



NATIONAL REPORT MALTA

**Tackling bullying, aggression and violence in
Maltese State schools**

Funded by the European Union



ASAP– Against School Aggression Partnership

Community Based Complex School Programme for Effective Prevention and Treatment of Aggression and Bullying

An Inter-sectoral approach from best practices to policy making

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I. Introduction

The topic of violence and aggression in school is highly debated in recent years and has become one of the most serious challenges faced by schools in Europe and worldwide. Aggressive behaviour and bullying accompany the daily lives of a large percentage of school children, leaving lasting consequences for their future development, social life and growth. School bullying and aggression are phenomena that are not confined just to one country or region, but are international in scope, making them a problem studied by scientists and experts from around the world. Dealing with the problem itself is a challenge that requires comprehensive action, targeting all participants in cases of violence, and collaboration at all organizational levels.

Adaptation of programmes, policies, training packages and curricula have been developed across Europe to deal with such issues. Frequently, however, such work is carried on by different entities that act independently rather than in cooperation with each other, often without taking into consideration the positive and negative aspects of existing practices, thus restricting efficiency.

With this in mind and with the understanding that, in many situations, schools are left to deal with bullying, violence, aggression and conflict on their own and with limited resources, Partners Hungary Foundation, Partners Bulgaria Foundation, Szolnoki Szolgáltatási Szakképzési Centrum and SOS Malta joined forces in 2015, in order to develop a model programme that will contribute to a reduction of school aggression and bullying, while establishing and strengthening cooperation between different institutions that deal with the student community, with the long-term goal to implement new conflict management methods and a culture of nonviolence in schools. This came together under the Against School Aggression Partnership – ASAP Collaboration project: Community based complex school programme for effective prevention and treatment of aggression and bullying - intersectoral approach from best practices to policy making. This report represents the outcome of the first phase of the project, and aims to shed the light on the current situation of school aggression and bullying at national level. Maltese, Hungarian and Bulgarian National Reports will be the basis for the creation of the model programme.

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1. Aim of the Report

When the three implementing organizations designed the project's outline and rationale, the research and analysis of the current situation of school aggression and bullying became the first logical stage of implementation. The National Reports conducted in Hungary, Bulgaria and Malta not only allow thorough review of gaps and needs within the area, but they also identify policies and practices that have already been tested and can be considered as lessons learned and know-how for future initiatives.

On the basis of the three National Reports from Hungary, Bulgaria and Malta, the partnership managed to

- compare the landscape of actors, policies and practices in the field of bully prevention and intervention in the three countries;
- review and present effective good practices in the field, which can be of help to policy makers and practitioners in other countries and contexts;
- design a model program that provides complex answers to the issues of school aggression and bullying taking into account its content and environment;
- formulate specific recommendations to policy-makers with regard to strengthening current measures to prevent aggression and bullying at school.

2. Definitions

In order to have a better understanding of the topic addressed throughout this paper, a set of definitions is provided regarding different types of behaviour such as bullying, aggression, violence and conflict. These definitions will apply for the whole report and the Model Programme, which will help avoid any ambiguity that might be generated by the differences between the terms that define these notions in English, Hungarian and Bulgarian.

The most widely accepted definition for **bullying behaviour** is *negative actions* on the part of one or more other students directed *repeatedly* at a victim which includes an *imbalance of power* between the actors involved.¹ **Aggressive behaviour** is a more specific term, referring directly to any behaviour

¹Dan Olweus, 'Bullying at School What We Know and What We Can Do', Wiley-Blackwell: October 1993, p.9.

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enacted with the intention to harm another person who is motivated to avoid that harm.² Moreover, aggressive behaviour can take many forms. It can be direct or indirect, physical, verbal, or relational.

Another term that becomes relevant here is **conflict**, which can be defined as an incident in which two parties oppose each other, and its resolution implies stopping the oppositional exchange. The reason that this term is made relevant here is because as research has shown, there is a tendency for children to resort to violence as a way to solve problems since they may lack adequate conflict resolution skills (see Joseph P. Forgas, Arie W. Kruglanski and Kipling D. Williams)³, thus highlighting the need for assertiveness and conflict resolution skills. This leads to the final definition worthy of clarification here, **violence**. Violence is defined by the World Health Organisation, as an intentional use of force or power, against another person, a group of persons or oneself, which ‘results in or has a high likelihood in resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.’⁴

For ease of reference these behaviours will be referred to as the targeted behaviours.

II. Rationale

In Malta there are different levels of intervention to tackle the targeted behaviour, especially bullying, however there is no clear delimitation of which actor bears responsibility for what type of action, especially when it comes to policy implementation which uses a whole school type of approach. On one hand there is the top down initiative managed by the Ministry for Education and Employment, through: the national intervention service (Anti-Bullying Service) and the national policy (‘Addressing bullying behaviour in schools’ policy, strategy and procedures. There is also the Personal, Social and Career Development curriculum (PSCD) which is fully implemented already in the Education System and deals with the personal, social and behavioural development of students. On the other hand, there are project-based initiatives led by independent entities, civil society and even various

² Wayne A Warburton, Craig A Anderson, ‘Social Psychology of Aggression’, International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences, 2nd edition, Volume 1, 2015, p. 373; [<https://public.psych.iastate.edu/caa/abstracts/2015-2019/15WA.pdf>].

³ Jesse A. Brinson, Jeffrey A. Kottler, Teresa A. Fisher, ‘Cross-Cultural Conflict Resolution in the Schools: Some Practical Intervention Strategies for Counselors’, *Journal Of Counseling & Development*, Volume 82, 2004, p. 295.

⁴ World Health Organisation, ‘World report on violence and health: summary’, Geneva, 2002, [http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/summary_en.pdf], p. 4.

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governmental agencies, which either tackle directly bullying, aggression, violence or conflict, or deal with their causes and effects.

The level of prevalence of the above mentioned types of behaviour among Maltese students is has been measured and analysed from a few perspectives along the years. The following summary of such findings will offer an insight of the Maltese situation and will enable further reflection on the national context, which will be presented in detail in the next chapter.

The most extended cross-national survey, that relates to bullying or violence, in which Malta has been a participant since 2001 is the ‘Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children (HBSC) Study’.⁵ According to the data collected in 2005/06 and 2013/14, bullying behaviour is not as prevalent in Malta as in other European countries. While there was a recorded decrease in the level of involvement of students as perpetrators of bullying behaviour between 2005/6 and 2013/14, the level of victimisation has risen for both female and male subjects as follows:

	2005/06 : 11 year olds	2013/14: 11 year olds	2005/06: 13 year olds	2013/14: 13 year olds	2005/06: 15 year olds	2013/14: 15 year olds
Being a victim of bullying behaviour	4% - female	8% - female	6% - female	8% - female	2% - female	2% - female
	9% - male	10% - male	10% - male	12% - male	6% - male	8% - male
HBSC average	16%	13%	14%	12%	11%	8%
Being a perpetrator	2% - female	1% - female	4% - female	1% - female	5% - female	3% - female
	6% - male	2% - male	12% - male	6% - male	9% - male	8% - male

⁵ WHO Regional Office for Europe, Candace Currie et al., eds. ‘Social determinants of health and well-being among young people. Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) study: international report from the 2009/2010 survey’ Copenhagen, 2012; [http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/163857/Social-determinants-of-health-and-well-being-among-young-people.pdf].

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of bullying behaviour						
HBSC average	9%	7%	12%	9%	12%	9%
Cyber bullying	-	2% - female	-	5% - female	-	3% - female
	-	3% - male	-	1% - male	-	4% - male
HBSC average	-	3%	-	3%	-	3%
Fighting	10% - female	7% - female	13% - female	10% - female	10% - female	5% - female
	20% - male	18% - male	26% - male	16% - male	20% - male	14% - male
HBSC average	16%	12%	14%	10%	11%	8%

Table 1 - Data extracted from: 'Health Behaviour In School-Aged Children (HBSC) Study: International Report From The 2013/2014 Survey' and 'Health Behaviour In School-Aged Children International Report From The 2005/2006 Survey'

In the HBSC study, fighting, being bullied, bullying others and cyberbullying are considered and analysed as risk behaviours, because it is considered that 'involvement in bullying affects young people's physical health, resulting in somatic symptoms such as head, back and stomach aches, psychological distress (depression, bad temper, nervousness, loneliness and suicidal ideation) and long-term patterns of problem behaviour, including aggression, violence, problem drinking and substance use.'⁶ In comparing the two sets of data collected through the study, it seems that the levels of involvement in bullying prevalence have dropped in Malta over a time span of eight years. However, bullying victimisation seems to have increased.

⁶WHO Regional Office for Europe, 'Growing up unequal: gender and socioeconomic differences in young people's health and well-being', *Health Behaviour In School-Aged Children (Hbsc) Study: International Report From The 2013/2014 Survey*, p. 197, [http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/303438/HSBC-No7-Growing-up-unequal-full-report.pdf].

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Comparable to this set of data are other research programmes that were conducted nationally. When it comes to bullying, the first study in Malta was conducted in 1998 by Prof. Mark G Borg who found that one out of three Maltese students were, at the time, involved in bullying behaviour, either as a victim or as a perpetrator. The study reflected the reality of secondary school students.⁷

Moreover, ‘Draw the line policy paper research’ by Studenti Demokristjani Maltin, included a survey that was disseminated among 3% of the whole student population in Malta that follow further and tertiary levels of education. Half the respondents – who were mostly aged between 16 to 18 year olds admitted to having experienced bullying mostly while they were students in secondary school.⁸

In another recent study, which focused on the wellbeing of Maltese children, Carmel Cefai and Natalie Galea found that a fourth of 3000 pupils, who were either 8-year olds, 10-year olds or 12-year olds, and therefore undergoing primary and secondary education, faced physical or relational bullying more than once a month. The level of victimisation and types of bullying that they were subjected to vary according to age and gender, thus girls for example faced more relational bullying than boys, who were more likely to experience more physical victimisation. Similarly, older students who were in their first year of secondary education faced lower levels of bullying compared to the younger pupils.⁹

Another research paper on the frequency of cyber bullying, racist bullying and homophobic bullying in state schools in Gozo, shows that around a half of the students that participated in the study (129 students Form 1 to 5 in both girls’ and boys’ state schools in Gozo) were victims of bullying behaviour on different grounds, while less than one fourth admitted to be perpetrators.¹⁰

These findings challenge the responses received for the survey ‘Tackling bullying, aggression, violence and conflict in state schools’ conducted for the purpose of this report, where 66,64 % of respondents,

⁷ Mark G. Borg, ‘The extent and nature of bullying among primary and secondary schoolchildren. Educational Research’ as cited in Helen Askill-Williams, Carmel Cefai, and Francis Fabri, ‘Maltese students’ perspectives about their experiences at school and their mental health’, *Australian Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, Volume 23, 2013, pages 252–270, p261.

⁸ Studenti Demokristjani Maltin, ‘Draw the line – policy document’, 2016 [https://issuu.com/sdm-studentidemokristjanimaltin/docs/sdm_dtlpolicypaper_outputissuu-2?e=0/34322476].

⁹ Carmel Cefai, Natalie Galea, ‘Children’s worlds: the subjective wellbeing of Maltese children’, Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, University of Malta, Malta, 2016, [http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/278369/ChildrensWorlds,Malta,20161.pdf].

¹⁰ Nicholine Borg, ‘A study about the frequency of cyber bullying, racist bullying and homophobic bullying in state schools in Gozo’, A Dissertation Presented to the Faculty of Education in Part Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Bachelor in Education (Honours) at the University of Malta, 2012, p.84.

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namely 20 Maltese Heads of School out of a total of 30 participants said that bullying is not really a problem in their school.¹¹

While the previous mentioned data reflect the experience of students themselves, the ‘Study on Violence, Harassment and Bullying in Schools’ led by the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE), attempts to bring together the voices of all different stakeholders, meaning parents, students, teachers, and other school staff. It managed to discuss, through a qualitative approach, the forms of gender violence in schools and explores different opinions and needs expressed by students, parents and school staff regardless of their experience at school. The results of extensive interviews with different categories of respondents raised issues that reflected the whole student community and school environment, such as the fact that there is confusion about what behaviour can be considered to be bullying, from both the teachers and the students’ perspectives, who may have a different understanding of the phenomenon. This aspect was also raised in the feedback received as part of the questionnaire disseminated among Heads of State Schools for the purpose of this report, namely the fact that different negative behaviours are mistakenly used interchangeably, and most of the times parents believe that any quarrel or conflict is equivalent to bullying.

Moreover, a rather surprising recommendation, which came from the NCPE’s research study, was that teachers and educational staff should also receive training on how to deal with ‘challenging circumstances’, in this case meaning abuse, assault or intimidating actions performed against them by parents. This supports the feedback received during an interview with representatives of the Malta Learning Support Association, conducted within the framework of this report, who stressed the fact that some incidents that happen among students are being disregarded for fear of negative consequences for teachers and other school staff, outside the school.

The same study, carried out by NCPE, also touches on the diversity element in Maltese schools, identifying the need for more positive intercultural events with an emphasis on similarities between different students rather than overstressing the differences while also pointing out the need of social mediators in schools to help improve the teacher-student and teacher-parent relations.¹²

¹¹SOS Malta, ‘Tackling bullying, aggression and violence in State schools’, survey, 2016 [http://www.sosmalta.org/file.aspx?f=865].

¹²The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality, ‘Research Study on Violence, Harassment and Bullying in Schools A qualitative perspective, 2016, p.34, [http://victimsupport.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Report-Violence-Schools.pdf].

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The inclusion of either Third Country Nationals or foreign students in the school community in Malta has been addressed by limited research until now. Among the research, there is the ‘Integration of Immigrant Spouses and Children’¹³ by the IOM in collaboration with several Maltese NGOs, including SOS Malta. In this study it was found that most of the foreign students and their parents were satisfied with their experience of their school, however, when they were asked about bullying on the grounds of their nationality, 21.43% admitted that the children have been victims of such cases.

Examples of responses were:

‘She was ostracised in the playground by her classmates, who made fun of her skin colour. The situation was not serious but my daughter now feels different to the local children.’

