procedures, etc. for managers, teachers, and school staff with the specific aim of helping them to combat cyberbullying. Direct link to the Guidelines and more specific information in paragraph 7 - Relevant links, point [c].
- The activation of the "ELISA PLATFORM": the platform provides access to an e-learning path available to managers, teachers, and school staff dedicated to supporting strategies to prevent and combat bullying and cyberbullying. Direct link to the platform and more specific information in paragraph 7 - Relevant links, point [c].

3.2 The alignment of national policies at European level

The phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying have been and are still being addressed even at the international and European levels as they are defined as full-fledged forms of violence.

At the international level, for example, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), approved and ratified by all European countries, determines the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities. Article 19 of this Convention stipulates that "States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation [...]" [15] guaranteeing, therefore, a form of protection also towards the phenomena of bullying and cyberbullying.



At the European level, the situation is very specific; European legislation has no direct competence in this area and *“EU has only a ‘supplementary’ role consisting of supporting, coordinating or supplementing the initiatives adopted by Member States at domestic level”* [14].

With this specific function, further regulations containing rules aimed at combating the phenomenon of cyberbullying; for example the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) which has been adopted by the Council of Europe: it is one of the most important texts at EU documents on the protection of fundamental human rights, which also apply to children and young people. This convention has a direct effect in the Italian legal system, influencing the national legislation concerning the matters dealt with.

At the same time, the Council of Europe is also addressing the issue of cybercrime through, for example, *“The Convention on Cybercrime”* (2001). This convention is the only binding international instrument in this area and, although it does not directly specify cyberbullying, it provides for many of these rules to be applicable to counter this phenomenon. Again, the convention is very useful in that it has become a model for many countries for the strengthening of national legislation

Another very important document adopted at the EU level in the last 10 years is the *“Decision 1351/2008/EC”* of the European Parliament and of the Council which included the development in each member country of specific programs for the protection of children using the Internet and other communication technologies. At the Italian level, this regulation has been applied, for example, by promoting the *“Safer Internet Centre – Generazioni Connesse”* project coordinated by MIUR in partnership with some of the main Italian companies dealing with security on the Net.

Despite European directives and programs/projects activated at the national level, very few EU member states have adopted specific legal measures against cyberbullying.

As we have seen in the previous paragraph, in 2017 Italy has instead adopted a specific law against bullying and cyberbullying (Law n. 71/17 of 29/05/2017) and, indeed, is the first country in Europe to have made it official.



4. Support strategies in the education sector

4.1 At formal level – school education sector

As anticipated above, a crucial point of the Italian approach against cyberbullying through the law n. 71/17 of 29/05/2017, foresees that the phenomenon is addressed consistently at the educational level with the aim of carrying out information and prevention events.

With this aim, it is certainly important to dwell on the already mentioned "*Guidelines for the prevention and countering of bullying and cyberbullying*": these guidelines, in fact, emphasize the central role of the school in creating a healthy and serene environment to promote the personal growth of students. Therefore, it is a priority to put in place a series of preventive policies and intervention strategies already in schools to combat the phenomena of cyberbullying.

It is then defined the role of the school in the fight against bullying and cyberbullying, emphasizing the importance of involving all school stakeholders (teachers, parents, students and school staff) in this process that is articulated on two levels:

1. PREVENTION:

The guidelines define a series of "Priority" actions that should be implemented by schools in a systematic and continuous way in order to intervene at the root of the phenomenon; in this sense, the 4 priority actions described in the guidelines are [16]:

- *Assessment of at-risk students, observation of distress, detection of health-damaging behaviors of boys/girls;*
- *Training of school staff by participating in the training modules provided by the ELISA platform;*
- *Training/information activities aimed at teachers, students, families and ATA staff, on the issues of regulations and procedures adopted by the contact person for bullying and cyberbullying and the Antibullying Team;*
- *Promotion, by the teaching staff, of an active role of students in preventing and combating bullying and cyberbullying.*
- *Activation of the "Elisa Platform"*

Prevention activities become, therefore, necessary and truly important in order to develop a level of responsibility among students at both the school and family levels. These priority actions, in fact, aim to increase awareness of the phenomenon, to engage young people personally in initiatives to raise awareness or to organize events to convey the importance of deepening these issues, etc.

2. HANDLING OF BULLYING CASES:

Alongside constant prevention activities, the guidelines also emphasize the need for schools to be able to activate systems for reporting and managing cases of bullying and cyberbullying; Again, in fact, the MIUR (The Ministry of Education, Universities and Research) suggests a few of recommended actions when faced with the manifestation of bullying (or suspicious) actions [16, pag.7].



MIUR has also activated in recent years a series of important initiatives to support the school education sector in the prevention of cyberbullying; these include, for example the *"A blue knot, campaign for the National Day against Bullying and Cyberbullying at school"*, a campaign promoted by MIUR aimed at contrasting the bullying and cyberbullying phenomena. All Italian educational institutions have been called to say "NO" to bullying at school, dedicating the *"First National Day Against Bullying at School"* to awareness actions aimed not only at students but to the whole community.

