



Skills for school professionals
against cyberbullying events

SPACE - Skills for school professionals against cyberbullying events - 2017-1-IT02-KA201-036470

SPACE is a project funded through the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission. It intends to answer to the training needs of school teachers, that are the main target group of the project, in order to make them acquire competences to prevent/contrast cyberbullying.

Background

The widespread diffusion and use of new technologies is connected to the phenomenon of **cyberbullying**: the bullying of others by means of new electronic technologies. The phenomenon is growing: already in 2009 across Europe approximately 18% of European young people aged 13-19 had been bullied/harassed/stalked via the internet and mobile phones, current rates ranged from 10% to 52%. European Parliament highlights that cyberbullying increased among children aged 11-16 from 7% in 2010 to 12% in 2014 ([Cyberbullying Among Young People, July 2016](#)). The 2016 Fundamental Rights Report points out that children are more exposed to Internet-related risks than in previous years.

European Parliament with the decision 1351/2008 launched a programme protect children using Internet and other communication technologies and instituted the *Safer Internet Centers* in each country, promoting educational actions for children, parents, assistants, teachers and educators to prevent and fight illegal content and harmful conducts. In Italy MIUR (Ministry of Education) has published in April 2015 the [Linee di orientamento per azioni di prevenzione e contrasto al bullismo e cyberbullismo](#) that highlight the necessity to find new and effective strategies to contrast the phenomenon, carrying out information and training actions; in October 2016 this has been followed by the [Piano Nazionale](#) that foresees, among the actions, training activities for teachers and students.

Needs of target groups

The project SPACE intends to answer to the training needs of school teachers, that are the target group of the project, in order to make them acquire competences to prevent/contrast cyberbullying. In fact, despite the EU Member States launched many initiatives and projects to prevent and combat cyberbullying, it appears growing; since it is a new phenomenon, it lacks an organic system of knowledge and skills and structured educational actions ensuring that teachers acquire the necessary competences in order to:

- **knowing the dynamics of the phenomenon** to plan appropriate action of prevention, information and training;
- **mastering the digital technologies** in particular as regards the correct use of the Web, security and privacy to undertake formative actions to their students on these issues.

Aims and objectives

Many resources and contents about cyberbullying have been developed within projects and actions promoted by schools and other institutions; nevertheless, they remain isolated initiatives, not collected into a single web space and thus tend not to be valorized and used. SPACE wants to address this challenge by the development of a **MOOC** (Massive Online Open Course) on cyberbullying for school teachers, and the organization of the contents and resources on cyberbullying retrieved on the web in form of **OER** (Open Educational Resources) to make them available on an online system. The project intends to:

- develop an online system that host a MOOC and OER on cyberbullying;
- map and describe the teachers competences needed to prevent and contrast cyberbullying;
- plan, develop and experiment a MOOC for school teachers in order to make them acquire competences to prevent and fight cyberbullying;
- gather, organize and label OER about cyberbullying to publish them in the online system;
- make available a space for a community of teachers sharing practices and solutions;
- make available information material for teachers, trainers, experts, parents and children about cyberbullying.

The main target group of the project is represented by school teachers (ISCED2 and ISCED3 levels). Indirect target groups: school manager and non teaching staff; students; parents; school authorities and decision makers.

European dimension

The 2016 CENSIS (Italian research institute) [Report](#) describes the results of a survey among Italian school heads: the 54,9% of school heads have managed cyberbullying situations, the percentage grows to 59,3% in upper secondary school; the 44,5% of school heads think that teachers are not adequately trained about cyberbullying; the 71,4% ask for training paths to make school staff understand the cyberbullying phenomenon and acquire the skill and approaches to contrast it.

European situation is not different: the [2013 Report of the Cost Action IS0801](#) (Horizon 2020) says there is a weak emphasis about the development of skills in teachers to fight cyberbullying; the IS0801 survey evidences how teachers need to be equipped with professional training to intervene effectively in cyberbullying situations. Cyberbullying involving young people aged 11-19 almost always starts in the classroom, and then goes through the online mode; teachers therefore have a key role in preventing and fighting the phenomenon, particularly with regard to the effectiveness and consistency of their response to bullying behaviour among students. This training needs to be part of a whole-school response to bullying where the training is linked to the school's bullying-related policy and response plan.

The SPACE Project intends to realize a MOOC for teachers about cyberbullying. MOOCs are courses designed for large numbers of participants, that can be accessed by anyone anywhere as long as they have an internet connection, are open to everyone without entry qualifications, and offer a full/complete course experience online for free. MOOCs can be positioned in the broader development of open online education. The potential of Open Education was strongly marked by the [Cape Town Open Education Declaration](#) (Shuttleworth/OSF, 2008). Another key element in the project is the re-use of existing contents and Open Education Resources (OER). In fact, many contents and materials have been already realized on the theme of cyberbullying: reports, stats, papers, surveys, presentations, booklets, video, methodological kits, practices and so on. All these contents have been developed within national or European projects and initiatives by schools, research centres and other organization. These contents are free and available on the web, but not integrated in a web space nor classified for typology, target, medium, etc. The project SPACE want to gather, classify and re-use all these contents according to the OER philosophy, whose value is recognized by the European Commission, that fosters their use and diffusion. In this way, the project does not start from "point zero" but re-uses and valorises the previously produced didactic contents.

According to [OECD definition](#) (2012) OER are "digital learning resources offered online freely and openly to teachers, educators, students, and independent learners in order to be used, shared, combined, adapted, and expanded in teaching, learning and research". By providing open access to course content, the development of OER initiatives have paved the way for free online courses, such as Open Course Ware (OCW) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC). The potential of ICT for modernisation of education and training

has become a key priority for the European Union. In its [Communication on Opening Up Education](#) (2013) the European Commission proposes actions at EU and national levels to “support the development and availability of Open Educational Resources (OER)” in education and skills development. The Communication highlights how OERs are important for stimulating innovative learning environments where content can be adapted by users according to their needs. Stimulating supply and demand for high-quality European OERs is essential for modernising education. Combined with traditional educational resources, OERs allow for blended forms of face-to-face and online learning. They also have the potential to reduce the costs of educational materials for students and their families as well as for public budgets when these cover the costs of educational materials. In the JRC Report [Opening Up Education](#) (2016) open education is seen as a way of carrying out education, often using digital technologies. Its aim is to widen access and participation to everyone by removing barriers and making learning accessible, abundant, and customisable for all. It offers multiple ways of teaching and learning, building and sharing knowledge. It also provides a variety of access routes to formal and non-formal education, and connects the two.

The SPACE project is in line with these documents and especially with one transformative key proposed in this area: "Use the new programmes Erasmus+ and Horizon 2020 to encourage partnerships between creators of educational content (e.g. teachers, publishers, ICT companies), to increase the supply of quality OER and other digital educational materials in different languages, to develop new business models and to develop technical solutions which provide transparent information on copyrights and open licenses to users of digital educational resources".

To learn more about SPACE Project: visit our website <https://www.spaceproject.net/>

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