

Staying Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet  
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46 Makedonitissas Ave.  
P.O. Box 24005, Nicosia 1703  
Cyprus

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Designer: Mario Pavlou, Redtank Ltd

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## GENDER AND SAFETY ON THE INTERNET

### An Anthology of Project Results



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## INTRODUCTION

This anthology was created in the framework of the project 'Staying Safe On-line: Gender and Safety on the Internet' realized by three organizations - Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies from Cyprus, Fundacja Feminoteka from Poland and Gender Studies, o.p.s. from the Czech Republic. The two-year international project was co-funded by the Daphne III Programme run by the European Commission.

The main aim of the project was to bring in the gender perspective on cyber-bullying and other forms of violence within cyber space. The gender dimension is absent in most of the current research papers and studies on the issue. "Staying Safe Online" incorporated and emphasized the gender perspective through research, campaigns and promotion of helplines and support services available to provide gender-sensitive support to victims. After two years of cooperation, we are able to provide relevant data regarding the issue and other sources of materials that can be further used for education and additional research purposes.

In this anthology we offer a package of project materials, in particular good practices in different formats and contents, from three different countries: Czech Republic, Poland and Cyprus. The first section presents the research report consisting of the results of three research projects; surveys, interviews and focus groups conducted among young people. The information and education campaigns carried out within the framework of this project, accompanied by information material created on the basis of the research data are examples that can be used for further elaboration of campaigns and awareness raising material in other contexts. Examples of the gender sensitive campaigns can be found in the fourth part of this publication.

The second section is dedicated to gender-based violence issues and the links with cyber space, particularly the forms of sexism related to information and telecommunication technologies. The analysis of selected cyber-violence campaigns is presented in the section following from this. The final section provides a report of the international conference *Gender-based Violence and Safety in New Media* held in Cyprus together with current recommendations resulting from the conference sessions and discussions.

The aim of this anthology is to offer gender-sensitive data and a different perspective on one of the world's biggest current issues i.e. violence and its manifestations in the virtual world - the world that should have the same rules and laws, where human rights should be undisputedly universal for everyone.

We hope that you find this publication an inspiration on a personal level or useful in research, educational work and activism in the field of gender-based violence.

*Michaela Svatošová*  
*Project Coordinator*





## PROJECT PARTNERS

*IN THIS PROJECT, THE THREE ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR ASSOCIATES JOINED FORCES. THEY USED THEIR LONG-TERM EXPERIENCE TO BRING RESULTS WHICH CAN FURTHER BE USED AS GOOD PRACTICE IN THE EU.*

❶ **Feminoteka's** primary concern is Violence against women. With a long tradition of preventing violence against women nationally and internationally, Feminoteka runs a legal help-line for women victims of domestic violence and rape, has conducted several research projects on these topics and trains teachers in gender equality and prevention of violence against women.

Website: [www.feminoteka.pl](http://www.feminoteka.pl)

❷ **Gender Studies, o.p.s.** is an NGO with a 20 year history of addressing gender equality at both national and international levels. As far as violence against women is concerned, Gender Studies has opened up the discussion about sexual violence (especially rape) in the Czech Republic and, in cooperation with other civil society organizations, provides support to victims. Gender Studies feel that ICT violence is yet another issue which is currently being undervalued and which deserves wider discussion among both the general and professional public. Gender Studies have extensive experience with media campaigns (e.g. a very successful campaign on discrimination), are in daily contact with journalists, run seminars for teachers, students and other relevant groups, organize conferences and engage in publishing.

Website: [www.genderstudies.cz](http://www.genderstudies.cz)

❸ **Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)**, based in Cyprus, is a non-profit organization committed to the elimination of discrimination against women using a combination of research, advocacy and lobbying, as well as trainings, conferences and other activities.

MIGS promotes initiatives which strengthen and enhance civil society participation and empower women, especially in the process of governance. Priority is given to issues of involvement of women at local, national and European levels; engaging minority and socially excluded groups in training and debate in order to help promote diverse public dialogue; combating gender discrimination and domestic violence; enhancing and promoting social empowerment, human rights and people's diplomacy. MIGS operates in collaboration with organizations and individuals from other Mediterranean and European Union countries. MIGS concentrates on the following thematic priority areas of activity: violence against women; trafficking in women; women in decision making; gender equality in economic and social policies; women and migration; women and the media; women's rights in an international context.

MIGS receives funding from the European Commission, the Global Fund for Women, the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, the US Embassy, UNDP - Cyprus and other donors.

Website: [www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)

# 1.

## CYBER-VIOLENCE ISSUES: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Michaela Svatošová, Gender Studies, o.p.s.

The aim of this research was to investigate the issue of gender-based media violence, particularly in new media and social networking websites. The main focus was to collect gender-related data on the role of gender in cyber-related abuse (such as sexual harassment, stalking, cyber-bullying, etc.) associated with the use of the internet and new information and communication technologies by young people. The report includes findings from three different countries, Cyprus, Czech Republic and Poland.

### 1.1 RESEARCH REPORT

*This report is a result of a research project conducted by three partner organisations: Gender Studies, o.p.s. (GS) – Czech Republic, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) – Cyprus and Feminoteka (Poland). The project is entitled Staying Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet, and is funded by the European Commission Daphne III Programme.*

*Cyber-violence has become an issue recently due to the massive impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on our everyday life. There have been several research studies focusing on different forms of violence occurring in cyberspace, yet the gender perspective is missing from many of them. This research, however, stresses the gender dimension of this worldwide problem. The gender perspective and an age range that does not focus primarily on young people and children is the added value of this research.*

*We presume that internet behaviour differs in relation with age and gender. Differences could be caused by an assumption of what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour and the perception of violence as a physical, not a virtual, matter. This research attempts to answer the question: "how significant are gender differences in the context of behaviour in cyberspace?" Mapping of gender difference in everyday internet use and the experiencing of (in)security in cyberspace is also a key to this project.*

#### 1.1.1 Project objectives

- Gather relevant information on the role of gender in our experience of ICT in relation to cyber violence
- Raise public awareness about gender-based violence and the role of ICT in everyday life
- Disseminate information about safety in cyber space and provide psychological and legal help to people who have experienced any kind of gender-based violence

#### 1.1.2 Methodology

A feminist theoretical framework was selected for the purpose of the current research. It was based on combined quantitative and qualitative research methods - interactive surveys for the former while a participatory method such as focus groups and interviews were included in the qualitative methods. The research was enhanced by social media research (conducted only in two countries – Czech Republic and Poland). Along with the qualitative and quantitative data collection, a literature review as well as the background research (research of existing material such as law, policy documents, statistics, organisations and hotlines providing help, etc.) was carried out.

The concept of gender used in this study refers to women and men and the power relations between them.

#### 1.1.3 The research objectives

- Collect specific gender-based data about women's and men's experience of gender-based violence
- Gain knowledge and understanding of the role of gender in the everyday use of ICT
- Explore the experience of young people in managing possible and/or actual danger in the form of physical, sexual or verbal violence in cyberspace

### 1.1.4 Sample

#### QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The research sample consisted of approximately 450 respondents (50% women, 50% men). The age range was 14 - 26 years old.

#### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The research sample included up to 10 semi-structured interviews with young people aged 18 to 26 and 1 mixed, or 2 separate focus groups with max. 10 people in total.

### 1.1.5 Data collection

#### QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The survey was conducted through a questionnaire which respondents, aged 14 to 26, completed themselves. The questionnaire was disseminated to the whole region and targeted mainly at students, working students or young working adults of the pre-selected age.

#### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The data were collected via individual, semi-structured in-depth interviews and one (or two separate) mixed focus groups. Each interview took 45-60 minutes, while the focus group lasted 90 minutes.

The semi-structured interviews were based on the format of the questionnaire in the form of an interview guide, allowing for a more detailed collection of qualitative data. The anonymity of the respondents was secured in order to ensure confidentiality.

### 1.1.6 Theoretical Framework

Much has been written about the information and communication technologies (ICT) and their impact on everyday life and the way we communicate. Physical distance is no longer an issue as we can now communicate in real-time with people in different countries; the Internet, along with social media phenomenon, has had an impact on communication in practically all aspects of our lives as Facebook and many other social media forums have taken off and become major influences. Together with the social implications, these changes in the way we communicate have brought to the fore several legal implications and new issues concerning privacy and anonymity, transparency in both private and public spheres.