Remaining in the school education sector, in response to some of the main needs collected at the national level, it is important to focus on the activation by the Ministry of Education of steering committees at the local level capable of coordinating common actions both in terms of prevention and management of emergencies. With this aim, from 2020 and throughout 2021 two national projects have been activated to promote, through the organization of meetings and training courses, the adoption of a preventive approach to bullying and cyberbullying involving regional and provincial referents for bullying and cyberbullying, teachers and school managers.

4.2 At non-formal level – extracurricular activities

Alongside the many initiatives promoted by MIUR and carried out at the school level, the many support strategies implemented at the extracurricular level are equally important.

Among these, for example, it can be cited the campaign *"Be Aware. Be Digital."*, the first national training campaign for the promotion of an aware use of ICT technologies, promoted by the Presidency of the Council - Department of Information for the Security of the Republic [17]. The campaign was transmitted on the main Italian television channels with the aim of promoting the conscious use of the web and ICT technologies among young people. For this purpose, the sport was interpreted by a popular Italian youtuber, well known among young people.

Among the outputs of the project was also foreseen for the creation of apps, tutorials and other educational tools (e.g. EBooks and comics) mainly with the aim of introducing young people to the conscious use of technology.

In addition, many schools are also committed to extracurricular activities by activating protocols, meetings and collaborations to bring more and more attention to the issue of combating cyberbullying. Finally, there is also participation (both at school and individual/youth level) in national and European projects on this issue; among them, for instance: *"Cyber-teen: web for friendship!"*, *"Let's Fight Cyberbullying!"*, *"BIT generation"* etc.).



5. Cases of cyberbullying

Title of the case	<i>Andrea's story: survivor of cyberbullies</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Students
When happened?	During the middle school years (around 2015)
Brief description of the case	<p>Andrea's story is nowadays very famous in Italy, as it is a success story as she considers herself a survivor.</p> <p>For years (during middle school) she was a victim of cyberbullying mainly through social networks (Instagram and Ask.me).</p> <p>In an article to the newspaper 'La Stampa' Andrea describes that experience: <i>"It all started with small words, insulting, stupid. I didn't pay attention, if they were jerks it wasn't my fault. That was where I was wrong, because everything starts with small words, and as the person gives them weight, the bigger they become. Why were they judging me? My self-esteem dropped below sea level. I felt small and insignificant."</i></p> <p>The accumulated stress and bad thoughts that reached her affected her psychophysical state leading her to be hospitalized.</p> <p>During these years, Andrea put everything down on paper in a diary that she decided to hand over to a computer security expert and make her experience public.</p>
Mention the interventions done, if the case	/
Impact, results achieved	<p>Surely in this case the best weapon that led Andrea to overcome these terrible moments was his willpower and the awareness of being able to do it.</p> <p>In her diary, Andrea says: <i>"Certainly the medicines and the doctors helped me a little. But my greatest weapon was to believe I could do it and to hope. Because in those moments you need a little hope in you."</i></p> <p>The fact that she made the diary public, telling her story and how she managed to overcome it can be a great starting point for many young people like her.</p>
Link, if the case was public	https://www.lastampa.it/cronaca/2016/06/16/news/storia-di-andrea-sopravvissuta-ai-cyberbulli-sono-loro-i-veri-malati-io-ho-scelto-la-vita-1.34988180



Title of the case	<i>Flavia's story: from bullying and cyberbullying to a newfound serenity</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Students
When happened?	During Primary and Secondary School
Brief description of the case	<p>Starting in primary school, Flavia was a victim of bullying. Many students made fun of her because of her physical appearance (she suffered from obesity).</p> <p>With the transition to middle school and the technological revolution, Flavia also became a target of cyberbullying. One of her classmates, taking advantage of the fact that she did not have a profile on any social network, created a fake profile of her telling false stories about her.</p> <p>Flavia spent those years trying not to point out that she was suffering. She said she needed help because she thought she was wrong and not the, crying a lot and very often.</p>
Mention the interventions done, if the case	A teacher told her parents what had happened to Flavia.
Impact, results achieved	<p>Flavia says that it was a very difficult time, but now that she has overcome it, she has decided to tell her story in schools in order to raise awareness. In an interview Flavia talks about what she believes is crucial when you are being bullied or cyberbullied: "I won't tell you it's easy because I would be telling a lie, but if you never start you never get there. My advice is to speak up. Speak up if you are being bullied or cyberbullied or speak up if you witness or are aware of these acts. Today I am no longer afraid of my bullies and I am fine for the simple fact that I am unique and unrepeatable just like each of you."</p>
Link, if the case was public	https://www.lastampa.it/blogs/2017/02/06/news/la-storia-di-flavia-dal-bullismo-e-cyberbullismo-a-una-serenita-ritrovata-1.37250906/



