Education on Online Safety in Schools in Europe

December 2009

European Commission

Introduction

Today, young people are among the biggest user groups of online and mobile technologies in Europe. Internet and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) open a world of possibilities for children, expanding their horizons and providing opportunities to learn, create identities and participate in society. In parallel, however, this population can also be exposed to risks, such as giving out their private details, cyberbullying or grooming for sexual abuse.

The Safer Internet Programme ([1]) promoted by the European Commission aims to empower and protect young people online, by promoting a safe and responsible use of Internet and other communication technologies and by fighting illegal and harmful online content and conduct. In order to implement the Programme, the European Commission is seeking to identify how national education systems approach online safety issues faced by children and what children learn about Online Safety (OS) in school.

To support European Commission activities, the Eurydice network carried out a study regarding the Education on Online Safety in schools. The data collection was coordinated by the Eurydice Unit of the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) with the collaboration of the National Eurydice Units. Participation in this study by Eurydice National Units was on a voluntary basis only, as it was not included in the network work programme. All the definitions used in the questionnaire follow the official criteria applied in establishing school curriculum. They use commonly accepted definitions for educational levels, subject content, teachers, teacher training, etc.

The present report summarises the information received from 34 Eurydice Units representing 30 countries, covering the 2008/09 school year. The main findings of this exploratory study cover the Primary and Secondary schools and are related to issues such as school curriculum, methods of teaching, specific teacher training and qualifications or cooperation between the educational authorities and other public or private organisations in the field.

Online Safety – a brief overview

The use of the Internet and other online technologies continue to increase across Europe, and young people are among the first to take up the new technologies and services. According to recent research, 70 % of 6-17 year olds in the EU-25 used the Internet in 2005. This had increased to 75 % by 2008, with a striking rise among younger children – 60 % of them used the Internet ([2]). The use of the Internet and other communication technologies can greatly enhance the education and life experience of millions of young people. They open up new opportunities for young people, boost their creativity and greatly contribute to achieving the pan-European aims of fostering e-skills, e-inclusion and digital competence.

However, the technological developments and their use by children and young people pose risks and present challenges related to five main areas common across European countries: giving out personal information, seeing pornography, violent or hateful content online, being bullied (i.e. cyberbullying),

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[1]   http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/sip/index_en.htm

[2]   http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/EUKidsOnline/Reports/EUKidsOnlineFinalReport.pdf

receiving unwanted sexual comments and meeting an online contact offline ([3]). In order to stay safe, children and young people need to be informed about both online opportunities and risks and how to deal with these risks – they need to be empowered to use the internet in a safe and responsible manner.

Since its set up by the European Commission in 1999, the Safer Internet Programme has been seeking to deal with these issues. The Programme co-funds 27 Safer Internet Centres, with the mandate to carry out awareness-raising actions – Internet Safety activities – targeting children, parents and teachers in order to empower children and young people to use the Internet and other online technologies in a safe and responsible way.

The Programme has had to keep up with fast technical, market and social changes in this field, in particular relating to the use of the technologies. From mostly looking for information on static websites, users have now become the main actors in the world of Web 2.0, where they provide the information, upload photos and videos, blog, chat and are experts in social networking. In addition, the Internet is available via mobile phones and game consoles.

The running Safer Internet programme 2009-2013 aims to face these new challenges with a view to empowerment and protection of children: the increased interactivity and mobility of Web 2.0 and the decreasing age of the Internet users.

Online Safety issues are present in the school curriculum in the majority of European countries
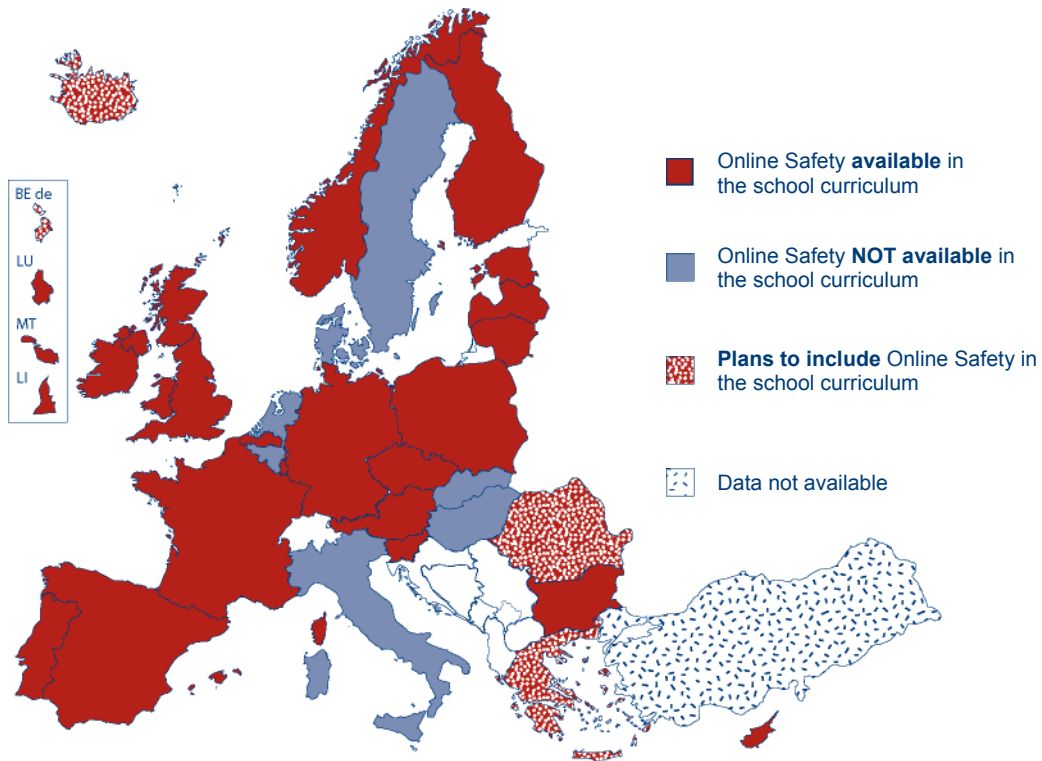
From 30 countries that participated in the study, education on Online Safety (OS) is included in the school curriculum in 24 countries/regions. However, it is implemented through a range of different methods. Eleven countries/regions do not currently include Online Safety in their school curriculum at central level. However, four of these countries/regions plan to implement OS subjects starting from the 2009/10 school year (Belgium – German-speaking Community, Greece, Romania and Iceland). For the Netherlands and Sweden, countries with high levels of school autonomy on definition of subjects and taught time, OS is not included as a subject at central level. However, it may be included in the school curriculum if it is decided by the local school authority or by the school head. In Denmark, there are no immediate plans to develop an OS subject in the curriculum. Nevertheless, the Ministry of Education has appointed a group of experts for the re-definition of the mandatory learning objectives in the curriculum, including security issues related to communication.

