

Social competences
and Fundamental Rights
for preventing bullying



safer

D.1.9

Testing of the scenario-based questionnaire – Report



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

D.1.9 Testing of the scenario-based questionnaire –Report

Document information

SAFER
Project number 621528-EPP-1-2020-1-IT-EPPKA3-IPI-SOC-IN

Output number D.1.9

Title Testing of the scenario-based questionnaire –Report

Type: Document

Version: 3.0

Author(s): Giunti Psychometrics

Dissemination level: PU

Revision history

Version 3

REPORT



**Social competences
and Fundamental Rights
for preventing bullying**

Credits:

Dott.ssa Chara Busdraghi – Chief Scienze Officer of Giunti Psychometrics

Prof. Stefano Taddei – University of Florence - Research Consultant Giunti Psychometrics

Dott.ssa Bastianina Contena - Research Consultant Giunti Psychometrics

Dott. Claudio Vezzani - Psychometric processing - Giunti Psychometrics

safer

Table of contents

Introduction.....	5
Cyberbullying.....	9
The tools.....	10
Results.....	11
Bulgaria.....	11
Cyprus.....	19
Greece.....	27
Italy.....	35
North Macedonia – Albanian classes.....	43
North Macedonia – Macedonian classes.....	51
Portugal.....	59
Discussion.....	67

Introduction

Bullying is a complex social phenomenon that has been the subject of much debate in the international scientific community since the 1970s, with the studies of Olweus, considered the father of research on this topic. Starting in the 1980s, the World Health Organisation (WHO) began monitoring the phenomenon, considering it important in determining the well-being of school-age children. The growing attention to bullying has resulted in an enormous increase in scientific studies and it is now considered a phenomenon in many countries, albeit with cultural differences in its forms (Tanaka, 2001), which have also sparked debate on its clear definition.

It seems possible today to highlight a substantial agreement that bullying can be defined as the perpetuation, repeated over time and continuous, of aggressive acts by a person, the bully, on a defenceless victim with the specific motivation of harming him/her (Farrington, 1993; Olweus, 1994; 2003; Smith, et al., 2002; Volk, et al., 2014). Aiming to hurt the other person, these acts can occur in different ways. On the one hand, they may manifest themselves physically and be clearly legible and explicit; on the other hand, they may be more subtle, referring to much less explicit and visible verbal and emotional aggression. The difference between these modalities is so profound that studies have shown that physical aggression is more easily recognised as an act of bullying by both children (McCudden, 2001) and educators (Shields, & Cicchetti, 2001). Rivers and Smith (1994) already distinguished three forms of aggression typical of bullying, direct physical aggression, direct verbal aggression and indirect aggression, pointing out that the latter was more difficult both to recognise and to prove.

The definition and characterisation of the different protagonists of bullying incidents are also the subject of debate in the scientific literature. Reading bullying with a dyadic approach what is most investigated are the personological characteristics of bully and victim and their relationship (e.g. propensity to anger, psychoticism, anxiety and shyness; e.g. Olafsen, and Viemiero, 2000; Ramirez, 2001). Instead, following a group approach, the necessary reference is that every act of bullying sees the involvement of a more or less large group of bystanders to whom the action seems to be directed and on whose response depends the greater or lesser likelihood of the phenomenon reoccurring and exacerbating (Flaspohler, et al., 2009).

It is precisely the group approach to bullying that has highlighted how it can be understood as a representation intended for a larger group of bystanders who play a decisive role in maintaining the phenomenon. People who witness violence and can decide their own degree of involvement in it are defined as bystanders and their degree of involvement in bullying situations can vary considerably (Twemlow, et al., 2004). Bystanders can basically react to bullying by showing indifference, reinforcing the bully's behaviour or intervening in defence of the victim (Salmivalli, et al., 2011). Specifically, the reaction of bystanders can be classified according to two behavioural dimensions: the first ranging from active to passive indicates the bystander's degree of involvement, the second moving from constructive to destructive classifies the positive or negative outcomes of the behaviour instead. The intersection of these dimensions gives rise to the four types of bystander behaviour (Pauli, et al., 2012) depicted in Figure 1.