Title of the case	<i>Cyberbullying, insulted because she was 'obese': 12-year-old girl hospitalised</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Students
When happened?	During Secondary School (11-12 years-old)
Brief description of the case	<p>Insulted in private chats on Instagram and with public posts (by fake profiles created ad hoc) for her physical appearance. The victim of these cyberbullying episodes was a 12-year-old girl from Naples who, as a result of the persecution, became lacking in appetite and had to go to hospital. The girl's mother, who was also a victim of insults and threats after she intervened to defend her daughter, decided to report the incident to the Police.</p> <p>The relationship between the victim and the cyberbullies, identified as a 14-year-old boy and a 13-year-old girl, had started as a friendship a few months earlier, but they soon began to insult her on social networks, through private messages, videos and the publication of photos of the 12-year-old girl being called 'obese'.</p>
Mention the interventions done, if the case	/
Impact, results achieved	<p><i>Corecom Campania</i> (an organisation for the protection of minors), will continue with greater vigour with the '@scuolasenzabulli' (@schoolwithoutbully) campaign, the initiative that for years has been meeting students in the Campania region, of all levels, and providing them with a series of useful information and solutions for asking for help and supporting those who are victims of bullies, through meetings and seminars, thanks to the collaboration of professional figures and institutions.</p>
Link, if the case was public	https://www.adnkronos.com/cyberbullismo-insultata-perche-obesa-12enne-ricoverata_gc52L9LvURtZngthdvreT?refresh_ce



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

Title of the practice	<i>1Safe app against Cyberbullying</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Municipalities, Fondazione Carolina, Families
Link	https://www.1safe.it/cyberbullying
Brief description of the best practice	<p>1SAFE is an application that, thanks to the collaboration with Fondazione Carolina, provides families with tools to educate their children in recognizing and avoiding the dangers of the network through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Prevention: providing users with short digital content (video tutorials, bi-weekly themed videos, downloadable documents with practical exercises) essential for a social-proof family.2) Update: by sending alerts to keep users informed of new risky trends or reports.3) Victim Support: in case of emergency, users can get in touch with a team of professionals to report incidents of CyberBullying, Request Victim Support, or Bully Recovery.
Why it is a successful intervention?	<p>This service allows any citizen to report risk situations to the authorities. It is certainly to be considered a successful intervention because of its intuitiveness that allows access to in-depth content and awareness on the topic of Cyberbullying but at the same time to report situations of cyberbullying that are managed directly by Fondazione Carolina, a non-profit association created to raise awareness throughout the educational community on the risks associated with the incorrect and unconscious use of new media.</p> <p>At the moment, more than 100 schools have joined the 1Safe application.</p>



Title of the practice	<i>"Se Mi Posti Ti Cancellò" Web series</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Boys and girls aged 11 to 16
Link	https://www.youtube.com/user/semipostiticanello
Brief description of the best practice	<p>Se Mi Posti Ti Cancellò is a web series, promoted as part of the "Generazioni Connesse" project, aimed at boys and girls aged 11 to 16 to promote a responsible and positive use of new media.</p> <p>The youngest was invited to briefly describe their online experience through the creation of a video and by answering some predefined questions. These experiences were used as inspiration for the writing and realization of a web series in 5 episodes where the following themes were addressed: cyberbullying, sexting, online sexuality, digital divide: understood as a generational gap, consequences of excessive exposure to the media.</p>
Why it is a successful intervention?	<p>The web series tried to tell real episodes through the voices and the participation of the same young protagonists of the videos and stories. This has guaranteed an important added value and a strong impact on young people in general.</p> <p>The Web series has had success among young people: the YouTube channel reached more than 1700 subscribers and some videos have exceeded 60,000 views.</p>

Title of the practice	<i>MABASTA - Movimento Anti Bullismo Animato da Studenti Adolescenti</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Young people and schools
Link	https://www.mabasta.org/index.html
Brief description of the best practice	<p>MABASTA is a movement of young and very young people, born in 2016, aimed at fighting bullying and cyberbullying through concrete and direct actions. Among these, for example, the creation of online spaces to help victims, give the possibility to tell and report stories of bullying/cyberbullying and give support to the bullies themselves.</p> <p>As already mentioned, moreover, there are many concrete initiatives in which the movement has participated since its inception in 2016 (e.g. #VinciamoilBullismo, a campaign aimed at raising awareness through sport as many young and very young as possible on the important issue of bullying and cyberbullying, "Operation TuttOk" by BNP Paribas Cardif to address in schools the issue of bullying not only from a psychological point of view but also physical and many other events and awareness days).</p>
Why it is a successful intervention?	<p>This movement has been very successful in recent years. What has made it increasingly important and what makes it a successful intervention is certainly the fact that it is a reality born from young people but with very clear ideas. It is a movement against bullying that sees young people who do not accept and do not tolerate the actions of 'bullies' and 'bully' and are tired of seeing their friends/peers affected by this phenomenon.</p>