Topics associated with OS were included in the national school curricula very recently. In more than 80 % of the countries, they were introduced during the 2006/07 or 2007/08 school years. For this reason, presently, there are no evaluations of the impact of these subjects on general pupil/student performance and behaviour.

([3])   http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/EUKidsOnline/Reports/08_0699EUKidsOnlineReport_Web.pdf

Figure 1: Online Safety education in the school curriculum (primary and secondary education), 2008/09

Online Safety **available** in the school curriculum

Online Safety **NOT available** in the school curriculum

Plans to include Online Safety in the school curriculum

Data not available

Source: Eurydice.

Additional notes

Belgium (BE fr): Elements of OS are included in the education and media subject.

Denmark: The Ministry of Education has appointed a group of experts to revise the mandatory learning objectives of primary and lower secondary school (the so-called common objectives). Although not directly stated in their commission, the group has focused on the security aspects of acting in cyberspace, especially in relation to communication. Currently, there is no final decision on including OS in the school curriculum.

Italy: At present, the school curriculum doesn't foresee any specific training on this subject, except for some initiatives or experimentations started up by individual schools according to their autonomy.

Hungary: The National Core Curriculum (NCC) describes the common values guiding the curriculum development. Local curricula are developed by schools on the basis of the NCC and are approved by teaching staffs and maintainers. Teachers can add updated relevant topics when writing up their actual lesson plans.

Netherlands: OS is incidentally taught in Dutch schools at both primary and secondary levels as part of 'Mediawijsheid' (media literacy) and information competencies. Both subjects are not strictly tied to the curriculum in terms of competencies and (exit) qualifications.

Sweden: OS may be integrated in subjects that form part of the curriculum if decided by the local school authority or school head. There are no immediate plans to introduce OS as a stand-alone subject in the Swedish school curriculum. However, the Swedish National Agency for Education has been instructed to support development of ICT in schools. In this respect, the Agency should promote safe use of ICT and online safe behaviour, highlight privacy issues and promote critical discussions on the use of information available on the Internet.

Iceland: OS is taught in some schools both at primary and secondary levels, but there is no centralised information on the topic.

Explanatory note

Online Safety (OS) includes information on the potential risks that children may face online – such as grooming (befriending of children for sexual abuse), cyberbullying (ill-treatment of others through harassment or exclusion), privacy, harmful content – and empowerment to use the Internet and mobile phones responsibly.

Online Safety is present both in primary and secondary education in almost all countries

Issues related to Online Safety (OS) are treated in secondary level education in all the 24 countries/regions that have introduced such topics in their school curricula. In the majority of these countries/regions, elements of OS are additionally included as a cross-curriculum theme at primary level. Questions dealing with OS are taught only at secondary level in Bulgaria, Germany, Cyprus, Lithuania, Austria and Slovenia.

Figure 2: Online Safety as part of the school curriculum in primary and secondary education, 2008/09