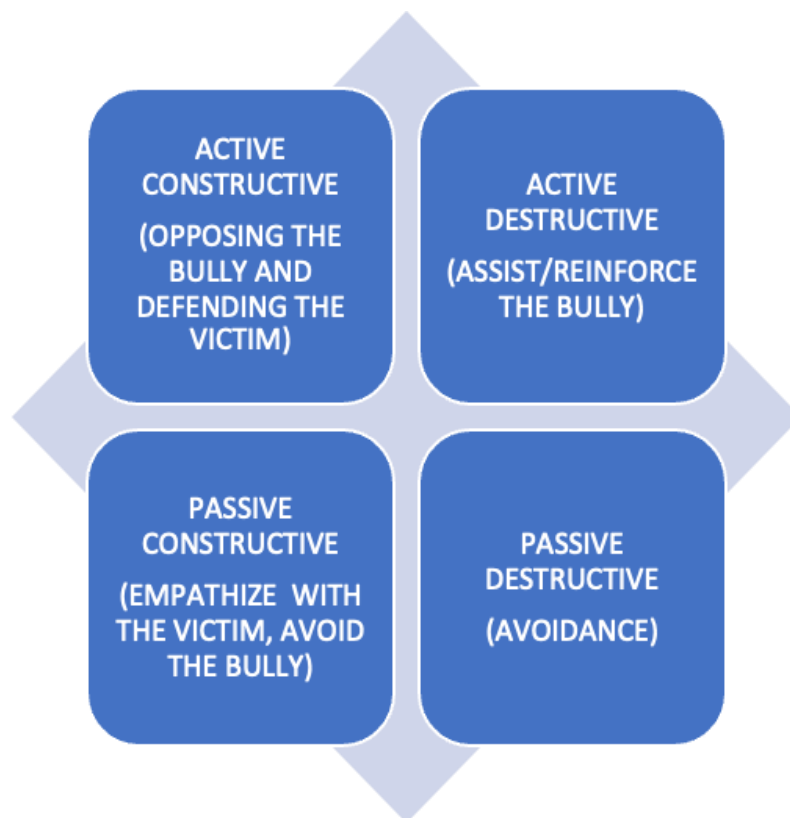


Figure 1. The intersection of the dimensions gives rise to the four types of bystander behaviour (Pauli, et al., 2012)

Precisely with reference to the group nature of bullying, aspects such as group dynamics and norms seem to be able to strongly influence the frequency and intensity of bullying itself, making certain bystander behaviours more possible. Groups that share 'pro-bullying' norms and show positive

expectations regarding the use of violence exert strong pressure on individual members to maintain congruent behaviours such as bully reinforcement, indifference towards the victim and make the perpetuation of bullying acts extremely more likely (Nocentini, et al., 2013, Salmivalli et al., 2011).

Moreover, high-hierarchy groups (Garandau, et al., 2014) are often systems in which bullying is more likely to occur. Indeed, the pursuit and maintenance of popularity and a position of dominance seem to be correlated with the use of behaviours aimed at the systematic prevarication of the other, especially if perceived as weaker, and thus bullying (Ahn et al., 2010; Andreou, 2006; Closson, 2009; Dijkstra, Lindenberg, Verhulst, Ormel, & Veenstra, 2009; Hawley, 2002, Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg, and Salmivalli, 2009). Group norms also seem to be more powerful than individual attitudes towards violence and bullying: several studies have shown that boys could actively engage in bullying even in the presence of negative individual attitudes towards it, as long as they belonged to a group with pro-bullying norms (Espelage, Green, & Polanin, 2012; Hamarus & Kaikkonen, 2008). Conversely, perceiving the bully as an outsider to the group and feeling similar to and empathising with the victim leads to a greater likelihood of anti-bullying behaviour by bystanders (Oh, & Hazler, 2009).