Title of the practice	<i>Cyberincluding European Project</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	Young people between 16 and 20 years old from Schools in the region of Marche (Italy)
Link	https://www.osservatoriodigenere.com/progetti/erasmus/cyberincluding-goes-europe/127-progetti/cyberincluding/675-cyberincluding-pi%C3%B9-sicurezza-e-meno-discriminazione-in-rete.html ; https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2017-3-IT03-KA347-012621
Brief description of the best practice	Cyberincluding is a project against cyberbullying co-financed by the Erasmus+ program, conceived and coordinated by the “Osservatorio di Genere”, in collaboration with the youth association “Vicolocorto”. The Cyberincluding project has involved more than 300 boys and girls from all over the Marche region in a process that ended with the creation of a bill formulated by young students from the Marche region together with the help of politicians who agreed to participate. The themes involved are three: bullying, cyberbullying and hate speech (incitement to hatred).
Why it is a successful intervention?	The project has been a success story both in terms of participation of young people and in terms of results achieved: in fact, about 300 young people aged between 16 and 20 from all over the region were actively involved in the project, but 1,530 participants from all over Italy responded to the questionnaire aimed at understanding the real data of the phenomenon. Young people were actively involved and participated within each group and there were many questions. This initiative is important because to help the legislative process is the same boys, who in the meantime are sensitized on the subject.

Title of the practice	<i>“Cyber-teen: web for friendship!” European Project</i>
Country	Italy
Actors involved	18 young people aged between 15 and 18 years old
Link	https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2014-3-IT03-KA105-004539 ; https://serenoregis.org/gruppo-edap/cyber-teen-web-for-friendship/
Brief description of the best practice	Cyber-teen: web for friendship! is a youth exchange project co-financed by the European Union under the Erasmus+ programme. The project was implemented in 2015 involving 18 adolescents (15-18 years old) who have engaged in non-formal education activities acquiring skills, putting themselves at stake and confronting the issue of online violence.
Why it is a successful intervention?	The innovative idea of this project, which has made it a successful intervention is to propose activities based on non-formal education (games, theater activities, moments of reflection and sharing, intercultural exchange, etc.) on the theme of online violence and cyberbullying.



7. Relevant links (resources)

1. CUORICONNESSI Awareness Project Against Cyberbullying: <https://www.cuoriconnessi.it/>
2. MIUR - Guidelines for preventing and combating bullying and cyberbullying
<https://miur.gov.it/web/guest/linee-guida-prevenzione-e-contrasto>
3. MIUR – Piattaforma Elisa: <https://miur.gov.it/web/guest/piattaforma-elisa>
4. MIUR-Programma “Safer Internet Centre – Generazioni Connesse”:
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Part 2 – Practical review

1. Methodology applied in the interview questionnaires research

The collection of questionnaires in Italy took place in several steps.

The first of these was to contact primary and secondary schools (from all over the country, but with a greater focus in the centre-north) with which our organisation had previously collaborated.

The first contact was through an email sent in mid-November to the teachers in which we explained the objective of the project, sent a pdf with a more detailed presentation and asked them if they were interested.

Most of the teachers were very sensitive and interested in the topic of the project and immediately agreed to participate. Once we had their consent, we asked them to have the headmaster sign the letter to officially become associate partners of the project and asked them to collect as many student and teacher questionnaires as possible in about 15/20 days.

Almost all teachers were able to meet the deadline. As for the students' questionnaire, they reserved one hour of lesson time for them to fill it in in class.

2. Target group

The following Italian schools (secondary or high schools) were involved in the collection of questionnaires:

- *Istituto Statale Istruzione Superiore “Leonardo Da Vinci” (Florence, Urban Area): <https://www.isisdavinci.edu.it/>;*
- *Istituto di Istruzione Superiore Statale “E. Montale - Nuovo IPC” (Genova, Urban Area): <https://www.iscsmontalegenova.edu.it/>;*
- *Istituto “Francesco Datini” (Prato, Urban Area): <https://www.datiniprato.edu.it/>;*
- *Istituto Comprensivo 2 “Arnolfo di Cambio (Colle Val d’Elsa, Siena, Rural Area): <https://www.comprensivoduecolle.edu.it/>.*

The number of questionnaires we have been able to collect is as follows:

- Teachers' questionnaire: 47 participants and 47 answers;
- Students' Questionnaire: 252 participants and 252 answers.

From a general point of view, it can be said that in Italy it was more difficult to succeed in involving a high number of teachers, whereas, thanks to the fact that teachers had whole classes fill in the questionnaire, the number of students involved was significantly higher.