‘Though it is not yet proved, but I have the impression that something strange is happening and according to other children of friends who are older with better understanding and communication they have confirmed such things. Moreover, he is most of the time sad during school hours. He hardly talks about friends in school.’¹⁴

One 2012 study, which focuses on integration in education of Third Country Nationals, includes important insights on social interaction and bullying victimisation or exclusion involving non-Maltese students. Similarly to the research mentioned above, the perception seems to be that Maltese and Third Country National students experience such social challenges in a similar manner. There were incidents that translated into bullying and islamophobia:

‘The children tease mostly my son; they call him ‘Arab’. This affects him. They call him ‘maħmug’ [dirty], ‘għarbi’ [Arab]. We only knew later when he told us. He isn’t happy at school. It would be good if parents teach their kids respect, before they send them to school. Teachers are fine, they are treated the same now.’ (Parent, State School)’

‘My younger child has not been bullied as far as I know, but we had to change schools for our older kid [girl]. We took her out of a government school in Bormla and transferred her to the Mosque school, but now she is back in a government school and she does not have problems. She was bullied because

¹³International Organisation for Migration, ‘Integration of Immigrant Spouses and Children’, 2015, p. 46. [<http://malta.iom.int/sites/default/files/Integration/Pan%20European%20Research%20-%20Integration%20of%20Immigrant%20Spouses%20and%20Children.pdf>].

¹⁴ Ibid., p.47.

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she was not Maltese; they used to tell her to go back to her country, that she doesn't have a family, etc.” (Parent, State School)’.

This shows that **the data collected through different research seems to provide for different interpretations and conflicting results**. This is due to differences in the formulation of questionnaires or interviews, differences in the contextual frameworks and definitions adopted, as well as different respondent populations – either students of different ages, or students versus school staff. This is also an argument which sustains the idea that investigating and tackling such behaviour is a complex process that raises contradictions among researchers and practitioners; in order to be able to have a holistic approach, all stakeholders should be considered. What is more, the level of prevalence doesn't seem to be related with existing practices at national or school level, nor does it mention any connection with or impact of national policy or the national intervention service – Anti-Bullying Service.

III. National background

Bullying, violence and aggression all translate into unwanted behaviour which often damages the integrity and wellbeing of the persons involved, as either perpetrators, or as victims or as bystanders. States, schools and communities have adopted different strategies through which to combat and prevent such cases from happening. Thus, the international and national legislation that touches upon these subjects is quite diverse, beginning with the rights focused legal commitments that States are enforcing at international level, the Constitution, and the national and EU policy and legal instruments.

This chapter aims to build on the Maltese background outlined partially through the different research data identified in the second chapter. The focus will fall first on the national legislation and policy and finish with an overview of relevant actors at national level.

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The Maltese Islands, with a population of approximately 420000 inhabitants, is considered as a bilingual country, having Maltese as a National language and English as a co-official language¹⁵, with both languages being used as instructional languages.

1. Maltese education system

Malta has two streams of education: the public state-run system and the private/independent and Church administered system¹⁶. The levels of education are as shown in Figure 1:

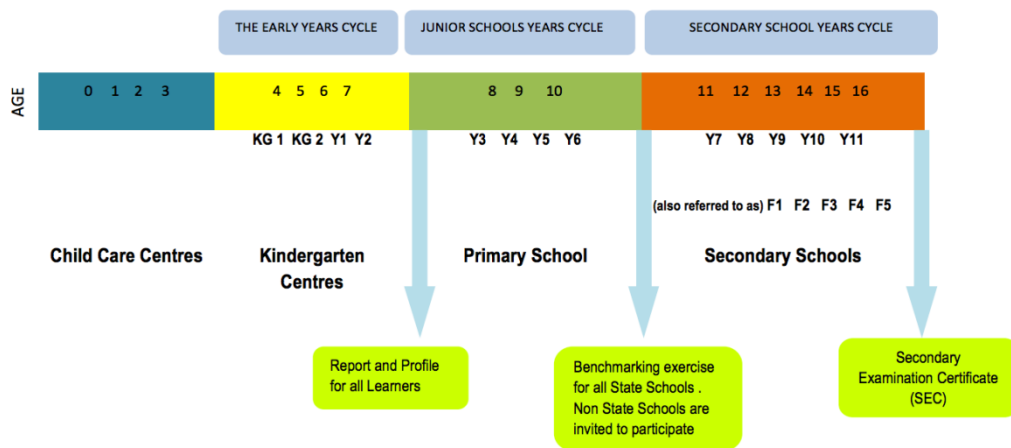


Figure 1 - Structure of the Maltese Education System (Source: 'Country Report: Malta', Language in Education Policy Profile Education Policy Profile, p.18.

Compulsory education starts with the Primary level at the age of 5/6 and ends with the Upper Secondary Education at the age of 15/16. The Maltese schools can either be co-education or single-gender education schools. Most state schools have primary education as co-ed while the secondary education is now under transition from single-gender education towards a full co-educational system.

2. National legislative and policy framework

At the national level, action taken in the field of prevention and tackling of bullying and aggression in schools is being led and overseen by the Ministry for Education and Employment, specifically through the Directorate for Educational Services, which among others, is responsible for the 'provision of

¹⁵Thomas Stolz, 'Maltese', in *The Languages and Linguistics of Europe: A Comprehensive Guid* edited by Bernd Kortmann, Johan van der Auwera, Walter de Gruyter GmbH & Co. KG: Berlin (2011), p. 241.

¹⁶Lara Ann Vella – Ministry for Education and Employment, 'Country Report: Malta', Language in Education Policy Profile, (2014), p.18.

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services required to deal effectively with issues of good conduct and discipline, of child abuse, of bullying and of drug abuse;¹⁷ as stated in the Education Act, Chapter 327 of the Laws of Malta.

Part of the directorate, is the Student Services Department (SSD) which includes Education Psycho-Social Services, Special Education and Inclusive Education. All services offered by this department are aimed at students who are following their compulsory education in State Schools. The SSD was created in 2007¹⁸, and it serves all 11 State Colleges which include a total of 82 schools, both primary and secondary, while also assisting Church Schools and Independent Schools upon referral.

Bullying behaviour is directly addressed in Malta through a national policy, strategy and procedures that create and promote the framework and culture for schools to deal with such behaviour in a whole school approach. The approach taken is to provide a **national strategy** and adds to the valuable country-wide **intervention service**, which has been in place for over 17 years: the Anti-Bullying Services, part of the Safe Schools Programme under the SSD.

The implementation of the policy is undertaken by the Student Services Department, Education for All from the Directorate for Educational Services, College principles and Heads of School.

The first step of implementation of the '**Addressing Bullying Behaviour in School**' policy is to create a tailor-made anti-bullying policy for each State School, where all stakeholders are involved. This creates the possibility for all stakeholders to take ownership of the regulations so that they are not just imposed upon them, but which stakeholders themselves have helped create and include their contribution to tackle specific problems that affect them.

¹⁷ Malta Education Act, Chapter 327, p. 8.

[<http://www.justiceservices.gov.mt/downloaddocument.aspx?app=lom&itemid=8801>].

¹⁸European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 'Special Needs and Inclusive Education in Malta – External Audit Report', Brussels, 2014, p. 30.

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According to the survey conducted by SOS Malta, as shown in Figure 2, out of the 29 respondents from different State schools, both primary and secondary, 24 schools have adopted an anti-bullying policy or have included it in the school’s development plan.

The policy aims to adopt a whole school approach and promotes restorative practices as method of intervention while also declaring zero tolerance to any bullying behaviour.

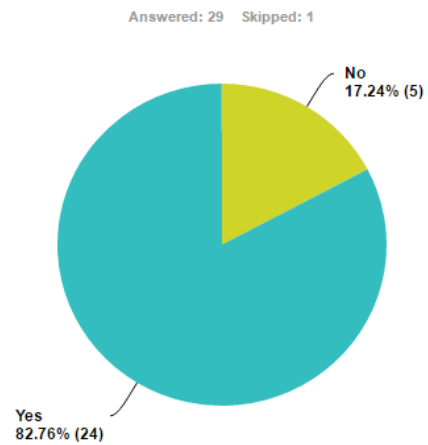


Figure 2

The whole school approach is ensured through the participation of all stakeholders in the drafting of the school’s own anti-bullying guidelines. We found that in most cases the policy was designed during Staff Development sessions with the contribution of school staff and members of the Psycho-Social Team, including the Anti-Bullying Service representative. While there seems to be a high involvement of the school staff in developing the policies, the students have been underrepresented, with only two cases mentioning that the Student Council representatives took part in the drafting phase.

There were cases mentioned where a policy was not drafted at school level but the given national policy was simply implemented within the school. However, this reduces the effectiveness of having a school-level policy, which is meant to be adapted to a particular school’s environment and created with a bottom up approach rather than just applying directly the national policy.

Another measure which aims to enhance the whole school approach is through offering adequate training opportunities to teachers and learning support assistants. This was done through Professional Development sessions and facilitated either by the Anti-Bullying Service representatives or other professionals such as members of the BeSmartOnline! project or the Cybercrime unit.

Moreover, with regards to training provided to school staff and professionals, a gap emerged between the practices that are to be used and the actual knowledge available or persons trained on how to use the practices in a safe and suitable way. While some respondents said that they were familiar with practices such as mediation, peer mediation, restorative justice, conflict resolution, no blame approach and aggression replacement, many of them admitted that not enough training on how and when to use them, was provided to the Heads of Schools or to the school staff. This was particularly

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true of the restorative approach, which is the underlying methodology adopted through the ‘Addressing Bullying behaviour in school’ policy and aims for the following outcomes:

- *students to develop responsibility, empathy, social skills and respect for others;*
- *students are happier and manifest improved behaviour;*
- *the school environment becomes a safe and secure environment, leading to improvement of the student's attendance and attainment;*
- *students are able to show remorse and change unacceptable behaviours to ones that are celebrated by the school community.*¹⁹

In order to maximise the effectiveness of interventions, professional training should be provided for all school staff. Moreover, when it comes to the target group at school, there is the need to focus on all actors regardless whether they are teachers, learning support assistants or service providers. For instance, during consultations meetings with the Anti-Bullying team and the Malta Learning Support Association, it was emphasised that there is not enough supervision on transport to and from school, where children are usually in the sole presence of the driver. Something that might contribute to and improve the position would be to include/target the bus drivers when delivering different types of training related to bullying, aggression or violence.

Another measure included in the strategy document for the ‘Addressing Bullying Behaviour in Schools’

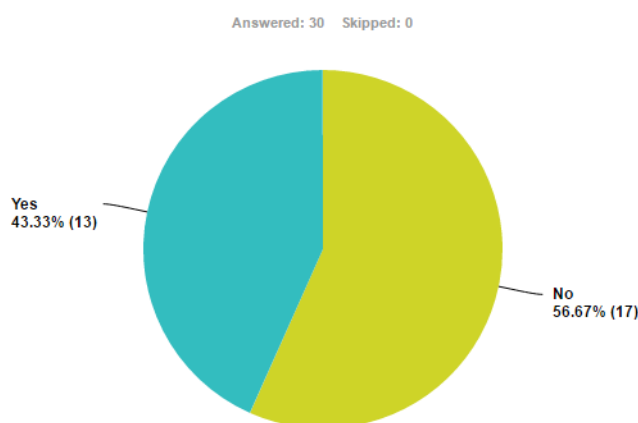


Figure 3

policy it to ‘develop a prevention programme at school level which ensures that vulnerable categories of students are provided with a safe and secure environment and are respected as all other students’.²⁰ For this action, responsibility is shared among a series of stakeholders: College Principal, Service Manager, Education Psycho-social Services,

¹⁹ Ministry for Education and Employment, ‘Addressing Bullying Behaviour in Schools’ strategy, p.12, [<http://education.gov.mt/en/Documents/Addressing%20Bullying%20Behaviour%20in%20Schools.pdf>].

²⁰ Ibid., p.10.

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Head of School (HOS), a designated member of staff and the Anti-Bullying Team Members, while impacting the whole school community. When it comes to actual implementation, the majority of respondents said that there was no programme in place for vulnerable categories of students (56.67% - see figure 3), however, the ones that replied positively and elaborated their answers related this question to Nurture Group classes in primary education and the Learning Support Zones for secondary schools. These two types of programmes offer support for students experiencing Social-Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD) – ‘those students who present disturbing and/or disruptive behaviour that interferes with their own and others’ social functioning and academic engagement’.²¹

Another programme mentioned by one HOS was the Core Curriculum Programme (CCP)– a competence based approach for low achievers in secondary schools which are provided with a mentor to help them develop different skills and competences during specially designed classes. This programme aims to help and support students with difficulties to integrate in mainstream education, who otherwise would feel on the margins of the school community.

While such structures are in place across State schools in Malta, they are not necessarily seen as being included within the national strategy and intervention system that was redefined in 2014 through the above-mentioned policy. Students that benefit from such services might be regarded as either possible perpetrators or else victims of bullying, thus, special attention and training should be offered to the service providers regarding what constitutes bullying and also the types of skills that students would need help with in order to stand up to bullying, methods of how to support victims and perpetrators and to encourage bystanders not to remain passive.

The policy which addresses bullying directly is part of the **Respect for All framework**, which along with the Framework for the Education Strategy 2014 - 2024 published in 2014 and the National Curriculum Framework published in 2012, offers comprehensive and inclusive objectives to set the core of the value-based education system in Malta, covering the four pillars of the “Learning: The treasure within” report by UNESCO, namely, learning to know, learning to do, learning to be and learning to live

²¹Paul Cooper, Carmel Cefai, ‘Understanding and Supporting Students with Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, A Practical Guide for Staff in Schools’, EuroCentre for Educational Resilience, University of Malta, 2013, p.8.

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together.²²The aim is for the school culture and climate to be based on a holistic set of values that are to be inculcated by students as individuals and members of the community.