Using the old model of Latané and Darley (1970) it is possible to assume that a bystander intervenes when they a) notice the event; b) understand the need for action; c) perceive his/her personal responsibility; d) choose an adequate strategy to intervene and finally e) correctly implement the intervention. It is easy to understand that the bullying is a complex process influenced by many variables (Bauman, et al., 2020): personal (i.e. sex, age empathy), situational (type and seriousness of event, negative outcomes and cost of the action) and social variables (group composition, dynamics, norms and expectancies). Not surprisingly the numerous empirically validated anti-bullying programmes (e.g., OBPP, Save, ViSC, ...) act on different aspects using different methodologies but, as highlighted by the meta-analysis of Ttofi and Farrington (2011), the greatest effectiveness would always seem to be linked to two main factors: the global approach with the adoption of an effective anti-bullying policy by the school and the empowerment of bystanders. Therefore, considering bullying as a group behaviour and a social phenomenon, it seems possible to highlight its relationship with prosocial behaviour (Garcia-Vazquez, et al., 2020). Social mechanisms such as norms and group dynamics (Simpson, & Willer, 2015), victim similarity, friendship ties within the group and group size (Batson, & Powell, 2019) would be able to better explain the complexity of the phenomenon rather than individual/dispositional variables related only to the bully or the victim.

In summary, personal characteristics, situational and social variables (Figure 2) can be considered in bullying because they can influence not only the behaviour of bully and victim but also that of all bystanders, explaining their reactions, favouring the understanding of the phenomenon itself and its evolution towards an exacerbation of aggression or, vice versa, towards the occurrence of prosocial behaviour capable of stopping bullying.

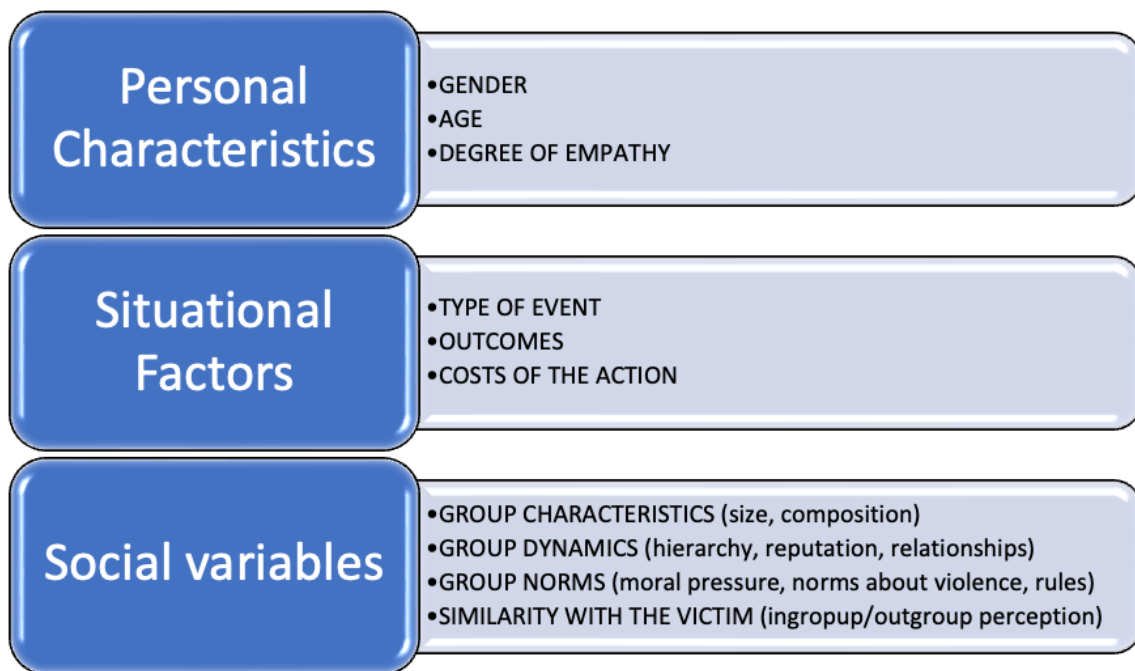


Figure 2. The bullying phenomenon: Personal characteristics, Situational factors and Social variables.

This seems to be true also for cyberbullying where the time and place of the act are more blurred, and attacks are mostly indirect.