- Online Safety included in **primary education**
- Online Safety included in **secondary education**
- Online Safety not included
- Data not available
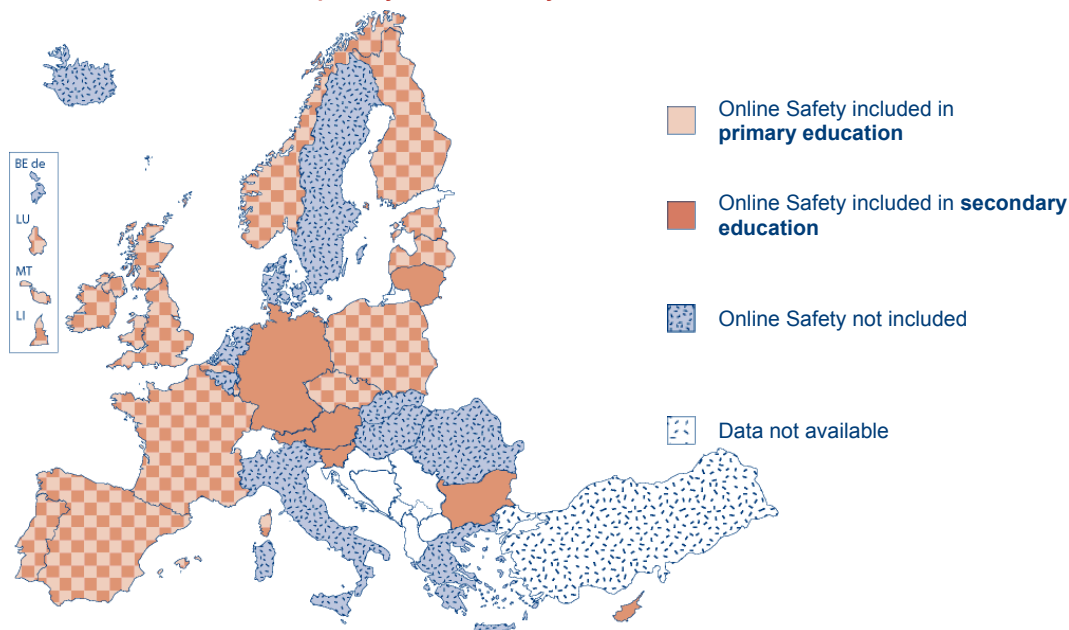
Source: Eurydice.

Additional notes

Belgium (BE de): Some schools have developed internal ICT-curricula with OS elements especially in secondary schools.
Germany and **Lithuania**: In primary schools elements of OS are generally taught on an informal level (projects, working groups, part of other subjects).
Luxembourg: In primary education, OS has been included for two years as a trial exercise from third to sixth grade of the *enseignement fondamental*.
Austria: The subject *Informationstechnische Grundbildung in vernetzten Systemen* (Information technology education in networked systems) is taught on a voluntary basis for pupils aged 10-14 in schools actively using ICT. For students aged 14-18, the subject *Netzwerktechnik mit Übungen* (Networking with exercises) may be taught with a stronger emphasis on technical aspects.
Romania: OS topics are planned to be included both in the primary and secondary school curricula in 2009/10.
Iceland: OS is taught in some schools at primary and secondary levels, but there is no centrally aggregated information.
Liechtenstein: Some elements of safe use of computers are also included at pre-primary level.

At primary level education, the introduction of subjects is mainly done on an informal basis or as part of specific educational projects or working groups. At secondary level, Online Safety is taught in a more structured way as part of ICT or computer science subjects or other more general subjects.

The grades and age groups for which OS issues are included vary considerably from one country to the next.

Online Safety is part of different subjects of the school curriculum and it is taught with flexible timetables

Online Safety (OS) is included in the curriculum following different paths and levels of intensity. In many education systems, elements of OS are present in the list of skills that must be developed by the ICT subject, but also by a broad range of other subjects that build up personal, social, health and economic competences. In another group of countries, this general approach is complemented by specific definitions. In the Flemish Community of Belgium, for example, 'E-safety' is specially designed in the new ICT-curriculum involving a wide range of competences and attitudes. These attitudes include working rigorously and carefully; taking care of equipment and software; vigilance about harmful or discriminatory content; being aware of viruses, spam and pop-ups; and recognising unusual and unreliable messages. In Spain, OS is included in a more general curriculum key competence called 'Information process and digital competence'. This skill entails a person being autonomous, efficient, responsible, critical and reflexive when it comes to selecting, dealing with and using information and its sources, as well as different technological tools. It also creates critical and reflexive attitudes concerning information assessment, verifying it when necessary, and respecting the socially agreed behaviour norms to regulate the use of information and its sources.

In the Czech Republic, OS measures are included in the Framework Educational Programmes with a broader scope, aiming to prevent xenophobia and racism according to the UN Convention on Children's Rights. In Finland and the United Kingdom, elements of OS are included in subjects related to the development of media and communication skills. Finally, in the Netherlands, even if there is no direct definition of OS in competence (exit) qualifications, pupils/students learn about how to take care of themselves, others and the environment. Furthermore, they learn how to positively influence one's safety in different living-situations.

OS has a flexible timetable in the majority of European countries, being taught as a horizontal theme of a wide range of subjects. Generally, schools are responsible for allocating the number of hours devoted to OS and the specific arrangements for content distribution between subjects.

Conversely, in Bulgaria, Cyprus and Latvia, this subject is only part of the ICT curricula. In these countries, as an estimation based on the general programme devoted to ICT, OS is taught for an average of 5-10 hours per year. In France, Lithuania, Malta, Poland and the United Kingdom, the issues related to OS are mainly included as elements of the ICT curriculum, but are also present in some other subjects.

Among the countries that have no central recommendation on the inclusion of OS in the school curriculum, Belgium (German-speaking Community) has schools which may include elements of OS as part of the ICT subject and in the Netherlands, these topics are integrated within a set of other subjects. Additionally, in Romania, the plans for implementation of OS in schools include different topics of OS in subjects such as civic education (primary level), counselling and orientation (secondary level).