Value	Definition
Respect	refers to persons knowing that they are unique, that they are valued, that like who they are and are able to listen to and value others.
Co-operation	refers to helping one another and working together in a collective effort to reach a goal.
Responsibility	refers to being fair, carrying out one's share of the work and taking care of oneself and others.
Unity	refers to collective strength and harmony.
Tolerance	refers to accepting oneself and others behaving with integrity knowing that we are all different.
Honesty	refers to being trustworthy, truthful and sincere and free from deceit or fraud.
Peace	refers to getting along with one another and having positive thoughts for oneself and others.
Love	refers to caring for others and sharing with others whilst feeling safe.
Happiness	refers to internalised peace and love.
Freedom	refers to choice, living with dignity and when rights are balanced with responsibilities.
Humility	refers to having a modest view of one's importance; being humble.
Simplicity	refers to being uncomplicated and appreciating the small things in life.
Courage	refers to strength in the face of pain, grief and adversity.
Patience	refers to the state of endurance under difficult circumstances, which can mean persevering in the face of delay or provocation without acting on

²² Ministry for Education and Employment, 'Respect for all framework', p.9, [<http://education.gov.mt/en/resources/News/Documents/Respect%20For%20All%20Document.pdf>].

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	annoyance/anger in a negative way and exhibiting forbearance when under strain, especially when faced with longer-term difficulties.
Quality	is the standard of something as measured against other things of a similar kind; the degree of excellence of something.
Friendship	is a relationship between friends built on mutual trust and support.
Social justice	implies fairness and mutual obligation in society: that we are responsible for one another, and that we should ensure that all have an equal chance to succeed in life.
Equity	is the quality of being fair and impartial.
Diversity	is any dimension that can be used to differentiate groups and people from one another; it means respect for and appreciation of differences in ethnicity, gender, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, education and religion; it brings with it diverse perspectives, work experiences, life styles and cultures.
Inclusivity	refers to the understanding and catering for the different potentials and needs.

The transposition and implementation of the framework is done through collaboration between the ‘Education for All’ department, Student Services Department along with all the 11 State colleges encompassing into a total of 82 schools.

Part of the Respect for All Framework are also the ‘Trans, gender variant and intersex students in schools’ policy, ‘Managing Behaviour in School’ policy, ‘Addressing Attendance in Schools’ policy and the ‘A Whole School Approach to A Healthy Lifestyle: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity’ policy. All policies are supported through strategy and procedures documents, in order to make their transposition easier for teachers and school staff.

‘Managing Behaviour in School’ policy is an informative policy and not punitive, as it describes types of misbehaviour and explains causes that lead to such behaviour. Also, it enforces and encourages the students to ‘develop a strong sense of personal responsibility and responsibility towards others and a

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clear understanding of the consequences of their decisions and actions’,²³ and offers support for teachers and parents in comprehending different types of misbehaviour in students, such as:

- *non-compliance: talking out of turn, idleness or work avoidance, hindering other students and non-punctuality;*
- *serious misbehaviour which usually is acting out behaviour (verbal abuse of teachers, physical destructiveness and physical aggression towards teachers and fellow students);*
- *acting in behaviour that is self-destructive rather than outwardly-destructive.*²⁴

‘The Addressing Attendance in Schools’ policy recognises bullying as an issue for children with low school attendance. Also early school leaving is very high in Malta but there seems to be no clear proven linkage between this phenomenon and bullying behaviour.

‘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.

This policy also supports the implementation of the The Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sex Characteristics Act where is the right to recognition of one’s gender identity and the right to physical integrity and autonomy is granted by law.

Beyond the policy level, an important aspect when analysing bullying, aggressive or violent behaviour, is to determine to what extent it can be considered to be a criminal offence. In fact, it can’t itself be considered to be a crime, however, depending on the severity and the characteristics of the behaviour, it might take the form of harassment, which, in the Maltese Criminal Code, is not well defined; however, it relates to the criminal offences described under Article 251 and represents the

²³ Ministry for Education and Employment-Policy, 'Managing behaviour in Schools', June 2015 [https://education.gov.mt/en/resources/Documents/Policy%20Documents/Managing%20Behaviour%20in%20Schools%20Policy.pdf].

²⁴ Ibid., p.11.

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use of violence in order to compel another person to do, suffer or omit anything and also the act of causing another to fear that violence will be used against him/her.²⁵ Moreover, Article 82A, offers protection against threats, abusive and insulting words or behaviour intended to harm or stir up violence or hatred, on the grounds of gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, colour, language, ethnic origin, religion or political belief or other opinion.²⁶ Different types of bullying might fall under the previously enumerated criteria.

However, after analysing the procedures in place for tackling bullying, one can reach the conclusion that among all types of anti-social behaviour described until now, cyberbullying is the one for which schools are encouraging both staff and parents to report any incident to the police. The Cybercrime Unit of the Malta Police Forces describes cyberbullying as falling under Insults and Threats or Computer Misuse and Hacking and, in most cases reported the cyberbullying behaviour as being classified as a criminal offence.²⁷

3. Relevant governmental or independent institutions and bodies

The Directorate for Educational Services is the agency responsible for ensuring an effective and efficient operation and delivery of services to the Colleges of State schools, through its three departments: the Student Services Department, the Directorate for Lifelong Learning and Early School Leavers and the School Resources Department.

The Student Services Department aims to assist students in achieving optimal educational, social, emotional, personal, interpersonal, and career development. It consists of various units providing different services to schools, teachers, students and parents.

The Education Psycho-Social Services is the most relevant department in this study, as it delivers the main services to students who are victims, witnesses or perpetrators of bullying behaviour, aggressive behaviour or violence, as follows:

- Counselling services in the schools.
- Educational, vocational and career guidance in the schools.

²⁵ Malta Criminal Code, Art. 251, p. 111.

²⁶ Ibid., Art. 82A, p.51.

²⁷ Sabrina Vassallo, 'Cyber Bullying Amongst Adolescent Girls - A Retrospective Qualitative Study', 2015, p 17.

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- Career guidance service.
- Education medical service.
- Psychological service in schools.
- Social work Service in schools.
- The Safe Schools Programme, which incorporates the Child Safety Service, Anti-Bullying Service and Anti-Substance Abuse.
- Servizz Għożża - a support service and an educational programme for unmarried pregnant minors.
- College Prefect of Discipline.

The Anti-Bullying Service is the specialised service that leads all initiatives regarding prevention and intervention in cases of bullying. The team is made up of eight officers, seven whom perform their activity in Malta and one who is working in the Gozo College. Each member covers a number of schools, generally being appointed to one or more State Colleges across Malta. The service provided is not only intended for State Schools, but also for Church schools and Private schools, which often make referrals whenever they are faced with alleged bullying behaviour situation.

Aġenzija Appoġġ is the national agency for children, families and the community. It safeguards and promotes well-being through the development and provision of psycho-social welfare services. The agency provides two services: the Child Web Alert – an online reporting system which provides a secure and confidential environment where anyone can report websites or online content that falls under child abuse; and the Supportline 179 - the national helpline which offers support, information about local social welfare services and acts as a referral service to callers who requires support, such as the victims of different types of abuse, bullying, etc.

Aġenzija Żgħażaġh, which falls within the remit of the Parliamentary Secretariat for Research, Innovation, Youth and Sports, aims “to promote the interests of young people and to provide assistance to youth organisations and young people in achieving their potential.” On a policy level, the agency manages and implements the National Youth Policy. It has, under its responsibility, Youth Activity Centres at Villa Psaigon and at Marsaxlokk, Youth Cafés in Qawra, Msida, Cottonera and

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Valletta, a Youth Hub at MCAST, a Youth Information One-Stop Shop and another youth stop in Valletta.²⁸

The National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) is an independent body falling under the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties (MSDC). Its main task is to oppose discrimination based on sex or gender, family responsibilities, sexual orientation, age, religion or belief, racial or ethnic origin, and gender identity. NCPE carried out various research among which is the 'Forms of Violence in Malta – a gender perspective', that also tackles harassment and bullying in Maltese schools.²⁹

4. NGOs and Associations

SOS Malta is a nongovernmental organisation that among various activities, works with local and international organisations to assist socially disadvantaged groups in improving their quality of life. It encourages advocacy on behalf of social causes, and promotes models of good care and practice. Kellimni.com, a free online support service for youths, is one of several volunteering projects that SOS Malta coordinates in collaboration with the Salesian Pastoral Youth Service, Agenzija Żgħażaġh and Agenzija Appoġġ. (<http://www.sosmalta.org/home?l=1>)

The Malta Girl Guides (MGG) is a 90-year old Maltese association and a member of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. Among many projects and initiatives, MGG is taking part in the International Campaign Stop the Violence: Speak out for Girls' Rights. This campaign includes a non-formal education curriculum developed in partnership with UN Women, for worldwide use, that can be adapted for different cultural, social and legal contexts and has been successfully piloted in 20 countries worldwide. The project includes action such as: awareness campaigns, research and policy, lobbying agenda and campaign action plans. (<http://www.maltagirlguides.com/>)

The Malta Gay Rights Movement (MGRM), is a non-governmental organisation which was set up in June of 2001, and aims at achieving full equality for LGBT people in Maltese society. Part of the work conducted by MGRM targets LGBTIQ youth and their rights and privacy in schools.

²⁸ Victim Support Malta, 'Not Just Offenders: Youth as victims of crime', 2014, p. 87.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

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Among the work carried out, MGRM has also contributed to the creation and implementation of **‘The Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students in Schools Policy’**. Within the LGBTIQ Consultative Council, in partnership with the Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, MGRM have raised the following recommendations for the LGBTIQ Action Plan 2015 – 2017:

1. *Monitor the implementation of the Trans, Gender Variant and Intersex Students Policy.*
2. *Assess the implementation of the Addressing Bullying Behaviour in Schools Policy.*
3. *Draw up a strategy and allocate the necessary financial resources in order to conduct training of the school community including school administrators, teachers, LSAs, support services, parents, students and trainee teachers.*
4. *Provide resources for schools such as story books, fiction and non-fiction for children and adolescents as well as resource packs for teachers.*
5. *Introduce an anti-homophobia and transphobia week in secondary and post-secondary State educational institutions.*³⁰

As part of their work for the implementation of the Policy, they organise training sessions - which include an introduction to the policy and case studies - for the psycho-social teams across colleges in Malta, and they are planning to deliver, in service, cross-curricular training for teacher. (<http://www.maltgayrights.org/>).

The Office of the Commissioner for Children is an independent human rights institution for children’s rights. The office is following the four P’s as part of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child: **P**romotion and **P**rotection of children’s rights, **P**articipation of children and **M**onitoring the **P**rovision of services. Besides action carried out with regards to bullying, violence and aggression there is an initiative since 2015 to create a video for raising awareness on the phenomenon of sexting. This video was part of the ‘Let’s Talk Young’ project under the coordination of the European Network of Young Advisors (ENYA).

(<https://www.facebook.com/Commissioner-for-Children-Malta-99261679454/?fref=ts>).³¹(<http://tfal.org.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx>)

³⁰Ministry for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, 'LGBTIQ Action Plan 2015-2017', July 2015, p.10, [<https://socialdialogue.gov.mt/en/Documents/LGBTIQ%20Action%20Plan/LGBTI%20Action%20Plan%20lo%20res.pdf>]

³¹Office of the Commissioner for Children, Annual Report 2015 Office of the Commissioner for Children, 2015, p.28 [<http://tfal.org.mt/en/publications/PublishingImages/Pages/AnnualReports/Annual%20Report%202015.pdf>]

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The Malta Learning Support Association is a voluntary organisation which tries to bring together all Learning Support Assistants in Malta in order to provide a platform where they can raise their needs and concerns.

Victim Support Malta is a Maltese NGO that offers free of charge, professional support to victims of crime (such as victims of theft or burglary, fraud and misappropriation, domestic violence, elderly abuse, rape or sexual assault, human trafficking and discrimination and/or harassment) and is involved in lobbying for a fair criminal justice system. In 2015 VSM published a research paper ‘Not Just Offenders: Youth as Victims of Crime’³² part of the Victim Support for Youth - VS4Y project-which also included an awareness-raising campaign and the delivery of training to youth workers, and any persons who might have contact with youth either at work, leisure or through voluntary work. This research was the basis for a more recent project the ‘Together against Bullying’ campaign which aims to raise awareness about bullying and to educate the public on this phenomenon. The project will be described in detail in the following chapters. (<http://victimsupport.org.mt/>)

The Richmond Foundation is a Maltese NGO which provides community services for a people with mental health difficulties and promotes mental health and the prevention of mental illness in the community. (<http://www.richmond.org.mt/>)

The President’s Foundation for the Wellbeing of the Society is devoted to the promotion of wellbeing, through development of research, while seeking innovative methods to engage with society for the promotion of peace and unity. One of the entities within the Foundation is the National Institute for Childhood. Among activities carried out, in October 2016 the Foundation held the 1st National Conference on Child Wellbeing, which focused on bullying from the perspective of children. (<http://www.pfws.org.mt/>)

The activities carried out by these entities, as described above, show the fact that many entities as part of civil society, are taking action to provide a safe and secure school environment for the whole community, by providing various types of support and focusing on different target groups.

³²Victim Support Malta, 'Not Just Offenders: Youth as victims of crime', [<http://victimsupport.org.mt/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/VS4Y.pdf>].

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IV. Methodology

The methodology used to compile this report was based mainly on desk research (literature review of reports and research available), informal interviews and meetings with different stakeholders. They were invited to respond to questions regarding current bullying prevention strategies in schools, at national and institutional levels and also to share from their experience of initiatives and projects that they are or have been involved in connection with bullying, violence or and aggression in schools.

A survey was also conducted, consisting of 17 questions which were disseminated to all Heads of State Schools (HOS) in Malta. From a total of 83 schools, 30 questionnaires were collected. 10 Heads of Secondary Schools, 19 Heads of Primary Schools and the Manager of a Learning Support Centre for boys responded with the information requested, representing a third of the targeted group.

The survey followed the level of implementation of the ‘Against Bullying Behaviour in Schools Policy’, the perception of bullying behaviour in the school environment by school staff and the methods used by the staff to ensure a safe school environment, collaboration with students and parents, the issue of cyberbullying and collaboration with external services and projects.

V. Best practices on a national level

Throughout the research carried out for this report, many practices, initiatives or projects have been identified that can be considered to be best practice in terms of prevention and tackling of, or raising awareness of, bullying behaviour , violence and aggression.

As already mentioned in Chapter III, Malta has developed a national strategy in order to promote and ensure an all-inclusive education for everyone. The ‘Addressing Bullying in School’ policy sets the theoretical background and complements the national intervention service’s work within particular regard. The policy and the intervention service form the basis of all efforts in Malta and adopt a top-down approach in the sense that they are part of the Ministry for Education and Employment’s work, while at the same time they promote a whole school approach in terms of implementation, which seems to be the biggest challenge according to the findings of this report.