Cyberbullying

Over the last few decades, the literature on bullying has grown considerably in relation to aspects of cyberbullying, a widely used term whose definition is still debated. Indeed, on the one hand, some authors use it to refer to acts of bullying perpetuated using digital technology (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Smith, et al., 2008) while others refer to a form of bullying with specific characteristics that would clearly differentiate it from traditional bullying (Englander, et al., 2017). Cyberbullying would be characterised by the fact that bullying, especially in terms of verbal aggression, can become repetitive and directed at a specific target without this being the real intention of the aggressor (Dooley, et al., 2009). Moreover, in cyberbullying, indirect attacks are more frequent, conducted for example in anonymity, and the victim may have the clear perception of having no way out, precisely because of the specific characteristics of the digital environment. The last element that seems to differentiate cyberbullying is the extent of the psychopathological consequences for the victim: online attacks would be characterised by a greater emotional impact for the victim and would more often result in depression and substance abuse (Englander, 2013; Kowalski, et al., 2015). In a recent contribution, Olweus and Limber (2018) pointed out that the term 'cyberbullying' is often used to indicate cyber aggression or cyberharassment; due to this definitional problem, studies that have attempted to produce useful tools for its detection (Chun et al., 2020) have come up with inconsistent results. Bullies and victims of cyberbullying would instead seem to have profiles that largely overlap with those of bullies and victims of traditional bullying (Hinduja & Patchin, 2010) while the specific types of violence would be (Willard, 2007; Sorrentino et al., 2019) 1) flaming; 2) denigration; 3) impersonation; 4) outing and trickery and 5) exclusion. Particular attention should be paid to the fact that, beyond understanding cyberbullying as a phenomenon in itself or a type of bullying that occurs in a special environment, the characteristic of the repetitiveness of the violent action certainly appears nuanced: in the online context even a single violent action persists over time causing repeated damage to the victim (La Regina et al., 2021; Menesini, et al., 2012) and prolonging its harmful action indefinitely.

Considering all the main constructs outlined above, an original instrument (SAFER Questionnaire) was constructed, alongside an existing one (Bullying Prevention Test, TPB), aimed at detecting and describing the risk of bullying and cyberbullying in the school context and the resources that can be activated to increase prosocial behaviour.

The tools

The first instrument consists of a questionnaire with 43 questions, 2 cards each followed by a series of 8 evaluation items and 5 pictures representing specific interactions between children.

The questionnaire includes, in addition to a number of questions aimed at collecting biographical information, 8 questions aimed at investigating Peer Group Dynamics (nominal answers); 8 questions dedicated to situational factors influencing the manifestation of bullying with answers on 4 nominal categories (no, never; yes at school; yes in person but not at school; yes online); 10 questions aimed at surveying Group Norms and answered on a 5-point Likert scale (always to never); 14 questions specifically dedicated to surveying online behaviour and cyberbullying so as to also identify which social media are used for different behaviours.

The 5 pictures and 2 cards constitute the part of the tool aimed at identifying the subjective perception of bullying and maladaptive behaviour. The pictures represent critical situations for which the presence or absence of bullying is identified. They concern body shaming, physical violence, teasing, conflict and verbal aggression. The 2 cards, on the other hand, depict critical situations for which the respondents are asked to describe their feelings but also the judgements and behaviours they would consider useful to implement, by using a likert scale.

This original instrument was also joined by a second instrument, the Bullying Prevention Test (TPB; Botta, Accetta and Zappullo, 2020), a semi-projective test that measures the level of psychosocial maladjustment of children and adolescents. It provides information on the person's experience in different life contexts. It provides 16 cards depicting neutral images representing episodes of everyday life in different socio-relational contexts with 5 'graded' response alternatives describing the presented scenes as adaptive, neutral or maladaptive (bullying episodes) stimulus situations. These answers make it possible to obtain 2 standardised indices of psychosocial maladjustment, one relating to the student (individual interpretative report) and the other to the class attended (class interpretative report) and 4 qualitative indices, referring to the type of prevarication experienced (Cyberbullying index) or to the situational context in which the maladjustment is experienced (within the school, family, or peer group).

Results

The heterogeneity of the student populations participating in the project, in terms of numbers, gender and age groups involved, makes a reliable comparison of the different contexts difficult, if not impossible. For this reason, it was decided to present the results by distinguishing between the different national contexts. The results obtained are thus presented below, following the alphabetical order of the geographical areas of reference.