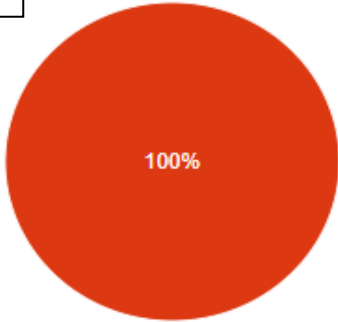
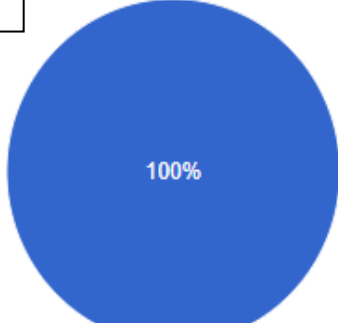
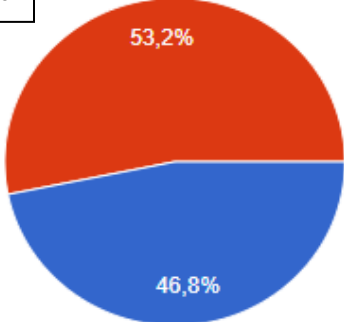
The questionnaire was evaluated as valid by both teachers and students even if it was underlined as too long and repetitive in some parts.



Summary of the results of the questionnaires

The following are some of the answers given by the teachers and students to the questionnaire, with the corresponding chart.

Teachers:

<p>Profession:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher	<p>47 Answers</p>  <p>A pie chart with a single red slice representing 100% of the data. The text '100%' is centered within the slice.</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Teacher</td><td>100%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Category	Percentage	Teacher	100%		
Category	Percentage						
Teacher	100%						
<p>I teach in a:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public School	<p>47 Answers</p>  <p>A pie chart with a single blue slice representing 100% of the data. The text '100%' is centered within the slice.</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Public School</td><td>100%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Category	Percentage	Public School	100%		
Category	Percentage						
Public School	100%						
<p>I have attended antibullying training:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes• No	<p>47 Answers</p>  <p>A pie chart with two slices: a red slice representing 53,2% and a blue slice representing 46,8%. The percentages are labeled on their respective slices.</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Category</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Yes</td><td>53,2%</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>46,8%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Category	Percentage	Yes	53,2%	No	46,8%
Category	Percentage						
Yes	53,2%						
No	46,8%						



<p>I teach students how to handle being bullied online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes• No• This is not my problem (2,1%)	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Yes</td><td>57,4%</td></tr><tr><td>No</td><td>40,4%</td></tr><tr><td>This is not my problem</td><td>2,1%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Yes	57,4%	No	40,4%	This is not my problem	2,1%				
Response	Percentage												
Yes	57,4%												
No	40,4%												
This is not my problem	2,1%												
<p>SCPT1. Cyberbullying is a problem in my school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree (2,1%)• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>2,1%</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>53,2%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>29,8%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>14,9%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Strongly Disagree	2,1%	Disagree	53,2%	Neutral	0%	Agree	29,8%	Strongly Agree	14,9%
Response	Percentage												
Strongly Disagree	2,1%												
Disagree	53,2%												
Neutral	0%												
Agree	29,8%												
Strongly Agree	14,9%												
<p>SCPT3. I am concerned about cyberbullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>17%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>66%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>17%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Strongly Disagree	0%	Disagree	17%	Neutral	0%	Agree	66%	Strongly Agree	17%
Response	Percentage												
Strongly Disagree	0%												
Disagree	17%												
Neutral	0%												
Agree	66%												
Strongly Agree	17%												



<p>SCPT4. I feel confident in identifying cyberbullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree (6,4%)	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>36,2%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>21,3%</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>36,2%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>6,4%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Strongly Disagree	0%	Disagree	36,2%	Neutral	21,3%	Agree	36,2%	Strongly Agree	6,4%
Response	Percentage												
Strongly Disagree	0%												
Disagree	36,2%												
Neutral	21,3%												
Agree	36,2%												
Strongly Agree	6,4%												
<p>SCPT5. I feel confident in managing cyberbullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree (2,1%)	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>55,3%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>34%</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>8,5%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>2,1%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Strongly Disagree	0%	Disagree	55,3%	Neutral	34%	Agree	8,5%	Strongly Agree	2,1%
Response	Percentage												
Strongly Disagree	0%												
Disagree	55,3%												
Neutral	34%												
Agree	8,5%												
Strongly Agree	2,1%												
<p>SCPT16. Schools should link with community resources to deal with cyberbullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Disagree</td><td>14,9%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>0%</td></tr><tr><td>Agree</td><td>57,4%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>27,7%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Strongly Disagree	0%	Disagree	14,9%	Neutral	0%	Agree	57,4%	Strongly Agree	27,7%
Response	Percentage												
Strongly Disagree	0%												
Disagree	14,9%												
Neutral	0%												
Agree	57,4%												
Strongly Agree	27,7%												