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The Anti-Bullying Service, provided under the Safe Schools Programme by the Students Services Department in the Ministry for Education and Employment, is a national intervention service that assists all State schools providing compulsory education. This can be considered as a strategic intervention service that deals mainly with prevention and tackling of bullying, and support for schools, students and parents in their quest to fight the occurrence of aggressive behaviour.

The Anti-Bullying Service provides advice and support in developing school-based responses to bullying, according to the needs of each school. It provides support to the staff of the school, the students, and the parents by:

- raising awareness of the issue of bullying;
- formulating and implementing strategies for situations of bullying behaviour;
- staff/school development;
- class intervention;
- dealing with individual cases;
- holding parents' meetings.³³

Launched in 2000, the main aim of the service is to help create appropriate responses to bullying and to promote pro-social behaviour in schools. Another important role is to help schools implement national policy, such as the 'Addressing Bullying Behaviour in the School' policy, by delivering training and information sessions to school staff, parents and the students themselves.

The Addressing Bullying Behaviour in Schools' policy lays the foundation for a national strategy against bullying and violent behaviour. It includes national objectives, definition of terms and explanations regarding different types of bullying behaviour. It stresses the importance of the school environment and ethos in promoting and providing a safe space for all, students and school staff alike. It promotes relationships based on respect, inclusion and diversity among all the school community, thus, students are exposed to positive examples.

The policy entails that a designated staff member shall be responsible for the implementation of the 'Addressing Bullying Behaviour in the School' policy and sets the following national objectives:

³³ Official web page of the Ministry for Education and Employment – Psycho-social service
[https://education.gov.mt/en/education/student-services/Pages/Psycho-Social_Services/Anti-Bullying-Service.aspx]

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1. To develop child friendly services.
2. To curtail violence against and amongst children.
3. To ensure that the rights of all children are safe-guarded.
4. To encourage child participation.
5. To increase student attainment.

A whole school approach is taken, recognising the importance of including, not just children, teachers and the psycho-social teams of the schools, but also non-teaching staff members, parents and the whole society. The direct involvement of children aims at enhancing the sense of belonging to the school, and a sense of ownership of decisions that are taken on their behalf. The relation between the school and the parents is promoted as a partnership, where the parents should be involved both in the decision making as well as their participation and contribution to different activities.

Moreover, the collaboration between the students, parents and the school is to be seen as a way to combine efforts in order to promote pro-social behaviour and to tackle any bullying behaviour and its negative impacts both inside and outside the school.

The policy supports the inclusion of restorative justice at the school level that may be included as a long term solution. More information regarding the implementation of the policy can be found in Annex8 - the report analysis regarding 'Tackling bullying, aggression and violence in State schools' emerging from the survey for this report.

Other practices identified are listed as follows:

- **Specialised services**
 - Kellimni.com project.
 - KID's – the kids in development programme developed by the Richmond Foundation.
- **Curricular or cross-curricular approaches**
 - Personal Social and Career Development (PSCD) curriculum
 - Stop the Violence – non-formal curricular adaptation - by the Malta Girl Guides
 - Rescur – a resilience curriculum for early years and primary schools.
- **School level initiatives:** The Buddy System at San Anton independent school.
- **Awareness raising and prevention projects**
 - Together Against Bullying by Victim Support Malta.

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- The BeSmartOnline! project.

1. Specialised services

a) Kellimni.com

<http://kellimni.com/>

Kellimni.com is a free anonymous online support service provided at the national level in Malta. It is a joint effort between SOS Malta, the Salesian Pastoral Youth Service, Agenzija Żgħażaġh and Agenzija Appoġġ, with the guidance of Child Helpline International. Kellimni.com is a national youth online support and information service that is available through e-mail, chat, online forum and smart messaging. The main tools used are the website www.kellimni.com and the Kellimni.com application available for both Android and IOS systems.

Apart from direct support to youths, Kellimni.com also provides educational material, through articles and video clips that address themes relevant to young people. While both of these are available on the Kellimni.com website, the video clips are also available on the Kellimni.com YouTube channel. These serve as initial information and support to young people as well as a resource for PSCD teachers, leaders within youth organisations or other youth workers.

The direct link with the bullying and aggression service is through the support that it offers online to youths that face different challenges and problems and through raising awareness of bullying in talks and presentations delivered in schools. The issue categories discussed with the Kellimni.com operators are bullying, parent/child relationships, partner relationships, problems with friends, bereavement, friends and friendship, depression, self-harm, fear and anxiety and loneliness.

This project is highly innovative as it manages to reach youths through communications that they know and are most comfortable with.

b) Kids In Development (KIDs)

<http://www.richmond.org.mt/kids-in-development/>

KIDsis a residential programme designed for helping children who have experienced severe emotional and behavioural difficulties; it helps them in their personal development in order to develop healthy

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attachments and a sense of self worth. Each child is assessed, covering all areas of their emotional, physical and educational needs; subsequently, an individual care plan is formulated for each child to ensure his or her total well-being.

The programme helps children recover and/or develop social and emotional skills, thus helping to prevent them becoming vulnerable and to avoid victimisation through bullying, aggression and violent behaviour.

2. Curricular or cross-curricular approaches

a) Personal Social and Career Development (PSCD) Curriculum

PSCD is included in the national curriculum, and is taught at both primary and secondary levels of education. It involves imparting to children the ‘skills and processes involved in becoming happy and fulfilled individuals in a healthy and supportive environment.’

This subject helps to shape the social and behaviour skills of children, through primary and secondary levels of education, covering different aspects of life, relationships, communication, self-recognition, etc., according to specific ages.

Some of the objectives are to enable students to recognise the different forms of communication (non-verbal, verbal, assertive and non-assertive) and develop good listening skills, enabling them to reflect on positive traits in friendship while also reflecting on the negative effects of bullying and developing the necessary skills to cope with the negative feelings this causes.

Among the topics covered are communication, the young adult’s perception of him/herself, the stage of physical development vis-à-vis same gender and opposite gender, decision making, values and diversity, self-expression, roles and responsibilities within different social contexts, understanding growing up changes and making responsible choices and making good use of one’s time.

b) Stop the Violence - non-formal curricular adaptation –The Malta Girl Guides

<http://www.maltagirlguides.com/>

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VOICES AGAINST VIOLENCE is an international campaign which includes the Stop the Violence non-formal badge curriculum, created by the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in collaboration with UN Women. The curriculum is designed to include a series of topics, all concerning different types of violence against women. It takes the form of series of workshops, and upon completion, participants receive badges – thus following the Girl Guides and Scouts system. The curriculum includes strategies, lesson plans, games and materials for a better delivery in the workshops.

The curriculum was adapted by the Malta Girl Guides for the school environment and a series of in-service training sessions are offered to teachers, counsellors or PSD teachers, who are encouraged to include such training in their daily activities and lessons at school.

c) Rescur - a resilience curriculum for early years and primary schools

<https://www.rescur.eu/>

Rescur is a project that was implemented between 2012-2015 in Europe, coordinated by the University of Malta with the participation of the University of Zagreb (Croatia), the University of Crete (Greece), the University of Pavia (Italy), the University of Lisbon (Portugal) and Orebro University (Sweden). It presents a resilience curriculum for early and primary schools in Europe, which provides students with the key tools to overcome the disadvantages and obstacles in their development and to support their academic, emotional and social learning.

The target group includes children who are considered to be at risk of early school leaving, absenteeism, school failure, social exclusion and mental health problems, bullying, discrimination, violence and social exclusion.

The main objectives are:

- *to develop and enhance children's social and emotional learning and resilience skills;*
- *to promote children's positive and prosocial behaviour and healthy relationships;*
- *to promote children's mental health and wellbeing, particularly those at risk of mental health difficulties;*

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- *to improve children’s academic engagement, motivation and learning.’³⁴*

3. School level initiative: The Buddy System - San Anton Independent School

<http://www.sananton.edu.mt/seniorsector/BuddySystem/default.html>

‘The Buddy System’ is a peer support system, developed and adapted at San Anton School in Malta by School Counsellor Ian Refalo, back in 2009. The system proved to be successful and became regular practice for students in the secondary school. Because the system was so successful with the older children, it was replicated at primary level as the ‘peer mentoring system’.

The targets of the buddy system are students in Form 4 - aged between 14 to 15 years old - who are assigned as buddies for students who are in Form 1 - aged between 9 and 10 years old - with the aim of helping them integrate and adapt easier in their first year of Secondary School. However, since the practice is repeating year after year, the impact falls on the entire student community. The participation in the programme is on a voluntary basis and, every year, a high number of students look forward to participate.

The practice is carried out on the school premises and students who are to become the ‘buddies’ - the older students - are trained and prepared for their role from when they are in Form 3. The skills they learn in their PSCD classes cover assertive communication, conflict resolution techniques and leadership. They will use these skills in helping and supporting younger students, while at the same time and improving their own interpersonal skills.

With regards to the ‘peer mentoring system’, apart from acting as student reference points for the new Grade 8 students, the system has given Grade 11 students first hand exposure to, and experience of, relating and working with other students. Such responsibility, albeit constantly supervised by the PSCD team, helps to develop their interpersonal skills even further.

³⁴Carmel Cefai et.al., ‘Surfing The Waves Rescur: A Resilience Curriculum For Early Years And Primary Schools - A Teacher’s Guide’, Centre for Resilience and Socio-Emotional Health, University of Malta, 2014 p. 4, [http://www.um.edu.mt/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/275465/RESCUR_IntroductionManual.compressed.pdf]

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The Buddy System has helped to reduce bullying, and consequently ease of the transition for students who would have moved from junior to the senior classes.

4. Awareness raising and prevention projects

a) Together Against Bullying - Victim Support Malta

<http://victimsupport.org.mt/bullying/>

‘Together against bullying training package’ is a preventive tool developed as part of the broader ‘Together against bullying’ campaign. The aim is to enhance knowledge about bullying and promote best practices among teachers, parents and peers, through specialized training.

Main activities involve presentations delivered to teachers, parents and students. They are both informative and interactive, and they use and promote the SWAP psycho-social strategy, an essential tool to empower those who are being bullied, as well as bystanders, to take control of the situation and seek support.

Since April 2016 VSM has delivered talks and trainings for various summer schools, dance schools and football clubs, with the overall aim of raising awareness about bullying in and outside of school, and facilitating prevention.

b) BeSmartOnline! Project

<http://www.besmartonline.org.mt/>

BeSmartOnline is a project financed through the European Union, coordinated by the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) in collaboration with the Foundation for Social Welfare Services, the Office of the Commissioner for Children and the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education. The consortium is also supported by the expertise of a number of other strategic partners’ membership of the Advisory Board: Kellimni.com, Secretariat for Catholic Education, Personal, Social and Career Development Unit, Cyber Crime Unit (Malta Police Force), University of Malta, Agenzija Zghazagh and the Independent School Association.

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The main objective of this project is to raise awareness and educate children and teenagers, carers and educators, on safe use of the Internet. The project includes reporting facilities for internet abuse and support services for respective victims, mainly through Aģenzija Appoģģ.

The project has a strong presence online and is intended to help children, youths, parents and educators understand the basic principles and best practices for a safer online experience for children.

The activities carried out include training, talks and presentations to students and teachers regarding the safe use of the internet and the risks and consequences of cyber bullying.

VI. Definition of best practices

Upon research, we found that a great number of projects were created to fight school aggression and bullying. Many of these were funded by various projects and their depths vary according to the project period and the available funding, and only a few of them are implemented in a sustainable, long-lasting way. It has been found that programs that are not sustainable and run only for a shorter period of time may immunize participants against bullying, violence, aggression and conflict, rather than sensitise them and provide methods to deal with such situations.

Relying on studies and experience, we define sustainable best practices according to the below criteria.

Increases public awareness

Since only a fragment of aggressive and bullying cases reach teachers' and parents' attention, it is vital that a program aiming at reducing such cases focuses on awareness raising. Even more so because there is no common knowledge and understanding regarding the notions of aggression, bullying, violence and conflict, every case is different and its perception relies heavily on participants own perception. Quality information and special case management leads to better understanding of the problem and taking actions against it. It is also important that even if one program was started in a specific pilot school, the work under this project or initiative should be able to continue and involve a wider scope of beneficiaries. For the sake of sustainability, it is beneficial if the initiative is supported by public institutions and professional societies so that a better result can be achieved.

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Holistic approach

In order to successfully reduce and overcome aggression and violence in schools, the socio-ecological model based on Dan Olweus's and Ken Rigby's research model has been proven strong and steady. Generally, it is based on the understanding that a holistic approach is required, that to address and overcome this specific issue. Thus, a desirable good practice in our understanding is one that directly involves all stakeholders – teachers, students, parents, technical staff of the school and other related experts – to promote cultural change. The direct involvement of children aims at enhancing the sense of belonging to the school, and a sense of ownership of decisions they are involved in. The relation between the school and the parents is promoted as a partnership, where the parents should be involved both in the decision making and in the contribution to different activities. We also consider it important that the initiative is supported by public institutions and professional societies so that a better result can be achieved.

Promotes a sense of community and personal responsibility

School culture presumes the presence of mediums to raise awareness and a sense of belonging to a particular institution. The atmosphere and the activities of the school set up the social identity of the student. Creating a sense of pride, "I am a student of this school, class, teacher, etc." and satisfaction of the achievement, completes the picture of school culture. "Being a student of this school" is a mindset that is built upon continuous disclosure of the specifics of the school: through presentations to the public, parents and students of best practices and a good model, withstood the time.

Promotes social-emotional learning

Teacher training in modern society requires competences in two directions: universal professional conduct of the teacher as a lecturer on a specific school subject, and secondly, behaviour as an educator in an adequate and contemporary manner. Teachers' ability to assert standardized professional behaviour for conflict-free communication among colleagues, between themselves and children, and between the students, guarantees the lowest level of aggression in school and outside.