Figure 3: Means by which Online Safety is taught in schools, 2008/09
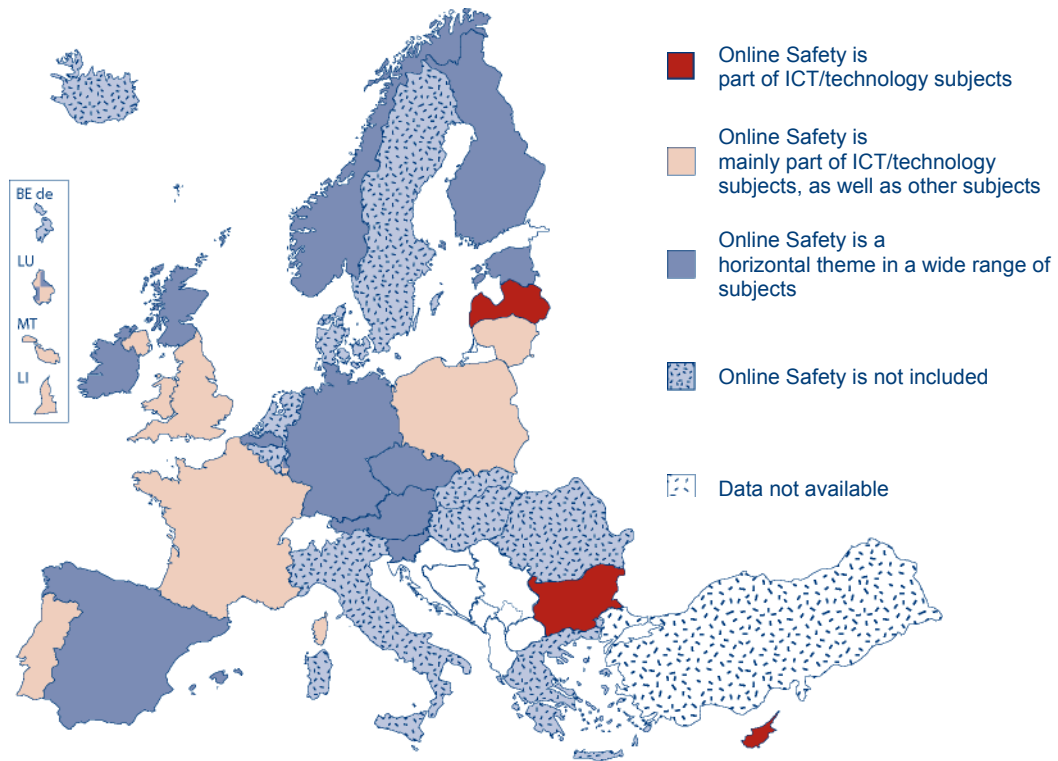
Source: Eurydice.

Additional notes

Spain: OS issues are also present as specific parts of the ICT subject in compulsory lower secondary education.

Poland: In grades 1 to 3 of primary schools, OS is taught in the framework of integrated teaching. Elements of OS are often included in classes with the class tutor devoted to behaviour/conduct issues.

Portugal: OS topics are included as a priority in the ICT subject (9th and 10th grades) and civic education (5th grade). In 8th grade, a growing number of schools promote OS in the subject 'Project Area' following recommendations from the Ministry of Education.

Sweden: The local school authority may decide to have OS taught within other subjects.

United Kingdom (SCT): Digital safely is included in Health and Wellbeing, Technology and Literacy Experiences and Outcomes parts of the curriculum.

A wide variety of issues dedicated to Online Safety are included in the school curriculum

As stated in the first section of the report, Online Safety may include a large variety of topics. In the present study, six main elements were analysed: *Online safe behaviour, Privacy issues, Cyberbullying, Download and copyright issues, Safe use of mobile phones and Contact with strangers*.

'Online safe behaviour' is present as a theme in all of the countries that have OS included under some form in the school curriculum. This topic tries to prevent persons with a sexual or any other illegal interest in children using technologies to be friend and get close to them (so-called 'grooming'). In the online safe behaviour topic, students are taught to not reveal any personal information, nor give

out their address, name of their school, telephone numbers, etc. Additionally, some initiatives are developed at schools to aid children in identifying the potential risks that exist in social networking sites, chats and blogs. Directly linked to the safe online behaviour in almost all the countries, the **'privacy issues'** are included in the curriculum. Students are shown how to develop the ability to keep their life and personal affairs out of public view, or to control the flow of information about themselves. A complementary approach is to avoid the publication of personal information on blogs and homepages and to engage on social networking sites with the perception that this can really only be seen by the persons they want to see it. In more advanced courses it is also explained how companies and agencies gather information about a person and how they use it in situations other than the ones the person has allowed them to.

'Download and copyright issues' are the second element of OS present in almost all the countries. The activities that are included try to persuade children about the existence of copyright for some online materials and that copyright gives an exclusive right for authors to distribute, reproduce and make their works available to the public. Even if file sharing is not illegal when it involves sharing of private files, pupils are advised that uploading and downloading music and movies without prior permission from the rights holder is illegal in European countries. The peer-to-peer networks are also analysed and children are taught that these networks allow people to share files that are stored on their personal computers with others that are connected to the network. In that case, as many peer-to-peer providers offer anonymity, they have often been associated with illegal file sharing and children must be aware of those issues.

Instruction on how to deal with **'Contact with strangers'** on the Internet is also a very relevant topic present in 80 % of the national curricula that have included some elements of OS. Children are advised that the process of getting close to them happens through a progression of manipulation and persuasion, in many cases without the child noticing it. To avoid any kind of physical injury, children are recommended never to meet someone that they know online without telling an adult and to always meet in a public place.

Bullying in schools has become a subject of growing importance within the last few years. In parallel, with more and more children using the Internet and mobile phones, bullying has also become present in that space as **'Cyberbullying'**. In the countries where this topic is discussed as part of the Online Safety subjects, students are advised of the ways in which cyberbullying can take place via e-mails, or instant messages; posting nasty pictures or messages about others in blogs, profiles, homepages or on websites; using someone else's user name to spread rumours or lies about someone (stolen identity). In all cases, children are advised to communicate with their parents and school tutors and not to remain silent to any incident. In many countries, this topic is also treated in collaboration with NGOs that in some cases are active in schools.