### 1.1.7 Social network sites

*"Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those*

*made by others within the system. The nature and nomenclatures of these connections may vary from site to site."* (Boyd and Ellison, 2007)

According to recent research, the risky behaviour of young people on the internet (cyber bullying, sharing personal data, etc.) is widespread. However, almost all research fails to provide gender specific data despite gender playing a significant role in bullying, stalking, sexual harassment and tech-related violence in general. While digital safety for children and senior citizens receives a lot of attention, young adults are usually out of focus. In fact, girls and young women tend to use ICT for social interaction more often than men/boys.

The types of unsafe experiences vary according to gender, internet activity, and identity sharing. Increased education in this field is needed as well as further research to monitor both positive and negative impacts on safety and development.

### 1.1.8 Gender-based violence

The term *"gender-based violence"* in this project refers to violence that targets individuals or groups on the basis of their gender. It is "any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public (including cyberspace) or in private life". (EIGE – European Institute of Gender Equality definition)

### 1.1.9 Cybercrime, cyber violence

There are many forms of cybercrime, such as hacking, cyber bullying, fraud, identity theft and harassment. Cybercrime is recognised in two forms – technologies are used as the object of the crime or as a tool of the crime.

Our research uses the term cyber-violence or cyber-bullying as an umbrella term for cyber-crime which uses modern technologies (computers, cell phones, tablets) and the internet for communication and different sorts of interaction.

Cyberspace is a term used for the universal environment where the communication occurs via computer or any other technological device. Cyberspace is very often associated and confused with the internet, which is just one part of cyber.

## 1.2 THE CASE OF CYPRUS: EXPERIENCE OF YOUNG WOMEN AND MEN IN CYPRUS

Research was carried out by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)

### QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

422 university students, 67% female, 33% male aged 18 to 25. More than one-quarter of the sample were working students.

Six individual semi-structured interviews – 3 male, 3 female, one focus group with 8 people (4 male and 4 female) all between 19 and 24 years old.

### 1.2.1 General information – Internet use

According to the research, the majority of the sample spends approximately 4 hours a day online; in fact, women tend to spend a little more time than men. The most common activities online are: communication through social network sites (Facebook is the most common one for both women and men), browsing the internet, and listening to/downloading music.

Women are more likely to use the internet for chatting, sending/receiving emails, and social network sites. According to the findings, men dominate in downloading films, videos and music, and playing games.

The majority of respondents get connected through their personal computers and smart phones.

### 1.2.2 General knowledge of cyber violence

97.4% of all respondents do not feel safe on the internet, with women having stronger feelings about inappropriate behaviour. The most common concerns are about personal data – using personal data to 'have fun at my or someone else's expense', and sexually toned messages.

### 1.2.3 Knowledge of the term cyber violence

The majority (89.6% – women in majority to men) of the participants are familiar with the term "cyber-violence". The knowledge of the term is connected with the ability to explain its correct definition and is gained mostly through the media (TV, internet and news) or heard from siblings/parents or friends.

### 1.2.4 Personal experience of any form of cyber violence

More than one-quarter of the participants reported a negative experience with some form of cyber violence.

Women were more likely to be victims of such violence (28.1% vs 24.8%). In terms of age, the most vulnerable age group was 23-25 years old (39.5% compared to 24.2% for 18-20 years old).

The reported experience with cyber violence consisted mainly of 87.7% receiving unwanted messages and phone calls. Women reported more often such threats whereas men reported more often having had offensive things said about them which other people could see on the internet. One-third of cases referred to the publishing of embarrassing pictures on the internet and over one-quarter of respondents had the experience with impersonation online (men more likely than women 42.9% vs 20.3%).

According to the research, women's experiences concern their safety; men's are related to online activities which harm their "status" and representation.

### 1.2.5 Victims

*"A victim of cyber violence can be anyone of any age and gender".*

However, interview participants often described victims as female 12-15 years olds, especially shy and lonely without sufficient parental supervision.

### 1.2.6 Aggressors

Aggressors were described again as any person; however a typical aggressor is male and older than the victims.

This notion reflects a typical gender order: female – a weak person and potential victim, male – strong in the real world just as in cyberspace. The reality, then, differs.

### 1.2.7 Focus groups

Focus groups pretty much proved what had been mentioned in the qualitative part of the research.

People spend a lot of time with technologies and, due to their accessibility and connections with the real world, the issues of cyber violence happen literally non-stop. Technologies have extended "traditional bullying" and one of the reasons for this is the anonymity that the internet provides. This anonymity is seen as negative, as a tool for bullies, and what's more, it makes the situation for victims more difficult when seeking help. For some people, anonymity brings comfort and protection against any violent attacks.

Women express more concerns about such issues, whereas men do not think it is that big of a problem (for them), but more of a problem for girls/women. Men



are self-assured that they can deal with any violence on their own but at the same time, they do not diminish the consequences such as depression and other physical harm.

Among the most frequent incidents are gossiping online with the intention to harm a person or a group of people. Almost any person participating in this research has experienced some form of violence (most often one of the soft forms such as gossiping mentioned above) or they know people who have experienced more serious forms of violence.

Women are considered as victims. One of the reasons for this, as seen emerging from the qualitative part, is that they expose themselves (pose and post provocative pictures, etc.) and thus put themselves more often at higher risk.

## 1.3 THE CASE OF POLAND

The Research was carried out by Feminoteka Foundation

### QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH ABOUT CYBER BULLYING

The survey was conducted in middle and high schools.

321 people participated in the research survey, 53.9% girls and 38% boys; the rest are without specified identity.

#### 1.3.1 Victims/aggressors

Boys have a tendency to simplify the problem and perceive it as fun and certainly not negative, while girls appraise such behaviour as negative and unwanted. However, boys and girls who experienced various forms of violence on the internet very often do not recognise them as violent.

#### 1.3.2 Access to the internet and technologies

Boys have more free access to computers than girls; some girls admitted that their PC is still under parental control. There was almost zero control from teachers or supervisors. The vast majority of young people participating in this survey use the internet in the form of instant messaging and online searching (both 90%), boys play games, and girls chat online. The majority of boys and girls download music and films from the internet at least once a week. Shopping and making phone calls comprises an almost insignificant statistic.

The average time spent online is about 4 hours a day, girls slightly less than boys. Yet girls are connected to the internet via smartphone more often (4 hours and more) than boys. The most common technology is a home computer (80%) and mobile phone (73%).

#### 1.3.3 Behaviour online

15% of respondents believe that sharing nude photos is acceptable (more acceptable for boys), swearing on the internet is fine and hanging up the phone can be a sign of interest. Sexually-oriented messages can be a compliment for women (13%) and for boys (21%). Boys tend to treat such messages as a compliment to women and do not mind erotic profile photos.

#### 1.3.4 What is cyber bullying?

96% of the respondents were familiar with the term cyber bullying; a little less known (88%) is the term cyber-stalking. The family was identified as the least frequent source of information – television, internet and teachers were in top positions.

#### 1.3.5 Potential risks

The deepest fears of the respondents were described as personal information theft and becoming an object of mockery. At the same time, every fifth person believes that mocking can be fun, while some believe that it can be a form of revenge.

#### 1.3.6 Experience with violence

According to the results, the girls are more often victims of various forms of cyber bullying (37%), boys 25%. Humiliation (36%) and stalking (22%) are the most common forms of cyber bullying. The most common protection strategy is blocking the aggressor (48%) or confiding in a friend (42%). One in three people change their privacy settings or speak about the incident. Girls choose different strategies than boys. Girls would tell a friend in the first instance, block the site from where they were attacked, block the aggressor, or adjust their privacy settings. Boys like to deal with the aggressor themselves or do the same to others in revenge. Young people do not usually seek psychological or legal help, nor the support of teachers' or NGOs.

#### 1.3.7 Risky behaviour on the internet

Almost every second person has shared their personal information and photos online. 3 out of 4 people speak with strangers and 1 out of 4 actually meets a stranger in real life (boys more often than girls). The same with unwanted messages of a sexual nature – boys receive them more often.

When it comes to the perception of victim/aggressor gender, the majority think stereotypically about this relationship i.e. women are victims and men are aggressors.

### 1.3.8 Focus Group report

Two focus groups were conducted in Poland – the first 10 people in middle school, the second 10 people in high school. Focus groups were women only. The scenario for both focus groups was inspired by the survey research.