Methodologically precise and adequate

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According to the World Health Organization, a national plan to prevent violence in school should include the following elements³⁵:

- Review and reformation of national legislation and policies;
- Capacity building;
- Support services, helping people who have experienced violence;
- Development and evaluation of preventive practices;
- Schedule of activities;
- Development of an evaluation mechanism;
- Establishing organizations to monitor progress;

This systematic approach can also be applied on project based anti-bullying programs. Further aspects to consider might be:

- The representatives of the target groups are trained and take part in the development of training materials, strategies and measures for preventing violence in schools;
- The program clearly differentiates among disruptive behaviours and offers methodologically founded solutions;
- There should be no gap between the practices to be used and the actual knowledge available or persons trained on how to use the practices in a safe and suitable way;
- The policy supports the inclusion of restorative justice approaches at school level which is identified as a long term solution;
- The use of appropriate and innovative methodologies for the target group such as ICT and audiovisual tools for young people.

VII. Best practices of partner countries

³⁵http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/en/wrvhrecommendations.pdf

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1. Bulgaria

In Bulgaria, public awareness of the problem with violence in schools noticeably increases. Still, actions taken to counteract this phenomenon are not unified. Despite the common model for cooperative work at school level, given by the "Mechanism to combat school bullying among children and students in school" - 2012, a national plan to resist violence in school and to serve as a strategy to prevent the problem, still does not exist. According to WHO, national plan to prevent violence in school should include the following elements :

- Review and reformation of national legislation and policies;
- Capacity building;
- Support services, helping people who have experienced violence;
- Development and evaluation of preventive practices;
- Schedule of activities;
- Development of an evaluation mechanism;
- Establishing organizations to monitor progress;

Good practices in Bulgaria

The good practices identified in the National Report in Bulgaria can be summarized as follows:

Mechanism to Combat School Bullying among Children and Students at School

On May 18th, 2012 the Bulgarian Government adopted the first "Mechanism to Combat School Bullying among Children and Students at School", which aims to support schools in their efforts to deal with violence and to provide a basic mechanism to counteract bullying. The adoption of such a document is based on the need to implement a coherent and purposeful policy towards combating school violence, which encompasses measures and activities for prevention and intervention, as well as written mechanisms and responsibilities for action in situations of violence. All guidelines and procedures laid down in the mechanism are common and valid to the whole school community.

The document was developed by the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) with the participation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy (MLSP), the Social Assistance Agency (SAA), the State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), the Central Commission for Combating Juvenile Delinquency

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(CCCJD) and non-profit organisations – the National Network for Children (NNC), "Steps of the Invisible Children in Bulgaria" Foundation, "Animus Association" Foundation, "Association of Psychologists in Bulgaria" and UNICEF Bulgaria. The Mechanism consists of several main parts, which generally clarify the terms "violence" and "bullying", behaviours that they include, and mandatory elements at school level to combat bullying.

Besides giving detailed specifications and definitions of violence and bullying in schools, the Mechanism sets down essential elements how to treat it. Firstly, it provides for development and implementation of preventive measures in order to reduce factors that contribute to aggression and to secondly to affirm aggressive models within the school environment. The basic principle of countering the problem is the adoption of a whole school approach, investing coordinated and consistent efforts to prevent bullying and creating a safer school environment.

Youth banks initiatives

In 2016, nearly 5000 students aged 10 to 18 years became part of the campaign "No to violence in schools", realized by Youth banks in Shumen, Burgas, Gabrovo and Pazardzhik. Thanks to the campaign, students from 80 schools in four cities learned about the types of violence and its consequences, and participated in various initiatives, provoking them to offer solution of the problem.

In Burgas nearly 300 students, aged 11 to 18 years, from three schools participated in informative meetings and discussed the types of violence and the ways to overcome it. Representatives of the Juvenile Delinquency Commission from the District Directorate of the Interior Ministry-Burgas, together with representatives of the Local Commission for Combating Juvenile Delinquency from the Municipality, led the discussions, in cooperation with educational counsellors from schools.

In Shumen more than 2400 students from 1st to 12th grade learned how to overcome aggression through sport. It happened due to the campaign "It's not you, when you're rude", realized by the team of the Youth Bank Shumen. Inspired by the idea of the team, within a month and a half, a punching bag, called by the young people "the anger bag", toured five Shumen schools. In the final part of "It's not you, when you're rude" project, the Youth Bank of Shumen organized an International Day against violence in schools. The campaign ended with an open lesson of self-defence, which included more than 100 students.

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In Pazardzhik 24 "ambassadors of peace" met more than 500 students from the project "NO to violence in Schools" organized by the Youth Bank Pazardzhik. The project started in November 2015 with the training of 24 volunteers, called "ambassadors of peace". They all met with students from 4th to 12th grade from more than 20 schools to tell them how to deal with school violence. During this initiative the idea of a contest for a poster on the theme "Bullying stops here" was thought of.

In Gabrovo 50 students aged 8 to 16 years sent their works at a contest "I say STOP": poems, stories and drawings, expressing in a creative and unconventional way to express their attitude to the problem with bullying at school and suggested how it could be resolved. This creative approach to dealing with violence in schools was an idea of the Youth Bank Gabrovo. The winners were announced at the closing event organized on the Day of pink shirt, and all the works of contestants from the team of Youth Bank Gabrovo were collected in a book.

"Train me and pass it forward" conflict solving and prevention of conflicts

The activity of Equilibrium Bulgaria is focused on prevention of violence and conflict management among children /positive methods for education/, targeting educational specialists and parents. The campaign "Train me and pass it forward" has the following main activities: training courses, scout camps, participation in the club "I win – you win", conducting regular meetings with the resource group /pedagogic advisors and psychologists from the schools in Rousse/, accentuating on the topic of violence in its different expressions, discussing and exchanging experiences among teachers participating in the group for parental support /parents of children with behavioural deviations/ on their opinions for the reasons and ways in which violence can be diminished

All children have rights. Everyone can help.

The initiative was realized with the special participation and support of Dimitar Berbatov, Bulgarian football player, Goodwill ambassador of UNICEF for Bulgaria. The campaign was launched on 20 November - the day of the signing of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The main objective of the initiative was advertised through an extensive media campaign where the whole society was prompted to think about the rights of the child as something requiring special attention and consideration, and to convince that everyone has responsibility to the children of Bulgaria.

National hotline for children

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24-hour hotline for children: 0800 19 100 "Talk to a friend" opened jointly by UNICEF Bulgaria, SACP and "Centre Nadya" Foundation. It has nationwide coverage, free for the one who is calling and observes complete anonymity. The line provides crisis intervention, counselling, specialized information on children's rights and directs them to the appropriate social services. When there is a threat to the life and the health of the child, the teams, serving the line, carry out an immediate connection with medical emergency, police, fire department, etc.

The line started its work in April 2009 under the leadership of SACP and the results of the external evaluation of the line during the period November 2007 to March 2009, carried out by "Centre Nadya", shows that during this period the number of calls are 1 059 582, and the majority of the significant calls were either problems associated with violence (35%), family problems (16%) and psychosocial problems (10%).

School without violence project

During the period 2007-2008 UNICEF Bulgaria together with the State Agency for Child Protection initiated a project for prevention of violence between children. The main project idea is to support for prevention of harassment amongst children in schools and to establish a safe and supportive school environment. Specialists work with teachers, children and the school community, showing them new ways for communication and dealing with problems without aggression. The entire school community is involved in the project. "School without violence" creates an opportunity for lowering the level of school violence – teachers and students together set clear rules, which in no case allow the expression of aggression or harassment.

The project "School without violence" is a Bulgarian version of the most efficient "Anti-Bullying" program in the world - that of the Norwegian psychologist Dan Olweus (Anti-Bullying are those programs focused on violence and harassment prevention in school environment)

The school transforms into a place, where children learn that violence is unacceptable and know how to deal with problems peacefully. The project leads to the formation of an overall school policy, based on values, attitudes and rules for behaviour, which lies at the grounds of a long-term strategy of violence prevention. The project started in 6 schools in Sofia and included children from 5th to 7th grade. Until 2008 the project encompassed additional schools and students from 1st till 7th grade.

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During 2009 the children from secondary school, 134 in Sofia, presented UNICEF with their declaration against aggression and violence in school – a result from their project work. It contains 6 main points: NO to insult; NO to disrespecting one’s own space; NO to physical aggression; NO to psychological aggression; NO to verbal aggression; NO to all kinds of relationship, which humiliate a person. This declaration has been signed by more than 500 students, teachers, celebrities, who participated in the event and demonstrated their attitude in favour of the UNICEF project.

“Virtual and real violence – prevention through interactive school education”

The initiative was implemented by the national centre for safe internet with the financial support of the Swiss “Oak” foundation and the EC program “Safer Internet Plus”. Part of the activities included the elaboration of a methodical guidelines with 25 modular lessons, approved by the Ministry of education and science, as well as the training of 49 teachers – practitioners and students. 10 schools – volunteers from Sofia – joined the implementation of the initiative. From November 2008 till the end of June 2009 the trained teachers conducted 600 free lessons, with more than 3000 students on various topics. Microsoft Bulgaria and the kids’ portal Dechica.com supported the initiative.

National Centre for Internet Safety (www.safenet.bg)

The project started in 2007 aiming at promoting safer internet among families, educators, children and teenagers through educational materials, popular articles, open lessons at class, technical and emotional support at the Bulgarian Helpline for Online Safety, lobbying for legal regulation of crimes against children in the virtual world.

The Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre works for the protection and empowerment of children and young people on the Internet by awareness raising, training, consultations and acting on reports from the public about online sexual abuse and exploitation of minors. By increasing digital literacy among children and youth, the National Centre for Internet Safety have been promoting the positive, safe and responsible use of Internet and information and communication technologies since 2005.

Zippy’s Friends – the Future Citizens of Bulgaria

Zippy’s Friends is a program lead by Association “Animus Foundation”. Within one school year in 24 lessons, the program teaches children at aged 5 to 7 years how to cope in a healthy and successful way with problems and crisis situations at this time of their lives or in the future. This is done by

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teaching how to solve specific problems and understanding and controlling of emotions- both theirs or others. Within the program in each lesson, the children learn to apply different strategies for coping with difficulties, increase their self-esteem and improve resistance to traumatic events. The program so far covers 10 schools and kindergartens, 14 classes, 24 specialists in the schools and 300 children.

The entire program lasts one academic year. It is constructed of a series of illustrated tales of the insect Zipi, kept as a pet and his friends - a group of young children. The stories and the activities in the six modules of the methodology deal with daily difficulties faced by children. While listening and discussing issues of the stories and participating in fun activities (painting, role plays, etc.), children develop positive coping strategies, which makes them feel better and do not feel the need to hurt themselves or others. Children express their thoughts and feelings related to the tasks to learn to understand, present and manage their emotions and to think about more than one solution to a problem.

Parents of the children who participated in Zippy's Friends program increased the active strategies for coping while those parents who did not attend the program increased in passive strategies. The data shows that teachers believe that the program has a positive impact on children's communication skills and their abilities to solve problems within the group.

Within the research of this report, 13 good practices on managing school aggression, violence, bullying and conflict were identified in Hungary. There is no unified, national approach to tackle this specific issue, and this is reflected in the heterogeneity of the projects running in this topic.

2. Hungary

a) Overview and tendencies

There is an overall tendency whereby anti-aggression and anti-bullying projects run only for a shorter period of time, with a limited number of activities and with only a few teachers or students involved, thus leaving no long term impact.

In many cases, the organization or team managing the project dissolves after the project is finished. The rest of the staff are often not even aware that there is a team/class working on a project to prevent or deal with bullying. It is highly questionable how these ad-hoc programs can prevent

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bullying and aggression in the long run. There is a risk that these kind of projects immunize instead of sensitize both teachers and students. Effective prevention programs that run in various countries (Restorative techniques, KiVa, OBPP) involve all stakeholders' participation and their implementation is systematic and requires several semesters.

Safe internet use has been in the spotlight in the last years. Overall, we found 16 websites that offer programs, activities and applications to prevent cyberbullying (see Annex), which is an impressive number. However, like offline projects, they usually reach a smaller number of students, parents and teachers and their use is very sporadic.

Increasing the sense of community and responsibility is of key importance. It is important that the school staff actively participate in the implementation process and they have their say regarding the necessary adjustments and amendments during the implementation process and the activities included, so that the school's specificities can be addressed appropriately. This is an integral part of programs that go with the holistic approach. Contrary to this, upon informal discussions on several occasions with teachers on the relevant topic, it came out that many of them prefer to have quick, ready-made solutions that can be easily implemented in the curriculum. This does not mean that they want to choose the easy way to magically get rid of the problem in an instant; this rather reflects the challenging conditions that prevail in Hungary:

- Teachers are overburdened due to the increased number of lessons; thus, capacity building needs to be ensured for the sustainability of programs.
- There is a high need for working solutions that show their effect quickly because teachers are expected to meet several demands including progressing with the curriculum in a timely manner, which might be hindered by discipline issues, conflicts and aggression.
- Although basic psychology is included in teacher training in Hungary, this does not accommodate social-emotional aspects of the teaching profession itself (assertive communication, conflict resolution skills, strong interpersonal skills, self recognition, etc.) Teacher trainees usually report lacking means to tackle situations that fall out of the scope of the school subject.

However, there are actually five working programs in Hungary which are based on the holistic and the involvement of all stakeholders for the sake of sustainability:

- Restorative practices by IIRP

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- Re-Education by No Bad Kid/Pressley Ridge Hungary
- Peaceful School Programs based on the book “Why school anti-bullying programs don’t work” by Twemlow, Stuart W. and Sacco Frank C (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (August 15, 2008)
- Alternative Head Teacher System
- KiVa Program

b) National Crime Prevention Strategy promoting alternative conflict resolution methods

Although there is no unified policy to handle school aggression, the National Crime Prevention Council of Hungary recently set forth a national strategy, which hopefully contribute to the decrease in such behaviours in the long run. In 2016, Partners Hungary Foundation trained over 200 teachers, school related professionals, social workers and secondary school students on mediation within the framework of the National Crime Prevention Strategy that set out as a goal to have at least one teacher who is a qualified mediator in every school. Participants were highly motivated and enthusiastic. Our experience shows that:

- It would be desirable to have a mentoring period so that after the trainings have finished the learning process can still continue as cases arise.
- Communication and dissemination about mediation as a method is very important so that cases of aggression and conflict reach the mediator.
- There is a need for a solid network for teacher-mediators to support the above mentioned learning process. Also, it is advised that the impartiality of the mediator should be conserved, so instead of treating cases in their own schools, teacher-mediators could rely on their network to find a colleague from a different school.
- Training for student mediators and setting up a student mediator network would highly support this initiative, since students open up easier to their peers. Also, only 10% of aggressive cases are reported to the teachers.
- Although there is a great need for tools that tackle challenging situations, it is very important to keep in mind that not all of them are conflicts, contrary to common belief; thus, conflict management methods are not always suitable for preventing bullying, aggression, violence and conflict, as in many cases the roots of bullying do not lead towards a conflict.