Finally, the **'Safe use of mobile phones'** is less present as an OS subject in the curricula but some complementary initiatives exist in many European countries. Young people use mobile phones for talking, sending text messages (SMS), taking and sending photos, playing games etc. Although their use of mobile phones gives them great opportunities, there are also certain risks associated with that use. More and more mobile phones have full Internet access and children and young people use stationary Internet connections and mobile phones in a dynamic manner. Therefore, the same safety measures as for using the Internet become important for using mobile phones (protection of personal data, harmful content, consumer protection, gaming etc.). In general, children are advised to refrain

from lending their mobile to others, and to not give away their password or send personal information to anyone, etc. Additionally, students are recommended to talk with their parents or someone they trust to help them if they experience bullying or other harmful activity.

In many countries some other topics are present in the OS curriculum, which can include elements of cybercrime issues or computer games addiction as in Latvia, or some legal issues regarding Internet shopping, as in Germany. In a set of countries, issues like computer viruses and other harmful programmes that can be distributed over the Internet are also included in the curriculum.

In the eleven countries/regions that had not reported the inclusion of OS in the curriculum, some of the discussed topics are also present in their school programmes. In Belgium (German-speaking Community) elements such as 'Safe online behaviour', 'Privacy issues', 'Download and copyright issues' as well as 'Contact with strangers' are included in various subjects. In the Netherlands, the school authority can decide on the different topics that may be included in the curriculum even if there is no central recommendation in that respect. Finally, in Romania, the plans to include OS in the school curriculum preview the teaching of all the indicated themes.

Figure 4: Content of the programmes on Online Safety by country/region, 2008/09
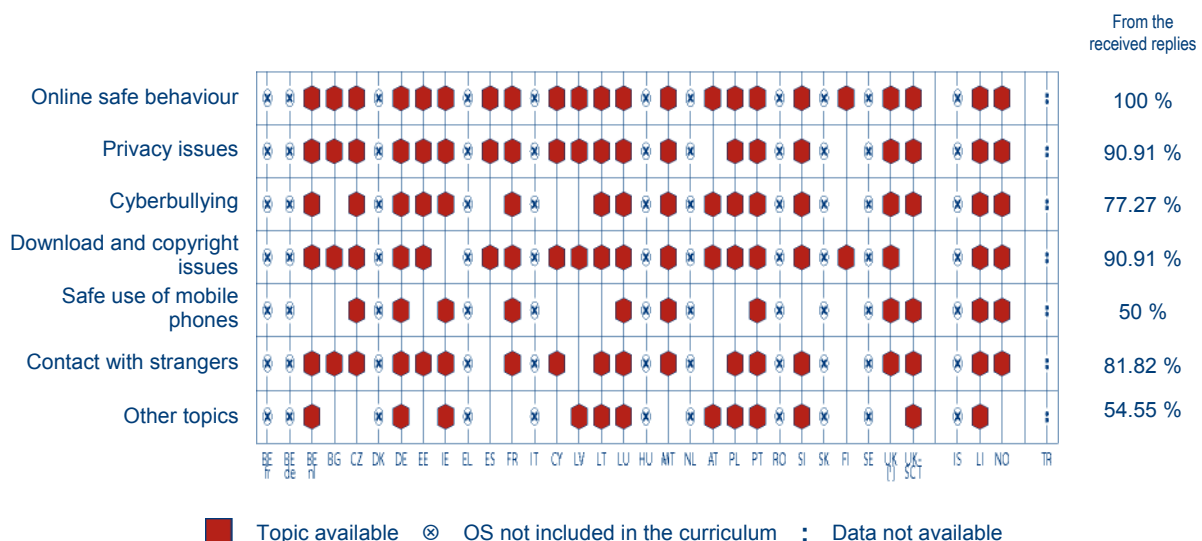
Source: Eurydice

Additional notes

Luxembourg: Also included in the curriculum are other topics such as protection of passwords, update of information systems and applications and firewall management.
Portugal: Other topics included in the curriculum are mainly related to security of data, backups and informatics viruses.
**United Kingdom**: Occasionally other issues such as commercialism, media literacy, digital literacy and reliability and bias are included in the teaching content related to OS.
Liechtenstein: Other issues included in the curriculum are the Internet and ethics, access to technology, societal aspects and equal opportunities, dependency on the Internet and information flows (sources, content and credibility).

Teachers with specific training on the subject are responsible for Online Safety

The responsibility of teaching Online Safety topics in the curriculum is shared in the majority of the European countries between the ICT teacher and other teachers. In Bulgaria, Cyprus, Latvia and Poland, only the ICT teacher is responsible for the teaching of that content. In the countries where OS elements are taught as part of other subjects, teachers (and school heads) are responsible for the methods and content that are taught. When OS content is taught in primary schools as part of the integrated teaching, the classroom teacher is responsible for it. In some countries, external experts assist teachers when teaching OS content within the framework of projects or working groups. Finally, in another set of countries the central or local school authorities may decide on the teacher that will deal with that subject depending on the school programme distribution and time allocation.