As both focus groups revealed that the internet, modern technologies and social media have become an integral part of daily life. All female participants are aware of the term cyber violence and its different forms. The “dark side” of the internet is identified mostly with their peer group from the “real world”. Almost every single girl from the focus group shared some experience of cyber violence (primarily related to ex-boyfriends, colleagues, usually a male). Some of the participants also admitted that they consider violent behaviour, such as bullying, somehow funny with no impact on their “real lives”. The importance and alarming threats of the cyber violence phenomenon is somehow taken into consideration by all of the focus group participants. They also find turning to relatives as the most appropriate response to such violence. Educators or specialised organisations were not often approached due to a difficulty in accessibility. The most serious cases would be solved through the police.

The gender dimension varied from stereotypical binary thinking - women are victims and men are aggressors, to women are in danger in most cases. At the same time, the problem with anonymity and privacy emerged from the discussion, both in positive and negative ways. Thanks to anonymity, gender is de-emphasized without differences. Perpetrators and victims of violence can be both boys and girls.

### 1.3.9 Social media research

#### METHODOLOGY

32 Facebook profiles were chosen randomly from the most popular Polish fan pages (via [www.socialbakers.com](http://www.socialbakers.com)). From the total of 32, there were 16 boys and 16 girls aged 14 to 20. All of the personal pages were public. The method used was a content analysis.

Young people often share publicly their personal information which can be seen online. This includes relationship status, age, list of interests or fan pages (school, university), pictures from childhood, lists of friends and hobbies. Because of such public information, a stranger can easily identify who the person is behind the profile.

Girls' behaviour differs from that of boys in many ways. Girls tend to post photos featuring them in sexy, erotic poses, photos of their favourite male celebrities and also photos suggesting sexual relationships with other girls. A common girl's behaviour is to share their emotional state, such as when sad or depressed, whereas boys publicly share their internal conflicts, such as when angry or irritated.

Boys' behaviour differs from girls in important ways. Although, boys may also post photos featuring their bodies, it is usually to demonstrate their masculinity. Boys who do not fit this body type may instead post photos of men who do fit such masculine stereotypes, as their profile or background pictures. In combination with this, boys also tend to use homophobic language towards other boys in order to embarrass or humiliate. Such language is used freely. One can conclude that boys pressure their peers to behave and look in a heteronormative way. Sexist comments and posts – such as photos of sexually objectified women - are also widely circulated by boys. Such activity is usually seen as humorous and fun.

Boys demonstrate their main interests and hobbies through profile and background photos, as well as personal statements in posts. For example, such photos or posts often express their interest in football and other sports. In contrast, girls' posts and photos are more diverse showing a range of interests.

Selfies, a relatively new but increasingly popular phenomenon, and pictures of young people are usually posted in order to test their popularity and attractiveness – seeking as many likes and positive comments as possible.

In general, appearance is one of the most important social stratification factors, and written content mostly consists of very short comments with pictures and emoticons. Privacy settings are insufficient in most cases.

Young people tend to demonstrate their whole life online without considering the short or long-term consequences of such public exposure. For example, they share information demonstrating alcohol and drug abuse, homophobic, racist and sexist attitudes, and aggressive or violent behaviour towards others (bullying, stalking etc.). They also expose very intimate information about their personal lives, disregarding any real or perceived risks.

## 1.4. THE CASE OF CZECH REPUBLIC

The research was carried out by Gender Studies, o.p.s.

#### QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

482 respondents from the Czech Republic took part – 18-29 year olds, 49% women, 51% men.

#### QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Eight people were interviewed aged 18 to 26 (4 men, 4 women). The qualitative part of the research follows up on the quantitative research and used the same scenario.

### **1.4.1 The use of internet**

The internet is commonly associated with information, fun and communication without any gender differences. Women very often add online shopping as an activity and also associate the internet with being a "time stealer". Men refer to work and games.

Men spend more hours on the internet during the whole week, an average of 5.5 hours a day. Women spend around 5 hours a day on the internet. Two-thirds of all respondents own smart phones, however women don't use mobile internet access very often.

Three-quarters of respondents use the internet for chatting, making phone calls (Skype), email communication and social networks. Women are more active when using the internet as a communication tool. However, men spend more time in playing games and chatting in forums corresponding to their interests. Not surprisingly, Facebook is the most widely used, and therefore dominant social network, while Twitter communication is preferred by men. An interesting fact is that the internet, as a term, was interchangeable with Facebook in most cases. The internet was scored very high for the opportunities that it offers, but also for how it stealing a lot of time.

### **1.4.2 Privacy and security**

37% of respondents answered that they do not feel secure on the internet yet at the same time they wouldn't admit that they feel endangered. Most male respondents expressed their feelings of security with the expression "certainly yes" we do feel secure, while women tended more to the expression "partly secure".

Men are more convinced about the security of their data and data protection on their computers and cell phones, whereas women admitted they have some reservations and that their protection is not at a maximum level. Most respondents admitted that they allow their partners to check out their information on the computer and women added that their employers have access to their data in most cases.

One-third of all respondents admitted that they have published personal data (mostly photographs) only to regret it later.

### **1.4.3 Behaviour on the Internet**

Getting in touch – no matter what age and gender, people like to get in touch and meet new people in cyberspace. 9% of all respondents admitted they like to use a fake identity in online communication in order to get to know somebody or just for fun.

Men are more likely to reach out than women, according to the results. Communication with strangers is often rejected by women in contrast to men. Men also admitted that they change their behaviour significantly when they are online.

### **1.4.4 Fake identity**

Around 44% of respondents confessed that they have used some form of fake identity at least once (age, gender, fictional character, publicly known figure or someone they know). 51% of male respondents have experienced this kind of behaviour, women 37%.

Three-quarters of respondents have searched for information about others, 1) because they know them only by hearsay and want more information (online social capital), 2) they find someone attractive, and 3) they are supposed to meet up in a real environment.

63% of people search for information about partners of people they like. Men also answered that they spy on people out of boredom and for fun.

More than 50% of respondents have met in person with someone from the internet (more often men). More women have admitted that they have received a sexually explicit or harassing text messages from an unknown person.

One-fifth confessed to sending a half-naked photo/video to an unknown person. Hacking of an email account or social network account was experienced by 22% of respondents.

Sharing personal pictures doesn't concern women, "we have nothing to hide" adding "when we look good in the photo/video". 43% control what they share, or rather who can see what they post. Only 9% do mind posting personal photos/videos.

Sharing drunken photos, for example, is acceptable (66%) among friends but not on YouTube for instance. One-half of respondents would not mind filming their bosses/teachers in "funny" situations; however they would not share it publicly and would keep it on their cell phones. One-third would never film anything of this sort. Women are more against this generally and in similar cases, 4% would share almost anything with the statistic being higher for men.

The answers vary, not just according to gender, but to the content as well. It is less appropriate to share pictures/videos if they contain relatives or close friends with women being more sensitive in this case. The issue becomes most problematic when content of profile pictures is aggressive, violent or erotic; less problematic when content is funny or of a 'drunken' nature.

Half-naked or erotic photos are more acceptable for women, drunken photos for men.

Every second person has had experience with fake identity, mostly in the form of a short term social experiment.

### 1.4.5 Cyber bullying

One third of the respondents have experienced cyber bullying personally at school.

11% is not sure whether their experience could be described as cyber bullying. 17% admitted that they know of a person suffering from cyber bullying.

Regarding cyber-harassment, the majority of respondents would try to block the source. Women would try to use more protection tricks such as changing email address and they'd prefer to discuss the issue with somebody else such as friends. Men tend to look for the aggressor themselves.

Two-thirds of people are convinced that victims of cyber violence are either men or women equally, 1/3 (of which the majority is women) think it is more of a female thing.

On the other hand, aggressors are very often seen as men by women and men equally.

More than 50% believe that men can fight against cyber violence better than women.

Gossip is spread out and passed by women (more than 50%), 50% men think that men themselves gossip more.

One quarter of respondents think that exclusion of people from internet forums or interest groups is more common among women, 2/3 think that gender does not matter in this case. Again, women think that they do exclude certain people, in most cases contrary to men.

### 1.4.6 Main findings

Cyber violence is not a matter concerning just children – it relates to all age groups.

Every second person has experienced some form of cyber violence.

Every second person has shared, or posted online, their own personal information or information about somebody else – photographs and videos being the most common formats.

The acceptance of cyber violence differs – men seem to be more tolerant. Humour is a part of online communication and thus the level of tolerance is higher.

Women are very often associated with the role of victim and those who spread gossip and rumour; men are associated with the role of the aggressor, yet the reality shows gender does not matter in this case. Women seem to be more cautious in electronic communication while men take things less seriously because they believe they can handle any potential risk themselves.