The trainings within National Crime Prevention Strategy continue throughout 2017.

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VIII. Best practices from around the world

There is an immense number of programs available in Europe- and worldwide, promoting anti-aggression and anti-bullying practices. This chapter provides an overview of the eight we consider the most prominent, holistic, researched and viable projects.

1. Am Not Scared Project³⁶

The project is funded by the European Commission “Lifelong Learning” programme (KA1 Policy cooperation and innovation), aiming to identify the best European strategies to address and prevent the phenomenon violence. The platform “I’m not scared” provides access to:

- Review of publications related to school violence;
- Best practices for prevention and combating school bullying;
- Situational analysis of cases of school violence;
- National reports and transnational report on school violence;
- European strategy to combat school violence.

The project intends to identify the best European strategies to prevent and combat the bullying phenomenon. The purpose of the project is to involve vocational education teachers, directors, pupils, parents, counsellors and key policy makers in the field of education in a common reflection on the issue related to school violence.

The project is based on bottom-up approach for a transnational sharing of the dynamics that can cause the emerging and consolidating of the bullying phenomenon and of the most effective strategies to tackle it.

2. KiVa Program – Let’s Make It Together!

KiVa Programme is developed by the University “Turku”, Finland, funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The effect of this programme is proven with multiple randomized

³⁶<http://iamnotscared.pixel-online.org/>

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controlled researches. In Finland, KiVa is a sought-after program: 90 % of all comprehensive schools in the country are registered KiVa schools and are implementing the program.

KiVa is an evidence-based program to prevent bullying and to tackle the cases of bullying effectively. While the former is crucial the latter is important, as no prevention efforts will make bullying disappear once and for all; there need to be tools to be utilized when a case of bullying comes to light. The third aspect of KiVa is constant monitoring of the situation in one's school and the changes taking place over time; this is enabled by the online tools included in KiVa. These tools produce annual feedback for each school about their implementation of the program as well as the outcomes obtained.

KiVa includes both *universal* and *indicated* actions. The *universal actions*, such as the KiVa curriculum (student lessons and online games), are directed at all students and focus mainly on preventing bullying. The *indicated actions* are to be used when a bullying case has emerged. They are targeted specifically to the children and adolescents who have been involved in bullying as perpetrators or victims, as well as to several classmates who are challenged to support the victim; the aim is to put an end to bullying.

KiVa has three units of which Unit 1 and Unit 2 are currently available outside the borders of Finland. Unit 1 is designed for children of 6–9 years of age. Unit 2 is suitable for children of 10–12 years of age. Unit 3 is meant to be used after the middle school/lower secondary school transition. Currently, Unit 3 is only available in Finland. KiVa has licensed partners in many countries within and outside Europe. In Hungary, the program started in 2016 September, in 3 schools: Papkeszi Bocskai Primary School, Hungária Primary School of Kispeszt and Kelenvölgyi Primary School.

Results of the program:

“In Finland KiVa has been evaluated in a large randomized controlled trial including 117 intervention schools and 117 control schools. The program has been shown to reduce both self- and peer-reported bullying and victimization significantly. It influences multiple form of victimization, including verbal, relational, physical, and cyberbullying. In addition, positive effects on school liking, academic motivation and achievement have been reported. KiVa also

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reduces anxiety and depression and has a positive impact on students' perception of their peer climate. A remarkable 98% of victims involved in discussions with the schools' KiVa teams felt that their situation improved. Finally, Finnish data from more than 1000 schools that started the implementation of KiVa in fall 2009 showed that after the first year of implementation, both victimization and bullying had reduced significantly. KiVa is now being evaluated in several countries: the first international studies from the Netherlands, Estonia, Italy, and Wales are emerging, showing that KiVa is effective outside of Finland as well.”³⁷

3. Olweus Bullying Prevention Program - OBPP

The whole-school approach based on Dan Olweus's anti-bullying model is considered to be the most significant 'evidence-based' prevention programs that has been running in Norway and in the United States for more than fifteen years now.

The Olweus Bullying Prevention Program is designed to improve peer relations and make schools safer, more positive places for students to learn and develop. The program targets the school itself as a whole, the classes and the individual as well. On the school level, a coordination committee manages the project (principal, school psychologist, teacher, parent, student representative). All staff members receive the training in groups of 15, for 3 semesters. They are mentored by 2 trainers, supported by regular supervision and a handbook.

The specific actions required are split into three sections: Measures at the School e.g. Initial Questionnaire to determine the extent of the problem, School Conference, improved supervision especially during breaks and lunchtime, parent circles, etc.; Measures at the Class Level e.g. Class rules against bullying, regular class meetings, etc.; Measures at the Individual Level e.g. Serious talks with bullies, victims and parents, Help from 'neutral' students, discussion groups for parents of bullies and victims etc. Students targeted are between 6-15 years old but the program can be adjusted to include secondary school students up until the age of 18.

³⁷<http://www.kivaprogram.net/is-kiva-effective>

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Project results include a decrease in bullying and antisocial behaviours by a stunning 50% and a better school climate overall where positive emotions and peer relations dominate.

4. 'One week without bullying'- Lithuania

During the 3rd International Conference of the European Anti-Bullying Network, Robertas Povilaitis, from Child Line Lithuania, said that around 26% of girls and 31% of boys in Lithuania were being bullied at school, which made Lithuania one of the European countries with the highest level of bullying. In order to reduce these high rates, in 2004 the **Child Line Ngo** (Vaiku Linija) has developed and implemented the Campaign '**Without Bullying**', having as its goal to make the schools a safer place, without bullying and violence. This campaign involved action over the years including:

1. The creation and dissemination of **bracelets 'Without bullying'**.
2. Cards showing famous people, in Lithuania who manifest their support for the campaign distributed in all schools.
3. The publication of three books, on bullying for schools staff.

In 2010, the same NGO, Child Line, initiated the '**One Week Without Bullying**' project which takes place throughout the country and involves all the school communities and a large number of different stakeholders. The main aim is to promote friendly relationships through different activities supported by many partners such as local authorities, NGOs, the Swedish embassy and the Vilnius International Film Festival.³⁸ Thus, one of the biggest successes of the campaign is the fact that the event is followed by the entire society. All 60 municipalities, 1147 educational institutions - from kindergartens to universities – many organisations, government representatives, pupils, students, parents, school staffs, companies and celebrities take part and collaborate in this national campaign against bullying. For instance, this year, the President Dalia Grybauskaitė participated by visiting some schools and talking to students.

The event not only enjoys widespread national the participation but also welcomes foreign organisations and actors such as the Embassies of Norway and Sweden to participate in the

³⁸ „The Anti-bullying week 2014“ in Lithuania', [http://www.vaikulinja.lt/media/filer_public/8c/be/8cbef9dd-a3b5-4369-970b-ee965df2f36d/the_anti-bullying_week_2014.pdf]

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programme, underlining the relevance of the anti-bullying campaign beyond Lithuania. In addition, close collaboration came about between the Child Line and the Swedish organization FRIENDS through the implementation of Swedish programmes in Lithuania.

Some of the activities that took place since inauguration in 2010 were:

The creation of an anti-bullying website (<http://www.bepatyciu.lt/>)

One of the main tools of the campaign and the Child Line itself is the website which hosts information gathered throughout all campaigns and disseminates information on bullying to the different actors, including victims, perpetrators, bystanders, parents, teachers and professionals.

The website is also used in order to promote the campaign and as a registration platform for different competitions and events, as well as to display content created as a result.

Extended working hours for The Children Line

The Children Line, which is a specialised help line, is usually available for a limited time per week, however during 'One Week Without Bullying' it functioned every day. This allowed, in the previous year, to receive around 3380 calls only throughout that week.

Competition for students

As direct victims, witnesses and perpetrators, children and students were involved in the project through competitions. In one of them, they were asked to relate their experience of bullying in a three minute audio or video recording uploaded on YouTube.

Production of various tools and outputs such as:

- Production of **prevention films** some of them showing celebrities in order to increase their attraction, especially on social media.
- Publication of various **books** for use by teachers in class. For instance, in 2012, Child Line published “Cyberbullying and its Prevention”, a manual on electronic bullying, with information and recommendations for children, parents and educational staff. One publication

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was issued in 2011 with the aim to provide answers to parents’ questions “how can I help my child? Answers to parents’ questions”.

- Production of **free access leaflets**.
- Creation of **the online Museum of Bullying** which shows art themes related to bullying in art form and sets up a platform for fundraising.
- Production of **social action** such as carnival parades (e.g. the friendship carnival on Vilnius).
- Production of **social advertisements** on radio, television and social media and posters displayed in many places. For instance, the social commercial “Mishandled Internet Space – like a weapon in the child’s hands”, created in 2014 by Child Line, was shown for two months in Lithuanian cinemas before adult movies and on national television in the evening.

5. Restorative approach – International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP)

The International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) works with a whole-school approach in various secondary schools in the United States, Asia and Europe. The program has helped very challenging schools improve their teaching and learning environment through restorative practices. Besides containing straightforward methods, it is rather a proactive approach based on the sense of community and responsibility, focusing on relationship building among students, staff and parents. It improves student behavior, reduces violence, conflict and bullying. IIRP provides a comprehensive two-year school implementation program. Experts of the institute help the school leadership and staff develop a customized plan based on their own needs, delivers onsite professional development and assists with evaluation. Everyone in the school staff is involved in the implementation, which serves as a base for committed cooperation. Staff members are also trained as professional development instructors to ensure sustainability.

80% of restorative practices are proactive, so once the approach is implemented in the school culture, only 20% of the work needs to focus on reacting to incidents. According to the

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restorative approach, conflicts are regarded as possibilities for development and stabilization – provided they are treated with a future-oriented strategy.

When a conflict arises, the trained facilitator – a teacher (or student) identifies the people affected in the conflict; does a preparatory one-on-one meeting with the participants; then summons the conference. The victim and the offender can invite supporters if they wish (friends, family members etc.). The facilitator (teacher) sets the framework for the conference and they operate with a set of fixed questions where the order of the speakers is fixed as well. All participants benefit from the free exchange of emotion that happens in a restorative conference or in a restorative circle. Offenders come face to face with their victims and directly hear the impact of their actions so they gain understanding on the harm caused. Victims have a chance to tell offenders how they have been affected.

6. Shield My School

The ‘Shield My School’ self-evaluation tool is a component of the ISPCC Shield Campaign, which aims to protect children from bullying. The tool consists of ten statements, referred to throughout the document as Shield Statements. Each of these shield statements is based on international evidence in relation to the management of bullying. The series of questions that follow each shield statement reflect evidence informed practice that has been shown to have a positive impact on bullying.

The self-evaluation tool asks a group of teachers to consider a set of evidence informed statements and questions about their schools approach to bullying. The questions are designed to act as evidence informed prompts to the school to facilitate a self-assessment of where they are in relation to the statement and known evidence based approaches to bullying. The process encourages participants to reflect on their approach to bullying, to identify the aspects where they are strong and the areas they would like to improve upon. The self-evaluation tool includes an action plan for schools to record the outcome of their evaluation, their proposed actions, time frames and review schedule.

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The self-reflection component enables schools to measure where they are in relation to meet the core elements of an evidence informed approach to bullying and the built-in evaluation focuses efforts towards acknowledging strengths and identifying areas for improvement.

The overall aim of the self-evaluation tool is to help schools identify how effective they are in dealing with, and reducing, incidences of bullying within the school and community environment. To be effective the self-evaluation tool relies on honesty and trust within the group and therefore individuals require a secure setting where difficulties can be raised and opinions challenged in a constructive manner. Within this safe group setting teachers are encouraged to consider their personal and combined approach to bullying, and the systems they have in place within the school, while being mindful of the available evidence and best practice research.

7. The Siren Project - Social games for conflict REsolution based on natural iNteraction

The Siren Project was a European funded project implemented cross-nationally between 2010 and 2013, aimed at creating serious games which complement and support teachers in their efforts to educate young people on how to understand and resolve conflict.

The researchers who took part in this project were from Greece, Denmark, Portugal, UK and the USA. They succeeded in producing a series of mini games that can automatically generate different scenarios that include different types of conflict to be resolved by the players, while also adapting to the maturity level of players, their cultural background and the intended learning outcome set by the teachers, who can use the system without any special technical training.

Two types of games were created through the project: Village Voices, a collaborative farm game similar to games available on social networks, and My Dream Theatre, a role-playing game in which the player is the director of a theatre, in charge of assigning roles to be carried out by non-playing characters, while attempting to resolve their conflict. The games are played through successive stages, each scenario gradually becoming more complex. The games also

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set several targets that are to be achieved and obstacles to be overcome and feature different methods that can be used. Scenarios and conflicts in the games vary according to the particular age group of the children, who would be between 10 to 14-years-old.

The games were tested in Greece, Portugal and UK and results indicated a positive impact on the children. After completing several sessions of Village Voices, they were found to have improved their conflict resolution skills; they managed to collaborate and to develop strategies among themselves in order to achieve a positive outcome in the virtual village life.

The games were developed through this project and the positive feedback they generated among the student and teacher population that participated in the pilot phase, proved that innovation can enhance the educational experience of students. Such games can be used as training tools for teaching students alternative conflict resolution skills in an attractive and exciting way that, at the same time is, not too complex for schools to implement.

The games can be used as part of the curriculum - for example the, driving PSCD lessons in the Maltese context – or as part of specific training organised outside the mainstream educational curriculum.

8. Violence in Schools Training Action (VISTA, 2004 - 2006)³⁹

This project under the European Union Comenius 2 programme is implemented in partnership with another 5 European organizations and universities. The aim of the project is the preparation of teaching materials that address violence and peaceful conflict management for schools. The expected results include an electronic textbook (translated in Bulgarian) and book.