Figure 5: Teachers responsible for Online Safety in schools, 2008/09
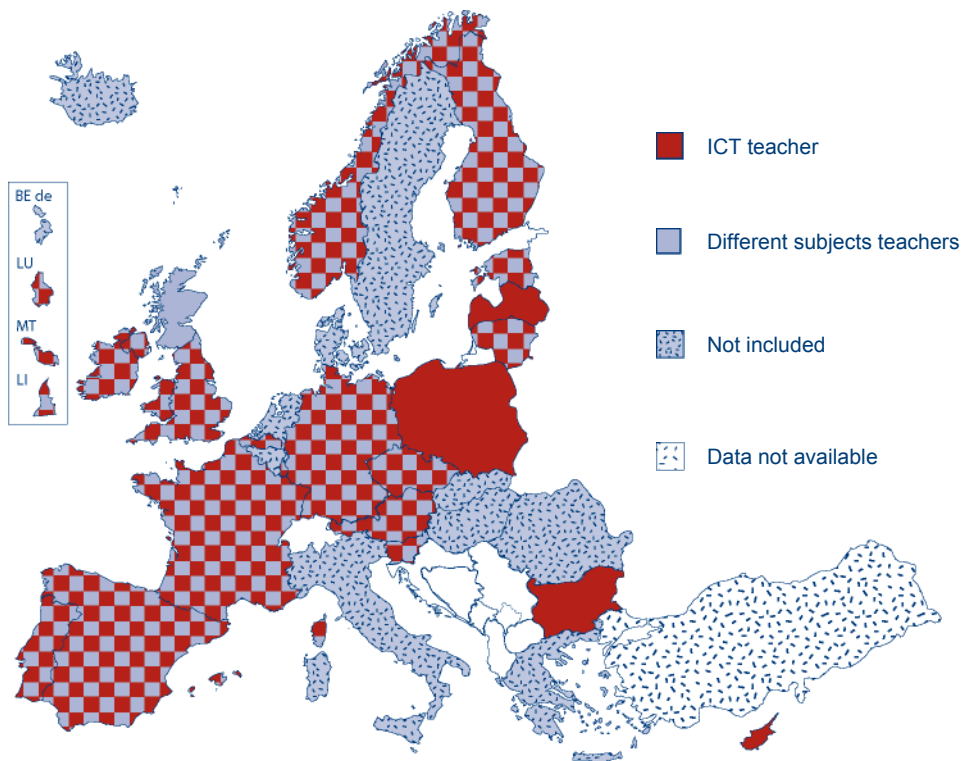
Source: Eurydice.

Additional notes

Austria: Teachers may be assisted by informatics-facilitators when teaching OS topics.
Poland: See note in Figure 3.

In all the European countries, the teachers responsible for OS issues must have the specific general teacher's qualification and in many cases specific additional training on ICT issues.

Independently, if OS issues are included in the school curriculum, teachers receive some form of specific training on similar topics. In almost all the countries, there are specific professional qualification courses that include online safety issues at pedagogical, technical and organisational level, but in the majority of the cases these courses are voluntary. The courses are provided by the institutes for teacher education or by consortiums that are responsible for promoting awareness creation on OS. In Greece, the Ministry of Education is directly promoting training courses via the national educational programme for computer science teachers. In France, the training is provided in two phases: training of the school heads and transfer of knowledge from the school heads to the teaching teams. The school heads in those cases work in close collaboration with the ICT advisers at regional level. In the Netherlands, the existing courses train the teachers to obtain a position towards the media and the digital information and aim to position the teacher as an information-mediator. As additional training in many countries, the responsible authorities provide self-study materials for teachers with specific information and exercises to execute in class and in some cases interactive online courses (e.g. Spain, Luxembourg, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

Educational authorities establish a broad public/private partnership to promote Online Safety measures

In almost all the countries, some form of public-private partnership exists to promote the Online Safety activities. These collaborations can be expressed in sporadic participation of the private actors in conferences and workshops or through the establishment of long-term activities related to infrastructure or methodological projects in schools.

In all the cases, during the Safer Internet Day (normally in February each year), private companies collaborate in campaigns to raise awareness and inform parents and children. Usually a wide variety of conferences devoted to topics around children's and young people's safety on the Internet and problems of tackling illegal and harmful content online are presented.

In addition, in many European countries, the educational authorities had established some form of public-private partnership concerning the promotion of Online Safety for young people in general and in schools in particular. In some countries, private companies support the public authorities in the purchase of computer equipment or specific software dedicated to protect the Internet connections and to monitor the undesired external access to school computers and networks.

In Italy, the Directorate General for the Information Systems of the Ministry of Education developed a broad consortium which includes the Telecommunication Police, the Caspur Consortium and the University *La Sapienza* for the project called *I ragazzi e il web* which aims at alerting young people aged 14-16 to a safe use of the Internet, with the involvement of teachers and parents. Starting with the school year 2007/08, a specific consortium was also established in Slovakia to develop the *Safety Internet project*. The consortium is coordinated and financed by Microsoft and the bank Tatra banka. Within the framework of the project, the training of pupils, teachers and parents is still ongoing. The total number of pupils who should be involved in the project is about 15 000 plus 500 teachers.

In Poland, specific software that blocks access to websites with unwanted/harmful content was offered to schools free of charge via the Ministry of National Education's website. The project was co-funded by the European Social Fund. Around 20 thousand schools received such software in the framework of the *Computer classroom project* and 12 thousand school libraries in the framework of the *School Libraries project*. Additionally, the Ministry of National Education concluded an agreement with Microsoft Poland to support the implementation of the 'Strategy of development of information society in Poland until the year 2013', in particular in schools and educational institutions. On the other hand, a Team for *Counteracting Discrimination of the Young in Electronic Mass Media* was created, including representatives of 70 public institutions and NGOs, amongst others the representative of the Ministry of National Education. The Team has a separate sub-team concerned with OS and works on legislation proposals, terms of cooperation, projects of educational campaigns and monitoring of the situation related to children/youth and mass media.