### 1.4.7 Social media Research

30 Facebook profiles of 14 – 20 year olds were examined (15 male and 15 female). According to the latest statistics presented on [www.socialbakers.com](http://www.socialbakers.com), the most popular Facebook pages of certain age groups were selected. From these pages the profiles were further examined and selected using the content analysis and social media analysis method.

One-third of girls do not use their real name; the visibility of all profiles was very high; all profiles make some personal information public (name of the school, home town, age, relationship status, etc.). Girls were more active in communication and interaction on their profiles. They usually share information (posts and photographs) from their life on a daily basis. The more Facebook friends a particular girl has, the more she posts (the majority were profile photos and pictures of themselves), whereas boys very rarely post their personal photos.

### 1.4.8 Trends among young people

Idols and celebrities such as models, film stars, and athletes are among the most shared pictures. Vulgarisms and rude communication are no exception among boys and girls and it is commonly accepted. Some of the comments show some form of violence, such as humiliation and age discrimination. Both boys and girls enjoy erotic pictures, ideally of themselves or, where lacking the self confidence, of someone they admire. Boys usually show their muscles and girls their breasts or bottoms. Girls like to express their feelings towards other people, usually of a heterosexual nature and also towards animals. Boys like to laugh a lot at jokes of a racist and/or jokes about drug and alcohol.

## 1.5 REFERENCES

Boyd, d. m. and Ellison, N. B. (2007), *Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship*. Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 13: 210–230. doi: 10.1111/j.1083-6101.2007.00393.x

■

# 2.

## BITCHES AND PIMPS. NEW SEXISM ON THE INTERNET

Barbara Buchegger, Austrian Institute of Applied Telecommunications

*LIKE IN "REAL LIFE" GENDER  
STEREOTYPES CAN BE FOUND ON THE  
INTERNET. BEING ACTIVE ONLINE, YOUNG  
PEOPLE FOSTER AND DISINTEGRATE  
THEM. SELF-REPRESENTATION IMAGES  
ARE GOOD EXAMPLES FOR THIS TREND.*

We had already thought them outdated: Gender stereotypes and their influences on girls' and boys' behaviour. The Internet offers new possibilities to play around with different identities and overcome cultural settings. But as a new study has shown, the opposite is the case: Social Media seem to foster or reinforce gender stereotypes. Young people seem to live along these stereotyped lines when they are online. An analysis of profile-pictures on Facebook has confirmed these results.

### 2.1 ONLINE SELF-EXPRESSION RESEARCH

The project ImaGE2.0 [[www.selbstdarstellung.at](http://www.selbstdarstellung.at)] encouraged young people analyse meanings of profile pictures which are used to represent themselves online. In 2013 approximately 50 young people between 16 and 17 years participated in the study. At this time Facebook was still being used as a synonym for the Internet.

Young people discussed how pictures were perceived and what risks could occur. The project was conducted with the funding of FFG and in collaboration with the "Büro für nachhaltige Entwicklung" in Vienna. As a result, a handbook for teachers was developed and can be downloaded in German [[www.selbstdarstellung.at](http://www.selbstdarstellung.at)].

#### 2.1.1 Gender roles in profile pictures

Young people are faced with various influences such as societal behaviour, music, popular culture and commercials. All of these influences seem to strengthen gender stereotypes. During the discussions, the participants detected the following trends: boys are often seen as strong, active people, whereas girls should possess a natural beauty and be a trophy for their men.

Nevertheless young people also found certain ways to break these stereotypes online. Not only are they using dummies as a way to play around with their gender identity, they also shape their personality with individual character qualities (hobbies, music taste ...).

#### 2.1.2 Expressing feelings – less options for boys

The study showed that young people have a wide range of tools to express their feelings: posting images, music videos, texting online, commenting on other postings in social networks, creating individual memes. The possibilities are there and are being used by young people. It emerged that young men have fewer options to share their feelings than young women. "The Internet does not know about any depressed boys," sums this up. Young men cannot easily post their sad feelings, without fearing the social implications, such as being made fun of or being cyber-bullied.

#### 2.1.3 Naked pictures online

Posting naked pictures or videos with explicit content is becoming a more common behaviour among older teenagers. They do it in order to stand out or even to provoke. Quite often it is done in a relationship or in order to be attractive for a potential relationship. A difference can be seen between the reception of such photos from men/boys and women/girls. A young man can easily post a topless photo of himself; a young woman has fewer options. Young women are judged more easily and instantly.

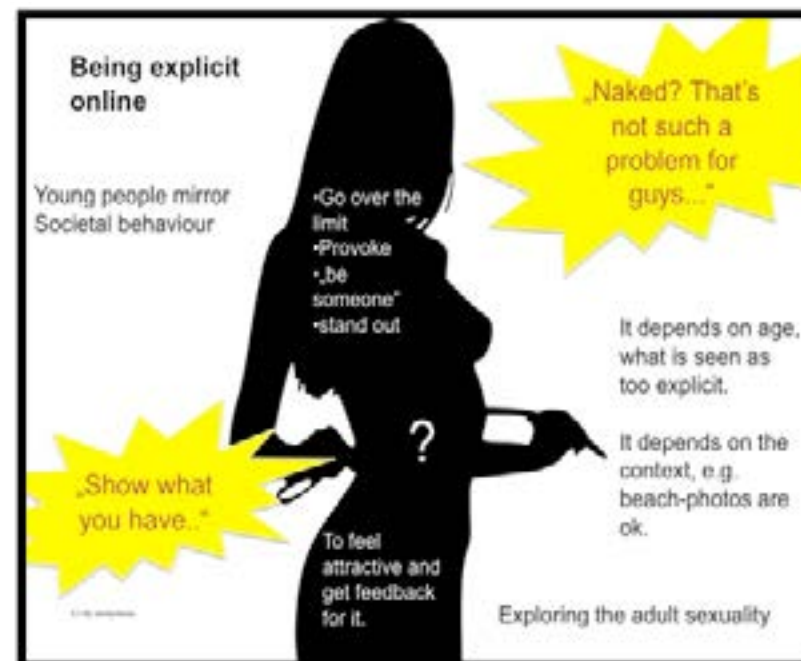
### 2.1.4 Privacy paradox

Young people are quite aware that posting a naked picture of themselves is risky behaviour and can lead to dangerous or unpleasant situations. However, such knowledge and awareness does not always prevent them from continuing to engage in such high risk behaviour and many young people decide to act against 'common sense' when posting such pictures.

### 2.1.5 What is privacy?

Young people define privacy in a different way than adults. When they can decide for themselves who can see their postings or pictures, then they consider online privacy. Quite often young people consider something as private if their parents should not see it.

This is in contrast to many adults who see the distinction between private and non-private in relation to their professional identity. Private usually has to do with home or family, whereas non-private is the professional environment. Young people do not state this difference between their professional environment (i.e. being a student) and their home life. For them, it's not content that is relevant, but the chosen audience.



2.1.4

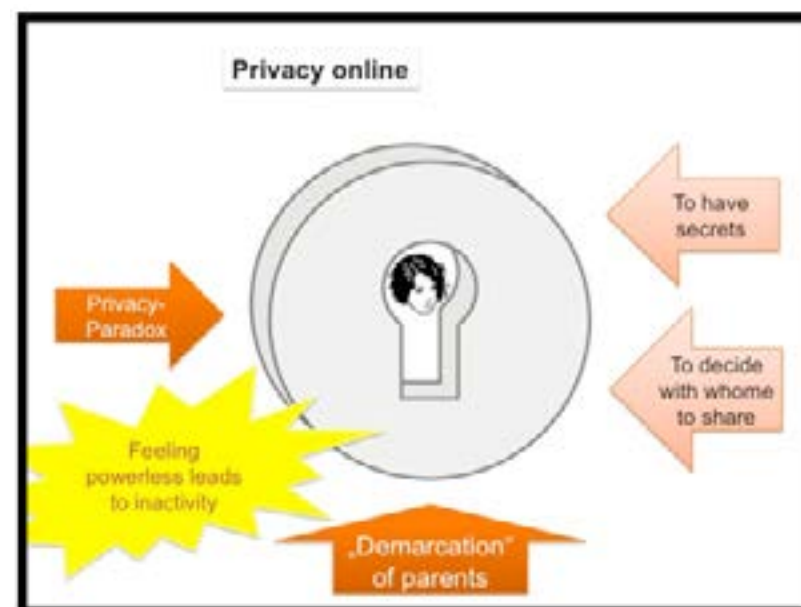
## 2.2 POSSIBLE CLASSROOM-ACTIVITIES

Part of the project included developing classroom activities, which can be used by teachers of any subject or students of any age group.