The VISTA project is a joint initiative based on the previous work on school violence (CONNECT, 2002). The training has been developed by experts with a different background in research, practice and training from variety of disciplines of sociology, psychology, education and criminology. The VISTA training is designed to benefit and inform not only the

³⁹<http://www.vista-europe.org/>

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teachers and educators but also local education authorities, policy makers in Europe and the young people themselves.

The training resource addresses the issue of school violence through a whole school approach (WSA). The focus of the WSA is on both the school as a formal organisation (i.e., the institutional aspects of the school) and the school as a community (i.e., the informal relationships and networks). VISTA recommends that schools work through the WSA to help children, parents and teachers prevent violence in school and create an environment that promotes non-violent attitudes.

The VISTA training activities include:

- Information on current research and practice about violence reduction and prevention
- Needs analysis including preparation and planning, implementation, and review and evaluation
- Pupil and school self-audit, and strategies for improving the school and classroom climate
- Exercises on conflict resolution, mediation, restorative practice, peer support
- Exercises for integrating a WSA with political initiatives

The training kit consists of five modules:

1. Module A: Definition, Context and Knowledge of School Violence.
2. Module B: VISTA: A Whole School Approach (WSA).
3. Module C: Responsibilities and Rights.
4. Module D: Managing and Evaluating Change.
5. Module E: Preventative and Integrative Practice.

Each module includes from two to six units and implementation procedures. Moreover, they are available as open source (anyone can download any unit, even in different languages, without the need to pay a fee). This gives everyone access to be informed, to implement procedures and policies and to put the training materials into practice.

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The VISTA programme provides efficient and effective perspectives which can easily be implemented in European schools.

IX. Summary and needs analysis

It can be seen that the issues of school violence and aggression are serious in all the three participating countries. The level of dealing with such problems, however, differs. Therefore we are going to provide here a short summary of the needs or gap areas of the three countries as it relates to our topic.

1. Hungary

As we have seen from our report in Hungary there is no unified national approach for preventing and tackling bullying and aggression. In addition, we lack a regular measurement of the situation in schools. There is a pressing need for the clarification and definition of a common terminology to be included in the Public Education Act and a national strategy for action in the area. There should be a general shift from the punitive to the restorative approach and a continuous quest for finding the best pedagogical tools for tackling these issues. Teachers should receive relevant training pre-service and in-service as well. Awareness raising efforts should be nationwide and encompassing all stakeholders including parents. Cooperation of different types of stakeholders should be encouraged.

When implementing our programme we also have to take into consideration some general characteristics of the Hungarian school system such as the fact that teachers usually have low salaries but high workload and a “reform fatigue” from the often changing central policies that happened in the past decades. It is also important to note that in most schools there is still a Prussian style educational approach in place which puts the teacher in the centre, expects the children to be obedient and uses punitive measures to resolve conflicts.

In order to achieve our goals, we believe we are going to have to build up our model programme from the foundation. We are anticipating the following needs:

- Drawing an exact map of the scale and specificities of the problem in the school
- Raising awareness of school staff as well as other stakeholders
- Investing enough energy into creating buy in and maintaining motivation especially from the part of teachers and school leadership

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- Creating a high quality and complex programme that includes tools for the development of organizational culture as well as social emotional learning of the participants
- Paying continuous attention to change management
- Taking adequate steps to ensure sustainability

2. Bulgaria

The National Report on the current situation of school aggression and bullying in Bulgaria revealed that the country has an appropriate level of response to these specific issues concerning children and adolescents. On a state level one notices the political will to apply nation-wide measure to counteract bullying and aggressive behaviour by adopting a corresponding normative framework (e.g. the Mechanism to Combat School Bullying among Children and Students at School), which could be described as adequate enough to include both prevention and intervention measures. The issue with aggressive and/or bullying behaviour is also to be understood within the context of the overall strategy to prevent violence against children, which the country implements through its framework normative acts (e.g. the Child Protection Acts, annual National Programmes, etc.).

At the same time, the institutional framework is also quite advanced, including relevant state actors mandated to work towards prevention and interception of violence among or against children, (i.e. the Ministry of Education with its Regional Inspectorates of Education, the State Agency for Child Protection, the Social Assistance Agency and its Child Protection Departments, specialised municipal departments and units among others). In addition, there is also a fairly well developed network of non-governmental organisations, which carry out prevention programmes, pilot innovative models and offer support at the level of intervention. Last but not least, school administrative and teaching staff, as the frontline professionals to confront bullying and aggression, also constitute a quite experienced structure and a key actor in prevention of aggression and bullying.

Bearing in mind that coordinated and targeted initiatives (both at policy and practices level) started taking place less than a decade ago, the overall system of measures to prevent aggression and bullying is at an earlier stage of its development. This fact calls for the need to streamline the efforts by all the stakeholders in order to achieve an effective and sustainable culture of tolerance and understanding at schools, and reach an environment that does not allow for aggression and bullying to arise in the first place.

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The piloting phase of the model programme in Bulgaria is planned to take place in a secondary education school, which has already identified the need to develop and incorporate a system of preventive measures, as well as to enhance the already existing set of procedures to deal with incidents of aggressive and bullying behaviour. Therefore, the model programme is seen as a valuable opportunity to strengthen the overall response to bullying in the pilot school.

At the level of **prevention**, potentially beneficial actions should include:

- Self-assessment tools for both teaching/non-teaching staff and students in order to assist them in evaluating the current situation of aggression and bullying, and existing capacity and resources to tackle the issue
- Capacity building programmes for teaching staff in order to achieve good understanding of the problem and its consequences by a wider network of adults
- Interactive and engaging, age-appropriate activities for all school grades, which could be easily organised and carried out by teachers during the so called “class hour”
- Innovative models for increased parental involvement in the school life

At the level of **intervention**, potentially beneficial practices should include:

- Introduction of restorative practices as a novel approach in contrast to the punitive measures currently applied
- Development of a peer mediation programme as an alternative way to reach a mutually beneficial solution to a challenging situation

3. Malta

Bearing in mind the different levels of intervention to tackle bullying, aggression and violence, one can easily state that Malta is fairly well advanced, as there are many initiatives with similar goals at different levels within the education system.

On one hand there is the top down approach managed by the Ministry for Education and Employment together with the PSCD curriculum which is already fully implemented already in the Education System, while on the other hand there are many project-based initiatives led by independent entities,

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civil society and even various governmental agencies. The list is comprehensive and not limited to these findings.

Throughout the consultation meetings carried out to gather data for this report and through feedback emerging from the questionnaires, a number of recommendations were identified. One outcome of the consultation session with the Anti-Bullying Service was that initiatives by civil society are not always in line with the work of the unit; however, NGOs and other entities implementing projects related to bullying, aggression and violence in schools found it difficult to collaborate with the State schools and State services in view of insufficient access to information regarding their work. While this appears to be a common scenario where discrepancies are found between civil society and governmental services, it also demonstrates that interest in this subject is high on both sides, and better communication channels and opportunities for collaboration would have a positive impact in any initiative.

Another finding of this report is that national policy implementation is not yet finalised and there can still be brought into discussion new elements such as a monitoring system for the implementation process and better delineation of responsibilities among all stakeholders. A model programme could complement policy implementation and the work carried out through the Anti-Bullying Service, by:

- introducing innovative practices and consolidating existing practices such as restorative justice;
- targeting stakeholders that are not sufficiently involved at present, such as parents and the community, which prevents the implementation of a whole school approach;
- implementing a self-measurement system for the schools themselves to evaluate the level of bullying, violence and aggression;
- performing activities without a direct focus on negative behaviour but, rather, which promote friendship and a positive approach to problem solving;
- enhancing relevant training resources to teach restorative justice and conflict resolution skills;
- creating a synergy between different stakeholders that are working closely within the same student community, in order to prevent conflicting initiatives as well as maximise results.

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Other recommendations are as follows:

Create strategies in order to consolidate the shared responsibility of all stakeholders involved, namely, students, teachers and school staff - directly and indirectly in contact with the pupils - parents, local community representatives, LSA's, the Psycho-Social teams, drivers and other personnel responsible for school transport.

In fact, parental involvement was one of the most frequently mentioned issues throughout the research conducted for the purpose of this report. Indeed, parents are considered to be among the main actors in the whole school approach promoted through national policy targeting bullying and they are referred to as partners of the school and the school staff. However, they are also responsible for making this partnership possible, since engagement of parents does not stand solely within the responsibility of the school or other service providers. In this respect, the Anti-Bullying team and the MLSA's representatives stressed the importance of educating parents for good and positive parenting, and cultivates their engagement in all aspects of their children's experience at school. A great strategy that was adopted by the ABU team is to try and schedule training and information sessions on the same day that a cultural activity or a celebration is being organised for them by the students.

Initiate an awareness campaign targeting parents and the community, through which they are sensitised with regards to their own behavioural influence not only on their children but also on other children in the community. This could address one of the concerns raised by stakeholders during consultation meetings, who stressed the importance of providing more positive examples for children in the community. Moreover, this can be complemented by encouraging parents to participate in parenting skills programmes or, when available, by creating new flexible programmes timed for parents that have unusual working hours.

Tackle cases of cyber bullying in a better way and to encourage more involvement at school level. Some of the actors that participated in consultation meetings stressed the fact that, in many cases, schools avoid getting involved as they are not keen to assume responsibility for acts that might have happened beyond the school premises. However, this should not be the case, as any act of cyber bullying, even if it happens away from school, would normally have an impact on the student's behaviour and wellbeing at school.

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Create a website focused on the work of the Anti-Bullying Service and all other initiatives undertaken at national and local level. The website could be modelled on the Slovenian Child Line website, and include:

- information for teachers, students, parents, bystanders, etc.;
- information for other NGOs working in the field or with youths;
- links to other projects and services, such as: kellimni.com, BeSmartOnline!, chilidwebalert;
- policies, strategies, procedures and other resources available for schools and practitioners;
- terminology, concepts and methods;
- examples of good practice;
- partnership opportunities;
- videos;

Although the three countries are not at the same level with regards to tackling school aggression and bullying, the ASAP partnership has to create a model programme in a way that it is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of all the partners. There are some features identified across different models or intervention programmes developed over time and these have been well described by Peter K. Smith, Debra Pepler, and Ken Rigby in their publication ‘Bullying in schools: how successful can interventions be?’. These are:

- Adopting a whole school approach, which requires co-ordinated actions among different stakeholders.
- Developing a school policy, which usually includes a definition of terms and types of anti-social behaviours and the actions which are to be taken when they occur: procedures and guidelines for teachers and staff, designation of roles.
- Relevant training for teachers and school staff on bullying or similar behaviour.
- Tools to measure the prevalence of the unwanted behaviour which is targeted through the programme.
- Preventative and interventional procedures – such as creating a positive environment in the classroom and the school.
- Inclusion of certain lessons and training in the school curriculum such as assertive communication, the behaviour of bystanders and its impact, conflict resolution.
- Surveillance and monitoring students’ behaviour when not in class.

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- Peer mentoring or peer mediation.
- Defined procedures to be used when dealing with bullying or other anti-social and unwanted behaviour, such as the no blame approach, restorative justice, well established penalties against perpetrators – zero tolerance or a punitive approach.

The model programme for the ASA Partnership will include these features, and will be designed as a set of tools which address both awareness raising and interventions in cases of aggression, bullying, violence or conflict behaviour. This will give the schools or implementers the flexibility to choose from different elements in order to build a suitable strategy and pilot programme in a given school environment. We also consider important to mention here that we believe the quality of implementation is essential from the point of view of the success of our project. We are conscious of the complexity of the task and plan to combine project management and change management tools for the effectiveness and sustainability of our programme.

X. Appendices

1. Anti-Bullying Service

Name of best practice	Anti-Bullying Service
Name of the organisation	Student Services Department, Ministry of Education
Homepage	https://education.gov.mt/en/education/student-services/Pages/Psycho-Social_Services/Anti-Bullying-Service.aspx
Who is targeted	Students Parents Care Givers Senior Management Team (SMT i.e. Principals, Heads of School, Assistant Heads) Teachers

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	<p>Guidance Teachers</p> <p>Prefects of Discipline</p> <p>Counsellors & Trainee Counsellors</p> <p>Psychotherapists</p> <p>Psychologists</p> <p>Social Workers</p> <p>Social Support Workers</p> <p>Youth Workers</p>
Location	Malta
What is the main context?	Intervention, preventive measures, informative talks and training
Main activities	National intervention service that assists all State schools which provide compulsory education but work as well with Church Schools and Independent schools upon referral
How long does it take to adapt?	The service can be adapted to the context of any given country, as long as appropriate resources (staff, materials, access to school staff, students and other professionals, etc.) are allocated
Main outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising awareness of the issue of bullying • Formulating and implementing strategies to situations of bullying behaviour • Staff/school development • Class interventions • Individual cases • Parents' meetings
Main challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of resources

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient human resource; only 9 officers that work across all Colleges in Malta and Gozo.
Capacity needs	Creation of such a service needs to be done and continuously supported through the Ministry for Education
Resource needs	Human resources, materials, access to school staff, students and other professionals
Adaptation possibilities	Can be transferred to different thematic and geographical areas; however, because it is an ongoing service it needs full financial support, as it is the case in Malta where the service is funded by the Student Service Department Ministry for Education.
Contact person	Sandra Cortis

2. Kelimni.com

Name of best practice	Kelimni
Name of the organization	Collaboration between SOS Malta, Salesian Pastoral Youth Service, Agenzija Żgħażaġh and Agenzija Appoġġ.
Homepage	www.kelimni.com
Who is targeted	young people (aged 13-35)
Where is the location	Malta
What is the main context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The service is based on yearly funding and collaborates different entities.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is run through both paid professionals and volunteers. There are 3 types of volunteers within the kellimni.com network. • The 1st type of volunteering deals with the helping and assisting in the daily running from an administrative point of view. This type of volunteer helps and assists the service coordinator in specific roles. • The 2nd type of volunteer helps and assist in outreach, promoting and marketing events and writing of articles. • The 3rd type of volunteer is the one who is in direct contact with the kellimni.com service users
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free online youth support offered through Chat, email, forum and an app - both for Android and IOS. • Main issues that are brought up by the users: bullying, parent/child relationship, partner relationship, problems with friends, bereavement, friends and friendship, depression, self-harm, fear and anxiety and loneliness • Dissemination activities: printed materials, cards, posters, stickers, badges, mint tins; website and Facebook page; promotion in schools, youth fairs, national events and festivals.
How long does it take to adapt	Easily adaptable once the human resources and technical structure are in place
Main outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oline platform • Printed materials • Cards, posters and stickers • Badges