In France, a specific network called *Renater* aims to bring together the teaching and research sectors. Local authorities can link networks of primary and secondary schools to it through the intermediary of the rectors' offices *(Rectorats)*. Through similar partnerships and in cooperation with the teaching teams, the initiative *Kidsmart* has been developed in nursery schools. This initiative aims to lead the discussion on the use of ICT and to assess the specific benefits of educational ICT for learning.
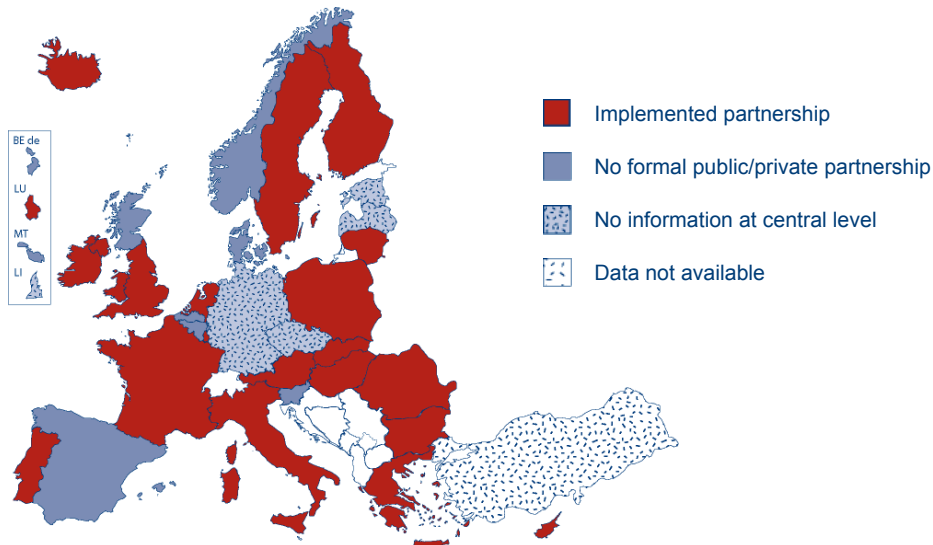
The Greek Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs developed the Greek School Network (GSN) which links schools of primary and secondary education, second chance schools, the regional training institutes, diagnostic, evaluation and support centres, adult education centres, environmental education centres, general state archives, public libraries and consulting youth centres. The GSN is an educational intranet which provides basic and advanced telematic services and which also analyses issues such as chipper of data, viruses, firewalls, digital certificates and safe transactions.

Other specific actions were developed in Bulgaria, where the Ministry of education is a member of the Council for fighting illegal and harmful content on the Internet, and in the United Kingdom, where the Council for Child Internet Safety has been set up and brings together a multitude of stakeholders to make the country a safer place for children. In Denmark, in the framework of the reflection process to include OS issues in the school curriculum, experts from the private and research sectors were consulted.

In Luxembourg, mobile phone operators are involved actively in the preparation of teaching materials and in the definition of annual reports. Additionally an active inter-institutional monitoring of all the OS issues by different ministries and legal institutions exists.

In Portugal, Portugal Telecom is the responsible provider for the network that connects the national public schools to the Internet and also is part of the *SeguraNet* Team that coordinates the dissemination of Internet Security in the educational community. Microsoft Portugal is another relevant national partner in OS and actively promotes awareness, training and promotion of critical and safe navigation on the Internet.

Figure 6: Public-private partnerships to promote Online Safety in schools, 2008/09

Legend:
- ■ Implemented partnership
- ■ No formal public/private partnership
- ▨ No information at central level
- ▨ Data not available

Source: Eurydice

Additional notes

Germany and **United Kingdom (SCT)**: Generally Public Private partnerships are organised on school/municipality level.
Liechtenstein: Cooperation is mainly developed at regional level in consortiums with other organizations in the neighbouring countries.

Broad cooperation between the educational authorities and the Safer Internet Centres in the European countries

Ministries of Education or other Educational Authorities are normally represented in the national Safer Internet Centres supported by the Safer Internet Programme. In general, the cooperation taking place under the Safer Internet Centres is linked to participation in regular meetings with all the involved partners and exchange of information and expertise. The active participation in the Safer Internet Day of the educational sector is one of the direct effects, but not the only one, since in many countries more intense initiatives are also present. For example in Belgium the *V-cards* and *SI family package* actions were developed; in the Czech Republic, in the 2008/09 school year, a competition for pupils at the age of 10-16 focused on the ethics of working in cyberspace was developed.

In Germany, the *Klicksafe* initiative was developed as a collaborative project of the Central Authority for Media and Communication Rhineland-Palatinate (LMK) which is responsible for coordination, and the Media Authority for North Rhine-Westphalia (LfM). On the basis of the active collaboration between the *Länder* Educational authorities during the last two school years, *Klicksafe* manuals are distributed in the school system and are actively used in all subjects related to ICT.

The Estonian Ministry of Education, with the collaboration of the Tiger Leap Foundation and the national Safer Internet Committee, organized the multimedia contours *Traps in the Internet* for students to collect stories of what might happen to kids online if they provide too much personal information about themselves. As result of that competition, there are now 220 different cases provided as collaborative works and individual contributions.