Gender roles are not only transmitted in general by society, but also by the students' teachers. Quite often teachers judge their students by their behaviour and also by their gender. "Girls are sweet and nice", they listen to teachers and do not disturb too much. "Boys are rude", loud and tend to disturb a lot. Boys are better in maths and science, whereas girls are better with languages or social behaviour. We all know these prejudices. Trying to work with students in a gender-sensitive way could therefore mean to be aware of the teacher's gender-prejudice and work against/around them. This is the basis for reflecting on gender stereotypes together with students in classroom activities, such as the following examples.

### 2.2.1 Strong guys, pretty guys, strong girls or pretty girls?

Ask your students to design 4 different profiles on their favourite social network and for these profiles to be as "typical", as the profiles found among their friends/acquaintances on social networks. Which pictures would these persons choose? Which descriptions? Which films would they like, which music? Language, arts or social learning classes can be used for this exercise. In the classroom, discuss with your students whether they chose traditional gender roles or not. Let them describe what traditional gender roles they perceive and why they think, society is



2.1.5

using those. Can they find differences in the discussion between girls and boys? Do they see a difference concerning gender roles from their parents' generation? Could they see other options in designing these profiles following this discussion?



### 2.2.2 Safer Sexting – Poster

Of course there is no “safer sexting”. Once a picture/film has been posted, there is no control over the existence of that picture/film. But young people have choices when they post a naked picture in order to minimise possible problems. Options include: the use of filters; leaving out the face/head or identifying tattoos so it is less easy to prove that it is them; instead of posting these images, they can show them to their friends on their own phone. Young people have options. In this classroom activity the aim is to explore/discuss these options or try to disseminate these options. Groups of young women/girls and young men/boys (in gender-homogeneous groups) create a poster aiming to raise awareness among their fellow students. They may use images (internet, media) which are appropriate but interesting enough for other students. The goal is to raise awareness on the topic using a variety of interesting and creative techniques. These posters could then be displayed in school. A secondary phase could engage the students in evaluating their work, reflecting on whether young women/girls and young men/boys reacted differently or similarly to the posters, and drawing conclusions as to what works best?

### 2.2.3 Who defines privacy?

In this classroom activity, students conduct a survey on the meaning of privacy for different groups. Firstly, they define privacy for themselves and identify a situation, the topic of which can be discussed with the interview partners e.g. a picture of a drunk person, a topless boy, a “sweet little baby” doing something silly. Students define a guideline for their interview, then conduct them possibly



among parents, grandparents, technophobe teachers, technophile teachers, boys and girls of their own age group or younger. After the interviews – which can be done in groups – they try to find similarities and differences in relation to their own definition of privacy. Do they see gender differences, age differences, differences concerning media competences? Can they draw conclusions for themselves, maybe even relating to their own behaviour?

## 2.3 CONCLUSION

To raise awareness of topics such as gender and ICT, given that teachers' awareness has first been raised. Before working with young people, teachers need to reflect on their own (gender biased) behaviour. But in the case of teachers not being willing to do that, there are still solutions! It is more important that young people have the possibility to discuss and reflect upon such topics in the classrooms.

## 2.4 REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Buchegger Barbara, Schwarz Sonja (2014). *Selbstdarstellung von Mädchen und Burschen im Internet*. Retrieved 2014 November, from [www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/files/imaGE\\_2.0/Unterrichtsmaterial\\_imaGE20\\_Webversion.pdf](http://www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/files/imaGE_2.0/Unterrichtsmaterial_imaGE20_Webversion.pdf)

Bente, Knoll (2014). *Ich im Netz. Selbstdarstellung von weiblichen und männlichen Jugendlichen in sozialen Netzwerken*. Retrieved from [www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/files/imaGE\\_2.0/Ich\\_im\\_Netz\\_Bericht\\_09012014\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.saferinternet.at/fileadmin/files/imaGE_2.0/Ich_im_Netz_Bericht_09012014_FINAL.pdf)







# 3.

## STAYING SAFE ONLINE - GOOD PRACTICES IN LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

Anna Dryjańska, Christina Kaili, Michaela Svatošová

### 3.1 CZECH REPUBLIC

**TITLE:** </THINK> PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY EVEN ON THE INTERNET.

**Promoting organization:** Gender Studies

**Beneficiaries:** general public with particular focus on youth 14 - 29 yrs.

**General Description:** Awareness raising campaign consisting of videos, city lights, posters, leaflets and the website [www.stopkybersikane.cz](http://www.stopkybersikane.cz).

**Lessons, ideas, methodologies:** The main idea of the campaign is to show parallels between real life situations, where most people are cautious and protect themselves and their property and/or privacy, and similar situations and activities happening in cyberspace where the sense for personal caution is many people's weakness.

**Videos** were disseminated via Gender Studies YouTube channel, Facebook site and other communication networks such as mailing lists, other websites, etc. The English version was disseminated via European Commission channels and also through the European Women's Lobby platform. The videos were also screened on Czech TV for a period of two months.



Part of the campaign strategy is to offer the videos to selected film festivals where mostly young people from different parts of the country gather.

**City lights and posters** were placed on public transport – underground stations and/or public trams, for the period of two months.

**The website “stop cyber-bullying”** [[www.stopky-bersikane.cz](http://www.stopky-bersikane.cz)] was launched at the same time along with other parts of the campaign. The website provides basic information on cyber-bullying, prevention and information for victims, contacts for advice and the legal hotline service. The whole multimedia campaign kit is available on the website. The **leaflets**, with similar content, have been distributed to high schools and universities, cafes and other public places where young people gather.

The topic of cyber-bullying and internet safety was communicated with the media (especially media for and/or about youth), including a campaign **press release** and the survey results.

**Indicators for success:** Numbers of shares, website(s) visits, media outcomes.

**Results, outcomes, experiences of this project:** The main aim of this campaign is to introduce the issue of cyber-bullying and internet safety to the broader public from a different perspective. To call attention to the gender dimension of the problem and offer a solution to those who have become victims of such violence. We also expect public and media discussion.

## 3.2 POLAND

**TITLE: CYBER-VIOLENCE. DON'T USE IT, DON'T LIKE IT, DON'T SHARE IT**

**Promoting organization:** Feminoteka Foundation

**Beneficiaries:** Young people, teenagers, their parents or legal guardians, teachers, educators.

**General Description:** The idea of this video campaign was a result of our research which showed that young people didn't recognize that sharing cyber-bullying materials was a form of cyber-violence. Boys often seemed to treat offensive comments, photos and videos as a good joke, while girls were targeted as victims of online sexual harassment. This is why we decided to bring all these issues into one campaign video which shows a new girl being introduced to her class and who becomes a victim of cyber-bullying, even before she has a chance to sit down. Unaware of what is going on; she is being laughed at, called names, characterized as fat and ugly. Her classmates are adding comments and likes; they don't hesitate to participate in cyber-bullying, even as bystanders. Although each and every action is hurtful on its own account, the online dynamics of producing and sharing such content can be devastating to the victim. This is why we ask the viewers not to use, like or share cyber-violence because it is important to break the chain that allows the cyber-violence to keep going.

**Lessons, ideas, methodologies:** The video campaign “Cyber-violence: Don't use it, don't like it, don't share it” can serve as a good starting point for an introduction to the topic in the classroom. It can serve as inspiration for a discussion about the subject, or it can simply be used as an element in workshops on preventing cyber violence. Several

scenarios of such workshops with students are described in the guide for teachers and educators, available in English, Czech, Greek and Polish. Although the campaign video is addressed to mainly young people, it's also useful for teachers as it makes them aware that students have a parallel, online life. This parallel online life continues during classes, while they are not watching. Some teachers may be equally skillful as their students when it comes to social media, but for many of them the internet is only a place where you receive your e-mail. The second group needs to realize that for young people the internet, with all its social services, is no virtual reality but simply THE reality. Sometimes things can get ugly especially when young people use technology to perpetuate violence that decades ago usually required the face to face contact of victim and perpetrator(s). The campaign video and the guide serve to raise the awareness of teachers and educators, as well as helping them to introduce the topic to their pupils.