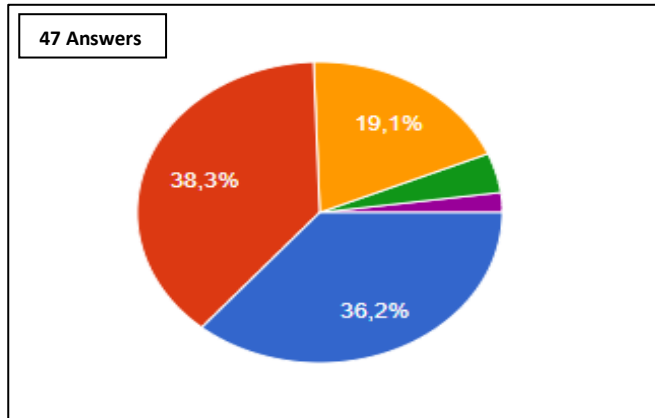


<p>SCPT7. Schools should develop policies on cyberbullying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>63,8%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>23,4%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>12,8%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Agree	63,8%	Strongly Agree	23,4%	Neutral	12,8%		
Response	Percentage										
Agree	63,8%										
Strongly Agree	23,4%										
Neutral	12,8%										
<p>SCPT21. I want to learn more about cyberbullying in my continuing education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree• Disagree• Neutral• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>63,8%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>23,4%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>12,8%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Agree	63,8%	Strongly Agree	23,4%	Neutral	12,8%		
Response	Percentage										
Agree	63,8%										
Strongly Agree	23,4%										
Neutral	12,8%										
<p>It is my duty to intervene in cyberbullying incidences happening to students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly Disagree (2,1%)• Disagree• Neutral (6,4%)• Agree• Strongly Agree	<p>47 Answers</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree</td><td>57,4%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Agree</td><td>34%</td></tr><tr><td>Neutral</td><td>6,4%</td></tr><tr><td>Strongly Disagree</td><td>2,1%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	Agree	57,4%	Strongly Agree	34%	Neutral	6,4%	Strongly Disagree	2,1%
Response	Percentage										
Agree	57,4%										
Strongly Agree	34%										
Neutral	6,4%										
Strongly Disagree	2,1%										



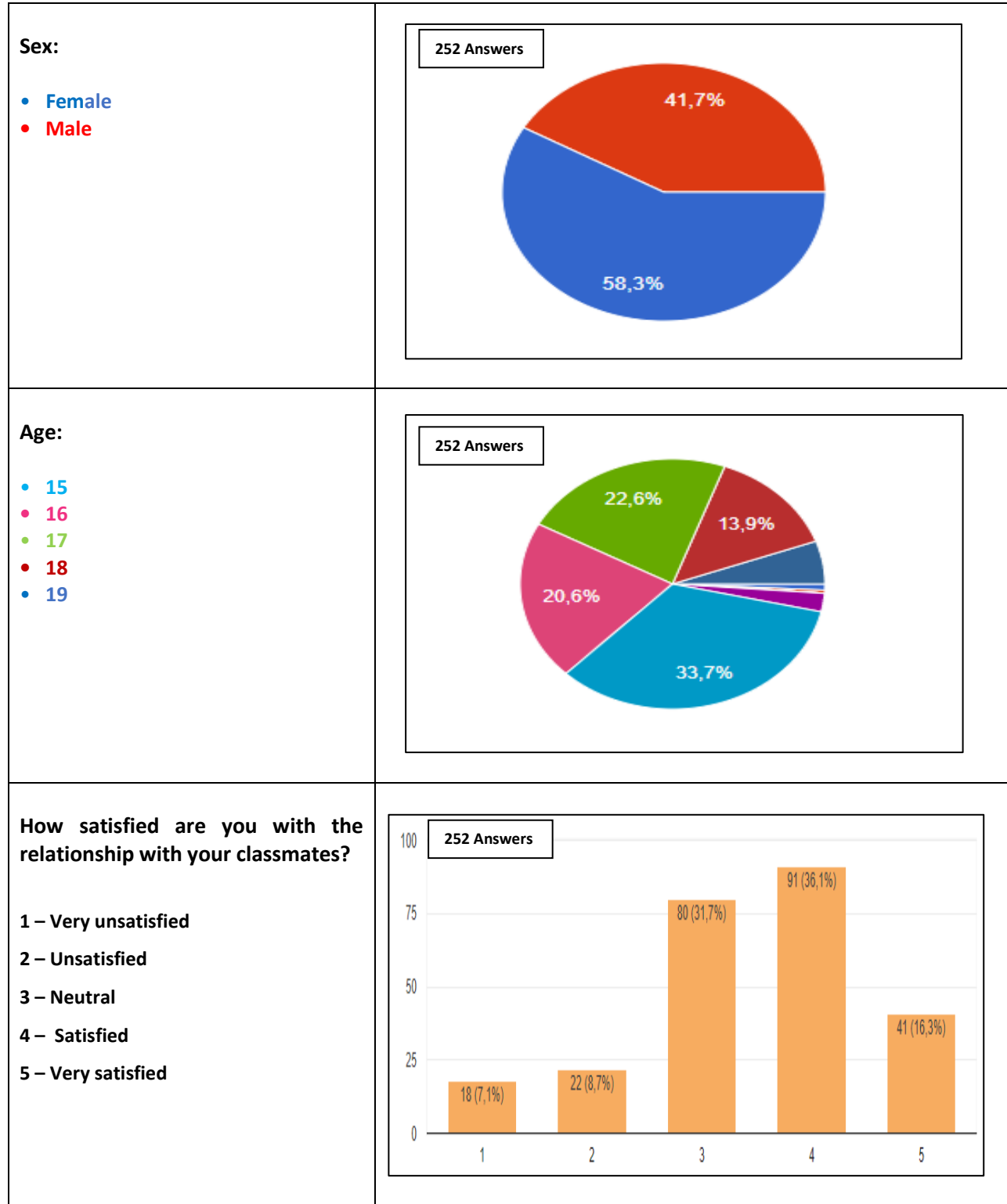
TCPS4. Teachers should implement a program for students in order to prevent cyberbullying:

- Always
- Often
- Sometimes
- Rarely (4,3%)
- Never (2,1%)

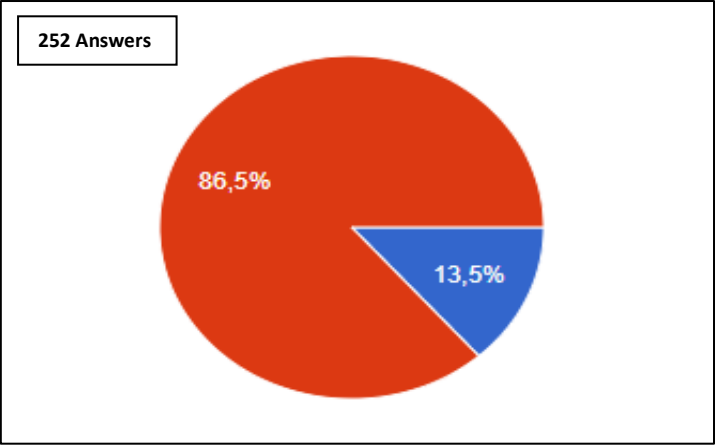
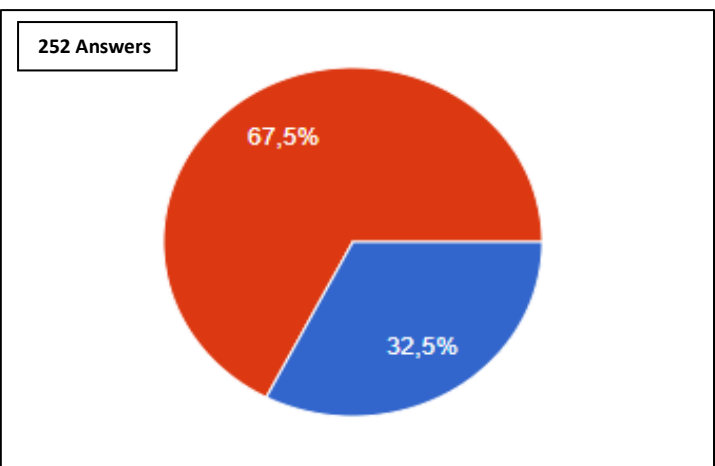
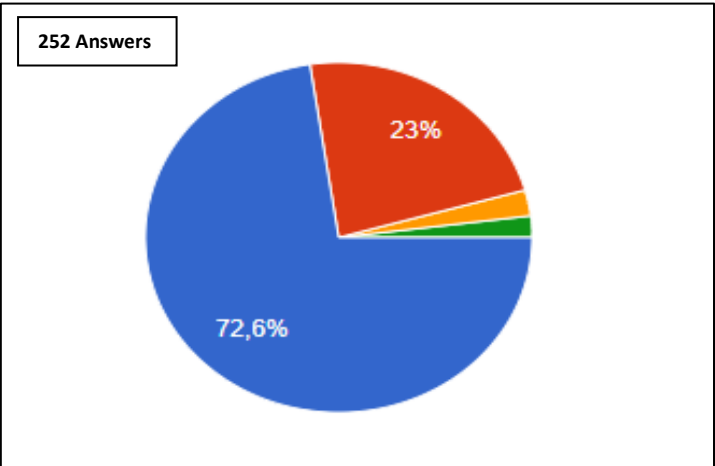




Students:





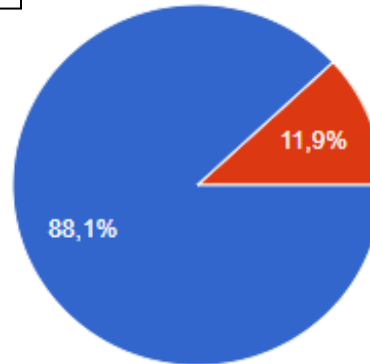
<p>Do you have classmates that cyberbullied other colleagues?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes• No	<p>252 Answers</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Response</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>No</td><td>86,5%</td></tr><tr><td>Yes</td><td>13,5%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Response	Percentage	No	86,5%	Yes	13,5%				
Response	Percentage										
No	86,5%										
Yes	13,5%										
<p>Who are the most frequent victims of cyberbullying?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Male• Female	<p>252 Answers</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Gender</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Female</td><td>67,5%</td></tr><tr><td>Male</td><td>32,5%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Gender	Percentage	Female	67,5%	Male	32,5%				
Gender	Percentage										
Female	67,5%										
Male	32,5%										
<p>Have you ever been bullied online (e.g. via email, chatroom, phone)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Never• A few times• Many times (2%)• Very frequent (2,4%)	<p>252 Answers</p>  <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Frequency</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Never</td><td>72,6%</td></tr><tr><td>A few times</td><td>23%</td></tr><tr><td>Many times</td><td>2%</td></tr><tr><td>Very frequent</td><td>2,4%</td></tr></tbody></table>	Frequency	Percentage	Never	72,6%	A few times	23%	Many times	2%	Very frequent	2,4%
Frequency	Percentage										
Never	72,6%										
A few times	23%										
Many times	2%										
Very frequent	2,4%										



Have you ever bullied others while online?

- Never
- A few times

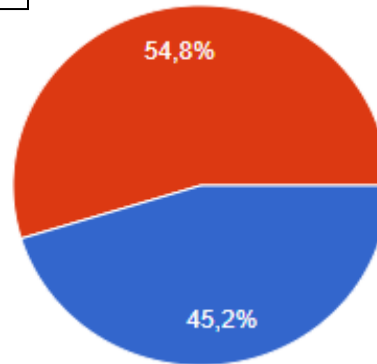
252 Answers



Have you ever seen other kids being bullied online?

- Yes
- No

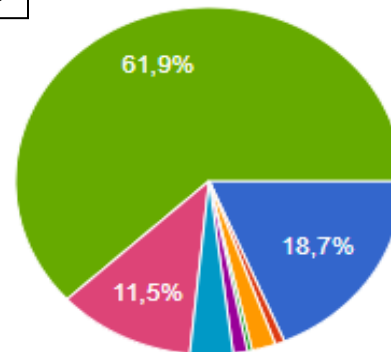
252 Answers



Have you ever report to an adult when you saw a kid being bullied online (messages, social media, email, chatrooms, etc.)?

- Yes, to my parent
- Yes, to other adult
- No, I did not report any incident
- No, I did not report any incident because I did not see any

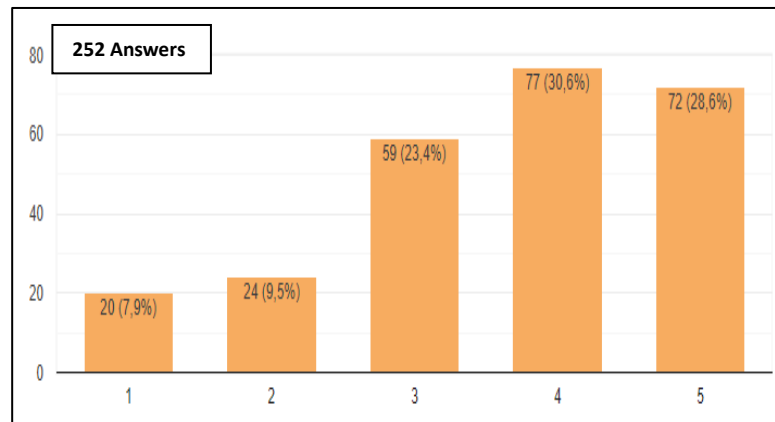
252 Answers





PSDQ18. My parents helped me reflecting on the consequences of my actions by inviting me to talk about them:

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Occasionally
- 3 – Sometimes
- 4 – Often
- 5 – Always



Conclusions

The collection of questionnaires was very successful in the Italian schools involved. From the answers to the above-mentioned questions, the following key points can be seen.

Teachers' Questionnaire:

- About a half of the teachers have never participated in antibullying training;
- Almost 60% does not teach how to handle being bullied online;
- Most teachers are neutral in considering cyberbullying as a problem at school;
- More than a half of teachers do not feel confident in managing cyberbullying;
- Almost two-thirds of teachers want to learn more about cyberbullying.

Students' Questionnaire:

- About 70% of the students involved believe that girls are the most frequent victims of cyberbullying;
- 45% of students have seen other kids being bullied online;
- Almost one in four has been cyberbullied;
- About 60% stated that their parents helped them reflecting on the consequences of their actions.