The Spanish Safer Internet Centre, called SAFENET II and coordinated by the association Protégeles, signed an agreement with the main confederations of parents' associations, as well as with the Ombudsman for Children, RED.es, and the main teachers unions. That agreement provides a wide basis for collaboration in schools and also entails an important preventive aspect through campaigns, studies and materials directly addressed at the main agents in the educational field: pupils, parents and teachers.

In Denmark, the Danish Media Council which coordinates the Danish Safer Internet Centre has collaborated with the Danish IT Centre for Education (UNIC) under the Ministry of Education on a web section with educational material, tasks for students, guidelines and information for teachers within themes about web ethics and IT security issues for teachers on Denmark's largest educational portal (www.emu.dk/webetik).

Figure 7: Cooperation between the educational authorities and the Safer Internet Centres, 2008/09
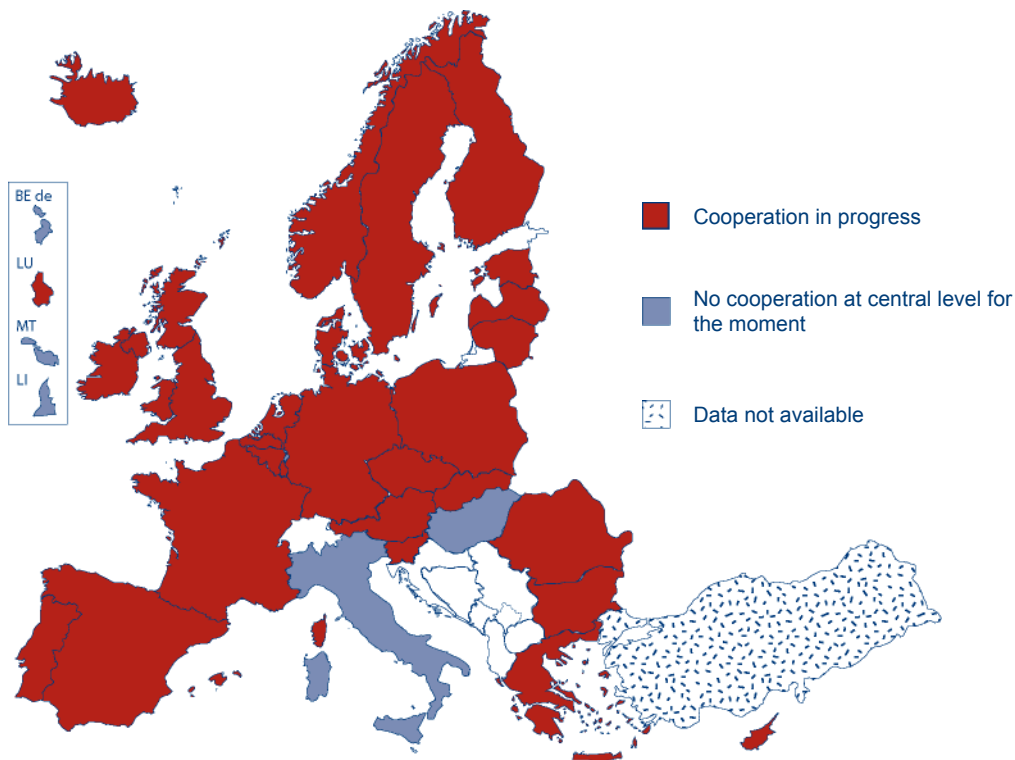
Source: Eurydice

The Portuguese Ministry of Education is part of the national Safer Internet Centre called SeguraNet. The SeguraNet consortium also provides training in area of Internet security with the assistance of the Criminal Police *(Polícia Judiciária)*. To face the growing needs and requests from schools on these issues, the consortium recently created the 'SeguraNet Regional Representatives' in each of the regional education departments of the Ministry of Education with specific tasks at regional level.

In Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia and Finland, as well as in other countries, the Safer Internet Centre is an active partner in the definition of the teachers training on Online Safety issues and also the distribution of didactic materials (posters and postcards for schools, leaflets for parents, etc.).

Some collaboration has also been developed to direct the promotion of OS towards the general public. In France, for example, the programme *Vinz et Lou sur Internet,* produced by Tralalère with the help of the Ministry of National Education, Higher Education and Research (SDTICE), provides a series of 15 cartoons with interactive activities and teaching materials. In Slovakia, the collaboration between the educational authorities and the Safer Internet Centre promotes an important mass media campaign and the production of an educational, interactive TV special program focusing on the eight most problematic areas of the safer use of the Internet.

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Eurydice network

The Eurydice network provides information on and analyses of European education systems and policies. It consists of 35 national units based in all 31 countries participating in the EU's Lifelong Learning programme (EU Member States, EEA countries and Turkey) and is coordinated and managed by the EU Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency in Brussels, which drafts its publications and databases.

The Eurydice serves mainly those involved in educational policy-making at national, regional and local levels, as well as in the European Union institutions. It focuses primarily on the way education in Europe is structured and organised at all levels. It provides a vast source of information, including:

- Detailed descriptions and overviews of national education systems (Eurybase).

- Comparative thematic studies devoted to specific topics of Community interest, such as Early Childhood education and Care, School Autonomy and Higher Education Governance (Thematic studies).

- Indicators and statistics (Key Data Series).

- A series of reference material and tools related to education, such as the European glossary, school calendars and education thesaurus (Eurydice Tools).