**Indicators for success:** Over 18.000 views of the campaign video on YouTube in 1 month; the spot has been run on public and private TV several times

**Results, outcomes, experiences of this project:** It turned out that the campaign video hit a sensitive spot - it resulted in many comments regarding the topic on YouTube and other social media networks. The problem of cyber-violence and it's the dimension of gender has been successfully brought into the public eye. Some commentators agree with the campaign message; some refer to past school experiences pre- internet era; some

point out the dangers of technology being put to wrong use. Many people stressed the fact that younger generations are often unaware of the way their thoughtless behavior can affect their peers. Some stated that bullying online can get out of hand much faster than offline, as in the case of things becoming viral. But there were also voices of dissent. Among them, those that stated that the problem has been blown out of proportion, were among the most common. While some see cyber-violence as something unpleasant but not that serious, others insisted that one should be psychologically resilient and this is the price that comes with being online. A minority indicated that “so called” sexual harassment of girls on the internet is just a joke and a normal part of adolescence. There were some heated online debates over the subject. To sum up, the campaign video has been received mainly positively, with some voices of dissent. The video has been successful in introducing the topic of cyber-violence and the dimension of gender, to the public discourse in Poland.

**Website or material available:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ju5ruLW8eIc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ju5ruLW8eIc)...  
(Polish version)

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTGBnb2zAe0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTGBnb2zAe0)...  
(English version)

### 3.3 CYPRUS

**TITLE: STAYING SAFE ONLINE: GENDER AND SAFETY ON THE INTERNET**

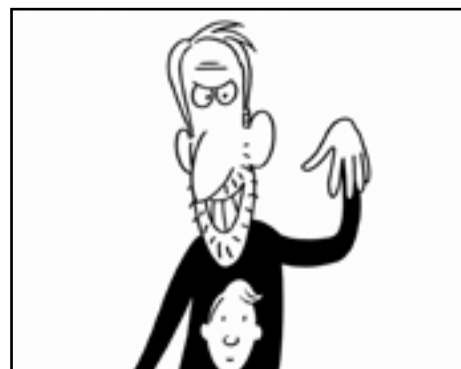
**Promoting organization:** Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)

**Beneficiaries:** Young people 14 - 26 year olds and the wider public. Particularly, the campaign targeted students, parents, educators/teachers, youth trainers, activists, civil society organizations and media professionals in Cyprus.

**General Description:** This video campaign aims to raise awareness on gender based violence through new media technologies. The campaign also promotes the "Safenet-CY" Hotline and the Safer Internet Helpline operated by Cyberethics in Cyprus.

The video campaign was developed within the framework of the project "Staying Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet", funded by the Daphne III Programme of the European Union. The project addresses the issue of media violence, particularly in connection with new media technologies and social networking sites. The overall project aim is the collection of gender-related data and awareness raising about the role of gender in cyber-related abuse (sexual harassment, stalking, cyber-bullying among other) associated with the use of the internet and new communication technologies by young people.

The video campaign address three forms of online gender-based violence including online child grooming, cyber-bullying, and cyber-stalking.



**Grooming:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9QKjYjd\\_cI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9QKjYjd_cI)

#### Lessons, ideas, methodologies:

##### Videos on TV

Implementation of an awareness raising campaign using the key messages/slogan "Think. Act. Report. Stay Safe Online" in Greek. These videos can be further disseminated widely according to available funding (airing time on TV), but also in schools through specific trainings or in class work on the subject. This video campaign requires funding in order to be sustainable. The fact that the videos make use of visuals instead of a specific language, renders it useful in multiple contexts. The campaign's slogan "Think. Act. Report. Stay Safe Online" can be translated. TV channels also can be approached for special deals, ideally to air the videos for free or at special rates. The fact that the video campaign had been launched during the summer ensured more outreach to young people, as they were on holiday from school and had more free time to watch TV. This, therefore is considered to be a good tip as TV is the best medium by which to reach young people during the summer.

##### Videos on the internet and social media

For a more budget-friendly option, the video campaign also can be implemented through social networking sites and electronic media websites.

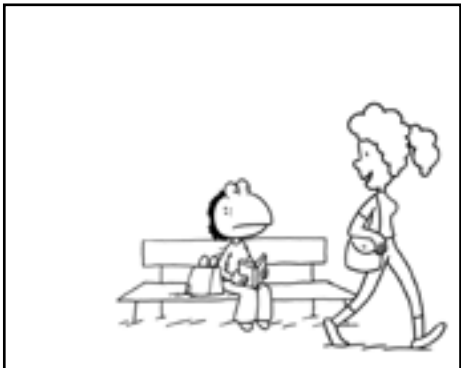
##### The website

[www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org) hosts a webpage on a similar EU project "LOG IN: Laboratories on Gender Violence in New Media" ([www.medinstgenderstudies.org/login-project/](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/login-project/)) which also served as a medium for dissemination of the videos and more information on youth actions.



**Cyber-stalking:**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWla0cusVsM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWla0cusVsM)





Cyber-bullying:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGx\\_JlfP4Mc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGx_JlfP4Mc)

**Facebook**  
The Institute's Facebook page [[www.facebook.com/medinstgenderstudies/](http://www.facebook.com/medinstgenderstudies/)] and the LOG IN Facebook Page [[www.facebook.com/LaboratoriesCyprus/](http://www.facebook.com/LaboratoriesCyprus/)], funded by the LOG IN Daphne III project, constituted two other important mediums through which basic information on cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking and grooming have been disseminated. Wide dissemination through social networking sites contributed in encouraging dialogue among young people and adults on prevention and raising awareness on the issue, and information sharing on contacts for advice and legal hotline service.

**Schools**  
The videos were also screened and distributed in high schools, universities and other public places where young people gather e.g. Summer Safer Internet Festivals.

**TIP: If you wish to adapt these videos to your local context it would be extremely beneficial to collaborate with local helplines, hotlines and other victim support services whose contact details could be promoted through the videos.**

Indicators for success:

Video	YouTube Views
Grooming	426
Cyber-bullying	467
Cyber-stalking	970

Screened in two Summer Safer Internet Festivals (in Paphos and Larnaca).

**Results, outcomes, experiences of this project:** The videos are of great use in raising awareness of three main forms of online gender-based-violence. The videos were particularly useful to young people, educators, youth trainers, parents, and activists. The videos can be further promoted beyond the project end.

The use of graphic design and cartoon design as a method contributing to the video creation, has been a very positive experience. This gave us the opportunity to reach a variety of audiences regardless of age, gender, culture and language.

**Website or material available:**  
Campaign webpage: [www.medinstgenderstudies.org/migs-video-campaign-staying-safe-online/](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org/migs-video-campaign-staying-safe-online/)

Watch the videos here and please share to promote safety online and to prevent gender-based violence!

**Campaign Videos:**  
*Grooming:*  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9QNKYjd\\_cI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9QNKYjd_cI)

*Cyber-bullying:*  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGx\\_JlfP4Mc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vGx_JlfP4Mc)

*Cyber-stalking:*  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWla0cusVsM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWla0cusVsM)

If you wish to adapt these videos to your local context please contact us at:  
[info@medinstgenderstudies.org](mailto:info@medinstgenderstudies.org)

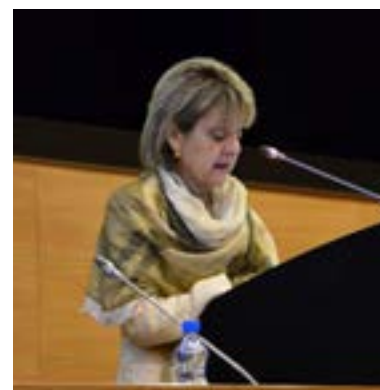
## INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND SAFETY IN NEW MEDIA: REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*Christina Kaili, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies*

The growing use of the social media and other information communication technologies (ICTs), has radically changed the way that teenagers and young people are communicating, networking and sharing ideas and information. While new communication technologies and social media have revolutionized how girls, boys and young people interact with one another, its role in instigating and perpetuating gender based violence among young people has been underexplored. The absence of a robust, evidence base in this area has hampered the development of policies and measures to prevent gender based violence and protect and support those affected.

On Friday, 31 October 2014, the *Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS)* in cooperation with *Cyberethics* organized the Conference entitled “*Gender-Based Violence And Safety In New Media*”, within the framework of the European projects *LOG IN: Laboratories on Gender Violence in New Media* and *Staying Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet*. The conference was under the auspices of the Ministry of Communication and Works and is co-financed by the *Daphne III Programme* of the European Union.

The aim of the conference was to exchange knowledge and good practice in the field of gender-based violence among young people, with a specific focus on the role of new technologies and social media. The conference combined new evidence on gender-based violence and new media, as well as interventions to prevent such violence and empower young people to form healthy relationships and promote responsible behaviour in the use of social media and ICTs.