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mint tins • Facebook page • Promotion in schools • Youth fairs • National events and festivals
Main challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Struggle - the yearly budget applied for from public funding remained the same over the years, whilst the service started to increase in its interventions. • Human Resources - whilst the service gained popularity year by year, the human resources remained the same • Client Group - since mostly they are teenagers and young adults, it is difficult to get their attention; the service has to be on their ever changing line of thought
Capacity needs	<p>3 types of volunteers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Helping and assisting in the daily running from an administrative point of view 2- Helping and assisting in outreach, promoting and marketing events and writing of articles 3- Direct contact with the kellimni.com service users
Resource needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Series of communication channels that youths are comfortable to use - they require an IT infrastructure • Infrastructure for a volunteer programme. • Dissemination materials which should be appealing to youths such as: badges, pen drives, posters and cards.
Adaptation possibilities	<p>Its adaptation to any national context is possible, depending on the needs identified in the given country.</p>

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Contact person	James Buhagiar
Phone number, E-mail address	james@kellimni.com

3. KID's – Kids in Development Programme

Name of best practice	Kids in Development (K.I.Ds)
Name of the organization	Richmond foundation
Homepage	http://www.richmond.org.mt/kids-in-development/
Who is targeted	Children who have been severely affected by trauma, primary deprivation and/or has got mental health problems and with challenging behaviour (self-injury, physical aggression, socially offensive, disruptive behaviour)
Where is the location	Malta
What is the main context	The aim is to maximise the full potential of each child and therefore focuses on the child's strengths rather than on his/her limitations.
Main activities	Because the programme is therapeutic in nature, all activities shall be evaluated from this perspective before being implemented for each particular case.
How long does it take to adapt	-
Main outcomes	3 years specific support for the child and his/her family
Main challenges	The financial sustainability of the project
Capacity needs	Specialist staff and a well-equipped facility centre

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Resource needs	N/A
Adaptation possibilities	N/A
Contact person	Daniela Calleja Bitar
Phone number, E-mail address	ceo@richmond.org.mt

4. Stop the Violence – non-formal curriculum – Malta Girls Guide

Name of best practice	Stop the Violence – non-formal badge curriculum adapted for teachers and professionals
Name of the organization	Malta Girl Guides
Homepage	http://www.maltagirlguides.com/
Who is targeted	Students and teachers
Where is the location	Malta
What is the main context	Curriculum and methodology for teachers on subjects related to violence, especially violence against girls/women.
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The main activity is the training offered on a voluntary basis for Primary and Secondary school teachers, PSD teachers, social workers and councillors. • Through the training the participants gain skills on how to apply the badge curriculum and adapt it to their lessons plans. • The topics covered through the curriculum vary because it is aimed at being a global curriculum, and covering a large

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	<p>number of problems that are a reality for women and girls from different parts of the world, such as: bullying, cyber bullying, child abuse, domestic violence, gender inequality and homophobia, teenage dating violence, crimes committed in the name of ‘honour’, female infanticide, sexual bullying, harassment, sexualisation of girls and young women, multiple forms of discrimination, forced marriage, sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM), sexual violence, rape as a weapon of war, maternal health, HIV and AIDS, teenage relationship abuse or intimate partner violence or dating violence, child brides, transphobia, racism, pornography</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the country where they are applied, the context and the student population, teachers or professionals can choose to leave out certain topics or to focus on just some which are more relevant for the given situation. For example, in Malta the topics chosen are: bullying, cyber bullying, child abuse, domestic violence, gender inequality and homophobia and teenage dating violence • The curriculum is divided in workshops according to the age of the children to be targeted and to their level of understanding of the subject
How long does it take to adapt	Not very long as the curriculum is available in different languages and it is being disseminated through member organizations of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts
Main outcomes	The outcome is getting teachers equipped with skills and a practical methodology to tackle different subjects with their students, by conducting workshops

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Main challenges	Getting the teachers’ interest to attend the trainings offered Finding appropriate timeframes to have access to teachers and school staff
Capacity needs	Need of training in order to transfer the skills necessary to school staff/youth workers or any other professional interested in the subject
Resource needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The resources for the workshops are provided by the Malta Girl Guides, as part of the international curriculum Training sessions are needed for teachers or whoever is embarking on using this tool
Adaptation possibilities	Depending on the context where the workshops will be applied, they can be adapted to specific needs. The teachers or professionals can choose which topics are needed or suitable for their targeted students
Contact person	Joyce Scembri
Phone number, E-mail address	joyceschembri07@gmail.com

5. Rescur – a resilience curriculum for early and primary schools

Name of best practice	RESCUR: Surfing the Waves – A Resilience Curriculum For Early and Primary School
Name of the organization	Three year LLP Comenius project coordinated by the University of Malta and including University of Crete (Greece), University

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	of Lisbon (Portugal), Orebro University (Sweden), University of Pavia (Italy), and University of Zagreb (Croatia)
Homepage	http://www.rescur.eu/
Who is targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European early and primary education • Vulnerable children (e.g. Roma children, children with disability, gifted children and children of refugees, immigrants and ethnic minorities) between 4 to 11 years' old
Where is the location	<i>Implemented and tested in about 80 primary schools of partners' countries (Malta, Greece, Portugal, Sweden, Italy and Croatia)</i>
What is the main context	To achieve social and emotional wellbeing for children
Main activities	<p>A resilience curriculum for early and primary schools in Europe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 major themes curriculum • Test of the curriculum in various school in each partner country • Publication of 3 manuals for teachers and one for parents in the seven languages of the consortium
How long does it take to adapt	Relatively short time to start the implementation, once the trainers/teacher receives the right guidance from the project creators
Main outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A resilience curriculum for early and primary school (from 4 year to 11 year old) • 5 manuals for teachers in every language of the consortium <p>1- Teachers' Guide</p>

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	2- Early Years (4-5 years) 3- Early Primary School Years (6-8 years) 4- Late Primary School Years (9-11 years) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Parents' guide in every language of the consortium • Implementation of the curriculum in about 80 schools
Main challenges	Engaging teachers, parents and schools schools to adopt the curriculum
Capacity needs	Short training for teachers and implementers
Resource needs	Manuals
Adaptation possibilities	Easily adaptable as the manuals already exists in seven languages
Contact person	Carmel Cefai
Phone number, E-mail address	carmel.cefai@um.edu.mt

6. Together against Bullying – Victim Support Malta

Name of best practice	Together against Bullying
Name of the organization	Victim Support Malta
Homepage	http://victimsupport.org.mt/
Who is targeted	Students, teachers, parents and community
Where is the location	Malta - piloted with a student population of 1,000 people
What is the main context	Anti-bullying and cyber bullying
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assembly presentations

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Half an hour each – General overview of bullying in Maltese schools – Urge students to reflect on what ‘bullying’ is, whether they have been/ are being bullied or have bullied/are bullying others themselves – Facilitate exploration of the potential short-term and long-term consequences of leaving bullying behaviour unaddressed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The classroom presentations – 40-45 minutes long more comprehensive and practical in nature – To be delivered over 6-10 lessons • The parent training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provide parents with tips and strategies to support their children in tackling bullying – Generating awareness and providing information on bullying • The SWAP psycho-social strategy: Say Stop and NO, Walk away, Adult engagement and Peer support
How long does it take to adapt	The training materials offer general information about bullying, thus could be adapted to different cultural contexts
Main outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness raising • Prevention
Main challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing a diverse audience using the same material. It required adaptation to each audience, both in delivery practice as well as theory • Containing the emotional responses of the children

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Capacity needs	For implementing the trainings, it is necessary to have at least one person who has a good knowledge of the training material
Resource needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power point presentations – access to computer and projector • Fliers and posters designed as part of the project
Adaptation possibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presentation can be adapted in terms of delivery • There is also prepared a guideline handbook on how the training materials to be used
Contact person	Roberta Lepre Isotta Rossoni
Phone number, E-mail address	isotta@victimsupport.org.mt roberta@victimsupport.org.mt

7. Be Smart Online!

Name of best practice	Be Smart Online!
Name of the organization	A consortium coordinated by the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) and brings together Aġenzija Appoġġ, and the Office of the Commissioner for Children, and funded through the European Union's Safer Internet Programme
Homepage	http://www.besmartonline.org.mt/
Who is targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and youths as the biggest users of online and mobile technologies • Children, youths, parents and educators to understand the basic principles and best practices for a safer online experience for children

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Where is the location	Malta
What is the main context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To raise awareness and educate children and teens, carers and educators on the safer use of the Internet • To establish, operate and promote reporting facilities for internet abuse and to offer support services to respective victims
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The establishment of a Safer Internet Centre in Malta • The Safer Internet Programme • The Youth Forum • The Awareness Centre • Youth Panel meetings • School interventions • Reporting facilities for internet abuse and support services to respective victims - mainly through Aġenzija Appoġġ • Trainings, talks, presentations delivered to students and teachers alike regarding the safe use of internet and cyber bullying - risks and consequences
How long does it take to adapt	Being funded as an ongoing project, and following the lead of EU's Safer Internet Programme, it can be easily adapted to any different country/local context
Main outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpline:179 • The establishment of a Safer Internet Centre in Malta • Hotline

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Main challenges	Main challenges relate to the funding of the project, which is not unlimited and is subject to uncertainty once the lifespan of the specific funding scheme is finished
Capacity needs	Professional staff Website and social media accounts/profiles
Resource needs	Human resources, ICT infrastructure, coordination between partners and different available services linked to the activity of the project
Adaptation possibilities	The online platform needs to be adapted to the national context, materials have to be created according to the national cultural trends so as to be appealing to the public
Contact person	Mark Spiteri
Phone number, E-mail address	info@besmartonline.org.mt (+356) 21336840

8. Personal Social and Career Development (PSCD) Curriculum

Name of best practice	Personal Social and Career Development (PSCD) Curriculum
Name of the organization	Ministry of Education, Department of Curriculum Management
Homepage	http://psd.skola.edu.mt/
Who is targeted	Students at primary and secondary schools
Where is the location	Malta

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What is the main context	Helping students to shape and improve on their social and behaviour skills by covering different topics such as relationships and communication
Main activities	Introduction of a new subject for students aimed at helping them when dealing with different aspects of life
How long does it take to adapt	The curriculum needs to be developed by the competent authority according to the priorities and context of the National Curriculum
Main outcomes	Students who are more prepared when dealing with social situations such as relationships and bullying
Main challenges	-
Capacity needs	Curricular resources, Allocation of hours, resources, teachers prepared to deliver the lessons
Resource needs	Teachers Time slots in the scholastic annual curriculum Teaching materials
Adaptation possibilities	The curriculum needs to be developed by the competent authority according to the priorities and context of the National Curriculum
Contact person	-
Phone number, E-mail address	-

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9. One week without bullying

Name of best practice	'One week without bullying'
Name of the hosting organization	http://www.vaikuliniija.lt/
Homepage	http://www.bepatyciu.lt/
Who is targeted	Students, teachers, parents, the whole community and policy makers
Where is the location	Lithuania
What is the main context	cyber-bullying and anti-bullying
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Children Line: The Children Line is available 24x7 for the whole duration of the campaign • The Competition for school children and students: As direct victims, witnesses and perpetrators, children and students are encouraged to participate in a competition where they were able to express their experiences of bullying through music and singing or video recordings uploaded on YouTube • Conferences and seminars: In order to raise awareness and develop dialogue, national and international conferences and seminars (more than 300 in 2015) headed by anti-bullying specialists, members of local authorities, NGOs and school staff • Production of various tools: With the aim to raise awareness and reach as many people as possible. Every year, organizers develop different tools and outputs with specific targeted public: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevention films targeting both children and adults, some with very popular celebrities in order to increase the dissemination • Publication of different books which can be used in class by teachers. e.g.: “Cyberbullying and its prevention”, a manual on electronic bullying with information and recommendations for

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	<p>children, parents and educational staff; “How can I help my child? Answers to parents’ questions”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of free access leaflets • Creation of an anti-bullying website http://www.bepatyciu.lt/ • Pictures with celebrities and their testimonies regarding bullying • Creation of the online Museum of bullying which present art objects related to bullying and which is a platform of fundraising • Social actions like carnivals and parades (e.g. the friendship carnival in Vilnius) - Promotional videos/spots for radio, TV, social media; e.g. the social commercial “Mishandled internet space – like a weapon in the child’s hands” created in 2014 by Child Line was shown on Lithuanian cinemas before movies and on national television in the evenings for 2 months • Publishing of The Anti-bullying policy for Vilnius Schools – 2016 • A participants’ mapping: On one of the page of the Campaign’s website (http://bepatyciu.lt/veiksmo-savaite-be-patyciu/dalyviai/) maps all the Lithuanian participants to the yearly campaign
<p>How long does it take to adapt</p>	<p>Activities can be transferred separately, not necessarily as a whole, which makes it easy to adapt according to the national/local environment and specificities</p>
<p>Main outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • anti-bullying website • engagement of students, parents and the wide public in anti-bullying activities • conferences and seminars • production of various tools and outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prevention films

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - books - free access leaflets - pictures with celebrities - the online Museum of bullying - social actions - social promo videos
Main challenges	<p>Decrease high rates of bullying at schools</p> <p>To establish and implement local and national anti-bullying policy</p>
Capacity needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteers and professional staff • Communication staff • Anti-bullying specialist staff • Important collaboration with every sector of the society (school, local and national authorities, media, etc.) • Important place on local and national media
Resource needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication supports • Material support for trainings, seminars and awareness raising activities • Specialist speakers for seminars and conferences
Adaptation possibilities	<p>Long term project but which can be adapted easily to any local/national context if awarded the funding for a similar campaign/project</p>
Contact person	"Child Line" ("Vaikų Linija")
Phone number, E-mail address	http://www.vaikulinija.lt/

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XI. Bibliography

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