In her welcoming speech, Leda Koursoumba, Commissioner for the Rights of the Child, stressed the need for multi-agency cooperation in preventing gender-based violence on the internet, but also in ensuring effective prosecution of such crimes. “*The state has the obligation to ensure a systematic review and modernization of the legislation in Cyprus in order to be in line with new technologies and the potential risks for young people and children*”, the Commissioner

affirmed. Ms Koursoumba emphasized the need to focus on the implementation of educational initiatives that enhance children’s “*life skills*” equipping them to protect themselves through critical thinking and improved communication skills for safer use of the internet. Towards these efforts, the Commissioner emphasized the active role of the NGOs, such as the organizing teams, congratulating them for their efforts.

Barbara Buchegger, *Austrian Institute of Applied Telecommunications* was the key note speaker of the conference and gave an inspiring speech on the issue of gender stereotypes reinforced by Social Media reflected by the online behaviour of young people. She gave very important examples from her research work on the analysis of profile-pictures on Facebook, in which young people were asked to analyse meanings of the profile pictures used to represent themselves online (featured in Chapter 2 of this anthology). Buchegger emphasized that to raise awareness of topics like gender and ICT, teachers’ awareness needs first to be raised. At the same time, it is more important that young people have the possibility to speak about and reflect on such topics in the classroom.



The first panel was moderated by journalist Gogo Alexandrinou, and focused on sharing research results and best practice examples on the prevalence of gender-based violence, New Media and effective prevention across Europe. Michaela Svatošová, Project Coordinator of the Daphne III project “*Staying Safe Online*” from *Gender studies*, Czech Republic Staying Safe Online, gave a comparative overview of the research results in the Czech Republic, Poland and Cyprus, highlighting common trends on the issue.



Stalo Lesta, Research Associate, MIGS, presented the main research results of another *Daphne III* project “*STIR: Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships: connecting online and offline contexts and risks*” explaining that cyber violence affects both genders, that it is manifested differently and has a different impact on boys and girls. Girls experience emotional violence, which is very often linked to jealousy and control. The research showed that girls are more often subjected to control and nasty messages over the internet. The presentations were followed by a lively question and answer session where the project partners shared their experiences and their own evaluation of the impact of GBV in the lives of teenagers and adults in the different country contexts.



The second panel of the Conference, moderated by journalist Michaela Loizou, focused on the presentation of recent developments in combating GBV online and a discussion on the actions required for the effective prevention, protection, and prosecution on an EU level. Yiannis Laouris and Iliada Spyrou, of *Future Worlds Centre*, presented the work of the *Safer Internet Centre*, ‘*Cyberethics*’, in providing services to victims of online gender-based Violence through a hotline and helpline. According to the organisation’s statistics, 522 female and 368 males called to report a case or to ask for advice at the Safer Internet Centre ‘*Cyberethics*’ (age ranges: 12-18, 19-30, and 30+). Christina Kaili, Project Coordinator at MIGS, elaborated on peer education as a model to combat gender-based violence among adolescents.

Kaili specifically focused on the main evaluation and results of a series of laboratories with young people in secondary education within the framework of the Daphne III Project “*LOG IN*” and the impact in changing perceptions and attitudes of young people. Shifts were observed in perceptions about violence, gender roles and stereotypes, and the myths about relationships and GBV, as well as greater awareness of the different forms of GBV. Anna Dryjańska, *Feminoteka* presented the Feminist Information Service, Helpline and Bookstore offered by the organisation in Poland, and shared the story of a teenage girl victim of cyber-violence which created an enabling environment for a productive dialogue among the conference participants.

The Conference concluded with two parallel workshops.

The first workshop entitled “*Effective Primary Prevention Strategies*” facilitated by Iliada Spyrou, *Cyberethics*, targeted educators and other professionals and focussed on prevention and education. It aimed to present the tools (textbook and guidelines) produced in the framework of the EC funded Daphne III projects “*LOG IN*” and “*Staying Safe Online*” for educators and teachers. Zoi Kinikli, Trainee, presented the *LOG IN* peer education guidelines on gender violence and the responsible use of social media and new technologies. Christina Kaili, Project Coordinator, *MIGS*, presented the *Staying Safe Online Educator’s Toolkit* introducing the main tips and recommendations offered in the manual, but also promoting the proposed exercises for in-class interventions. Maria Constantinou, *Educational Technology Department, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute*, presented valuable Pedagogical Suggestions and Exercises for Safety Online which can also be implemented in class. The informal workshop format created space for a very productive dialogue and sharing of experiences among the trainers and the educators. Bridges and collaborations were also built for future school based initiatives.



In the second workshop entitled “*Social Media and Cyber-safety Tips*” facilitated by Maria Angeli, Sociologist, the current legislation in Cyprus and cyber-safety tips were presented and discussed with the conference participants. George Karkas, *Cyber-crime Unit, Cyprus Police*, presented the legislative framework in Cyprus which is of importance to school policies and procedures to protect and support victims of cyber-violence.

Alexis Michael, Information Security Manager & Cyber Security Course Director, *Ledra College Nicosia*, shared social media and cyber-safety tips that equip both adults in their educational practice and daily life, but also teenagers in their online and offline behaviour.

The conference received extensive media coverage both in print media as well as in





TV shows where the conference organisers were invited to talk about the event and the research results.

To conclude, 6 key action points emerged from the International Conference “*Gender-based Violence and Safety in New Media*” that the State(s) need to address:

1. A comprehensive National Action Plan must be developed to address the issue of safety on the internet, acknowledging that gender based violence is a form of online discrimination and manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. Timetables, deadlines, and specific budgets for the implementation of such a National Action Plan must be set.

2. The Digital Strategy of Cyprus must incorporate the use of ICT to promote human rights for all and incorporate human rights gender equality principles in the “e-education” section.

3. The Ministry of Education must set guidelines for the development and implementation of school policies and procedures in handling cyber-violence, especially gender-based-violence online (e.g. cyber-bullying, cyber-stalking, sexual harassment). This will ensure raised awareness among educators and other professionals to handle adequately such cases and to provide support to victims.

4. Greater support from the state to NGOs that provide services (e.g. helplines and hotlines, legal support) to victims of cyber-violence.

5. Organise systematic and specialised training using a gender-sensitive approach for all participants (e.g. educators, parents, governmental departments) providing them with the knowledge and skills to address this issue in their daily professional and educational praxis. Ensuring that the adults have the knowledge and skills to support children and teenagers in protecting themselves, preventing gender-based violence on the internet and tackling cases that may arise, is crucial.

6. Organise and implement systematic awareness raising and educational programmes using a gender-sensitive approach for children and young people about internet safety and school procedures and policies in reporting cyber violence, but also about the national legal framework on the issue.

Conference presentations are available on the website of the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies [[www.medinstgenderstudies.org](http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org)].

Here follows the conference agenda.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND SAFETY IN NEW MEDIA  
Friday, 31 October 2014  
Filoxenia Conference Centre – Kyrenia Conference room  
CONFERENCE AGENDA

9:00- 9:05	Welcoming Speech	Susana Pavlou, Director, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies
9:05- 9:15	Opening Speeches	Leda Koursoumba, Commissioner for Children's Rights
9:15- 9:35	Key Note Speech	<b>Gender Violence – Sexism and ICTs</b> Barbara Buchegger M.Ed., Pedagogical Manager, Saferinternet.at
9:35- 11:00	<b>Panel 1 – Research on Gender based Violence, ICTs and New Media Objective: To share research results and best practice examples on the prevalence of GBV and New Media and effective prevention across Europe</b> <b>Chair: Gogo Alexandrinou, Journalist</b>	Staying Safe Online, Research Results in the Czech Republic, Poland and Cyprus Michaela Svatošová, Gender studies, Czech Republic STIR: Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships: connecting online and offline contexts and risks Stalo Lesta, Research Associate, MIGS Q&A
11:20 – 13:00	<b>Panel 2 – Combating Gender based Violence Online: Challenges and Recent Developments in Prevention and Support</b> <i>Objective: to discuss the challenges when addressing the phenomenon, the actions required for effective prevention, protection, and prosecution on EU level.</i> <b>Chair: Michaela Loizou, Journalist</b>	<b>Safer Internet Centre 'Cyberethics'; Providing Services to Victims of On-line Gender-based Violence</b> <i>Yiannis Laouris and Iliada Spyrou, Cyberethics</i> <b>Peer Education as a model to combat gender-based violence among adolescents</b> <i>Christina Kaili, Project Coordinator, LOG IN Project, MIGS</i> <b>Feminist Information Service, Helpline and Bookstore</b> <i>Anna Dryjańska, Feminoteka, Poland</i> Q&A
14:00- 16:00	<b>Parallel Workshop 1: Effective Primary Prevention Strategies</b> <i>Objective: to present the tools produced in the framework of the EC funded Daphne III projects "LOG IN" and "Staying Safe Online" to educators and teachers.</i> <i>*The session will take place in Greek</i> Facilitator: Iliada Spyrou, Cyberethics <b>Parallel Workshop 2: Social Media and Cyber-safety Tips</b> <i>Objective: to present the main legislations in Cyprus and cyber-safety tips.</i> <i>*The session will take place in Greek</i> Facilitator: Maria Angeli, Sociologist, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies	<b>Peer Education Manual: Gender Violence and Responsible Use Of Social Networks</b> <i>Zoi Kinikli, Trainer, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies and Cyprus Family Planning Association</i> <b>Staying Safe Online Educator's Toolkit</b> <i>Christina Kaili, Project Coordinator, Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies</i> <b>Pedagogical Suggestions and Exercises for Safety Online</b> <i>Anastasia Economou, Head of Educational Technology Department, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute.</i> <i>Maria Constantinou, Partner, Educational Technology Department, Cyprus Pedagogical Institute.</i> Discussion and Practical Exercises



## CONTRIBUTORS/ PRESENTERS



BARBARA BUCHEGGER studied landscape planning and organizational development in Austria. She is currently pedagogical manager of 'Saferinternet.at' and is working as a trainer for students, teachers and parents in the field of responsible internet use. She is also working in the field of e-learning. In this paper the results of the project lmaGE2.0, funded by the research Promotion Agency (FFG) were presented.



ANNA DRYJAŃSKA is a sociologist and the author of 'The Opponents of Women Rights Party' exhibition presented in the Art Museum in Łódź. She wrote her thesis on Harriet Martineau. She is the co-author of a research tool created for the purpose of this project; she analysed the available research results as well as the data on cyber-bullying in Poland. She was also responsible for the analysis of social networking websites from the equality perspective.



CHRISTINA KAILI is a sociologist, activist and social researcher. She coordinates and conducts research in the framework of a variety of transnational projects focusing on gender equality, gender-based violence and new media technologies. Christina is also involved in providing training to various social groups, especially young people and adults on online and offline gender-based violence. She is also an active member of the Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Rights of the Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network, contributing to the continuous efforts to promote the central role of women in the movements against oppressive regimes. Christina is a PhD candidate in the Department of Social and Political Sciences, University of Cyprus.



GEORGE KARKAS holds a BSc (Hons) in Crime and Criminology from the University of Portsmouth (2009). He is Assistant Director of the Office for Combating Cybercrime Unit of the Police Department and predominantly investigates cases related to cybercrime (child pornography and hacking), as well as a member of the Advisory Board for Cyberethics of the awareness node Cyberethics.





ZOE KINIKLI holds a BSc in Psychology (University of Nicosia, 2010) and an MA in Clinical and Health Psychology from Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest (2012). Her work focuses on the management of chronic diseases, drug treatment programs etc. In addition, she collaborates with various services providing psychological support. She is a CFPA volunteer since 2009 and she participates as a peer educator in various educational programs offered by CFPA, including the Training for 1455 Helpline and educational workshops at schools covering prevention and sexuality education issues.



LEDA KOURSOUNBA was appointed as the first Commissioner for Children's Rights in August 2007 following the enactment by the House of Representatives of the Commissioner for the Protection of Children's Rights Law in June 2007 (Law 74(I)/2007). Ms Koursoumba studied Law in England and she is a registered advocate in Cyprus. She has specialized in the fields of Constitutional Law, Administrative Law and Human Rights Law, in particular Children's Rights Law, and has dealt extensively with issues relating to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and issues relating to children generally. She has represented Cyprus before international courts, organizations and Committees of the United Nations and of the Council of Europe, in particular human rights treaty-bodies, including the Committee of Experts on the Rights of the Child. She has served as President of the National Human Rights Institution of Cyprus (2003-2008). She was member of the Negotiating Team for the Accession of Cyprus to the European Union. Ms Leda Koursoumba is also serving as Law Commissioner and Deputy President of the Cyprus Red Cross Society.



Dr. YIANNIS LAOURIS is a social and business entrepreneur, a neuroscientist and systems engineer. He was the main Founder of the Cyprus Neuroscience and Technology Institute and he is founding member and elected Secretary General of the Cyprus Society for Systemic Studies, member of the Board of the Institute for 21st Century Agoras and member of the Board of a number of high-tech companies. He has an MD and a PhD in Neurophysiology from Leipzig University in Germany and an MSc in Systems and

Industrial Engineering from the University of Arizona. In the 90's he founded CYBER Kids [[www.cyber-kids.com](http://www.cyber-kids.com)], a chain of franchised computer learning centers, which introduced IT to the lives of over 15,000 children and 10,000 adults in Cyprus. He promotes the application of broadband technologies and structured dialogue as tools to bridge the digital, economic educational and inter-personal divides in our planet.



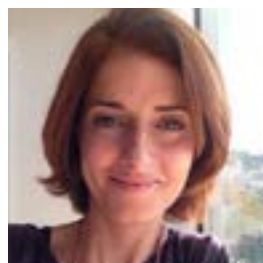
STALO LESTA has been working as an External Associate to MIGS since 2005 in the role of trainer and researcher. Her main involvement was in the field of gender-based violence, under the Daphne Projects Perspective and Youth 4 Youth. She was also the co-author of the training manual '*Youth 4 Youth: Empowering young people in preventing gender-based violence through peer education*'. She is actively involved in issues relating to gender and sexuality, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, sexual abuse against women and children, homophobia and homophobic bullying. Stalo holds a B.A. degree in Statistics (with emphasis in Mathematics and Psychology) from the University of California at Davis. She is also a trained Psychotherapist in the 'Person-Centered / Rogerian Approach'.



ALEXIS MICHAEL is an Information Security professional who currently serves as the Information Security Manager & Cyber Security Course Director of Ledra College. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science from King's College, University of London, a Master's degree in Information Security from Royal Holloway, University of London, as well as a Master's degree in Business Administration from London Southbank University. In addition, he is a Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP), a Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), a Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH), an EC-Council Disaster Recovery Professional (EDRP) and a holder of the Security+ Certification.

Furthermore, he was a founding member of the International Information Systems Security Certification Consortium, Inc., (ISC<sup>2</sup>) Cyprus Chapter, which he currently serves through the position of Secretary. He has published sev-

eral papers and articles concerning Information Security topics and has given numerous presentations at national and international conferences, universities and corporations.



SUSANA ELISA PAVLOU holds a BA in Political Science from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and an MSc in International Politics with an area concentration in the Middle East from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), London University. Susana is currently Director at the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS). Susana has extensive experience in the coordination and management of projects, in gender equality training and education, and in gender research and analysis, with particular expertise on issues of gender and social policy, and violence against women. Susana is a Member of the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combating of Family Violence, National Expert for the European Network of Experts in Gender Equality, and Expert at the EWL Observatory on Violence against Women. She is serving a third term as Board Member of the European Women's Lobby and is a member of the Executive Committee.



ELENA ROUSOU is a researcher and part of the scientific staff at the Cyprus University of Technology, in the Department of Nursing. She conducted research for the project Staying Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet, and an MC member of the COST action ISO206 '*Femicide across Europe*'. Currently, she is a PhD candidate investigating the theme 'The health of single mothers in Cyprus and its relation with the perceived levels of social support'.



ILIADA SPYROU has a BA in Psychology from the European University Cyprus collaborates with Future Worlds Center since August of 2009. Mrs. Spyrou is the Project Coordinator of the Cyprus Safer Internet Helpline, which is being implemented by the Pancyprian Coordinating Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children in the context of the Cyberethics project.



MICHAELA SVATOŠOVÁ is a librarian and a project manager responsible for the project Stay-ing Safe Online: Gender and Safety on the Internet. She graduated from gender studies at the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Charles University and the Higher Professional School of Information Services in Prague and from Manchester Metropolitan University where she studied Information and Library Management. She is currently participating on Take Back The Tech campaign in the Czech Republic. She has been working at Gender Studies, o.p.s. since 2003.

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