Bulgaria

The sample of Bulgarian participants consists of a total of 88 students, with an average age of 13.51 ± 1.99 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 1).

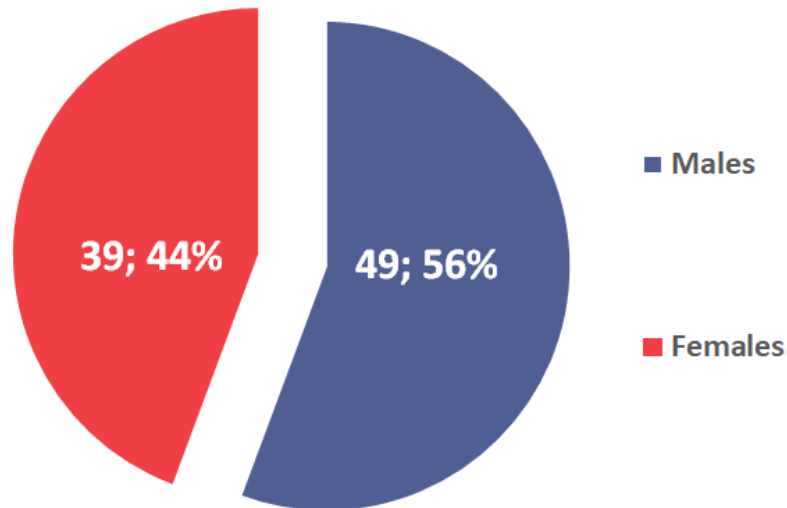


Chart 1. Frequency distribution for males and females of the overall sample



Image 1. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows how, in general for the Bulgarian sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 1).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of Bulgarian participants in the SAFER project (Charts 2, 3, 4 and 5).

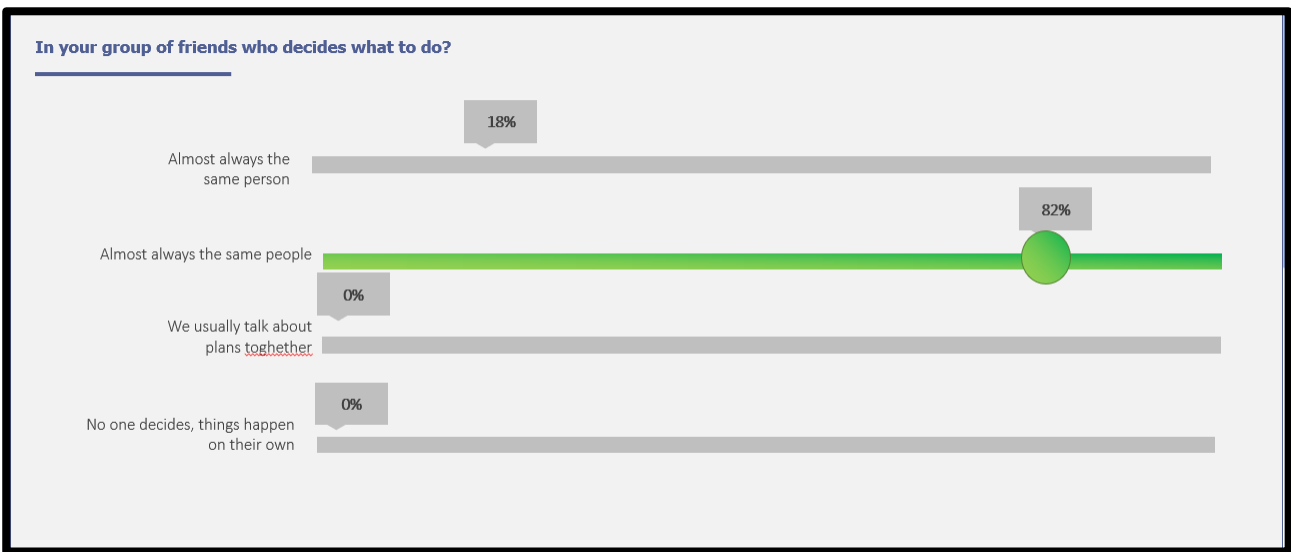


Chart 2. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?"

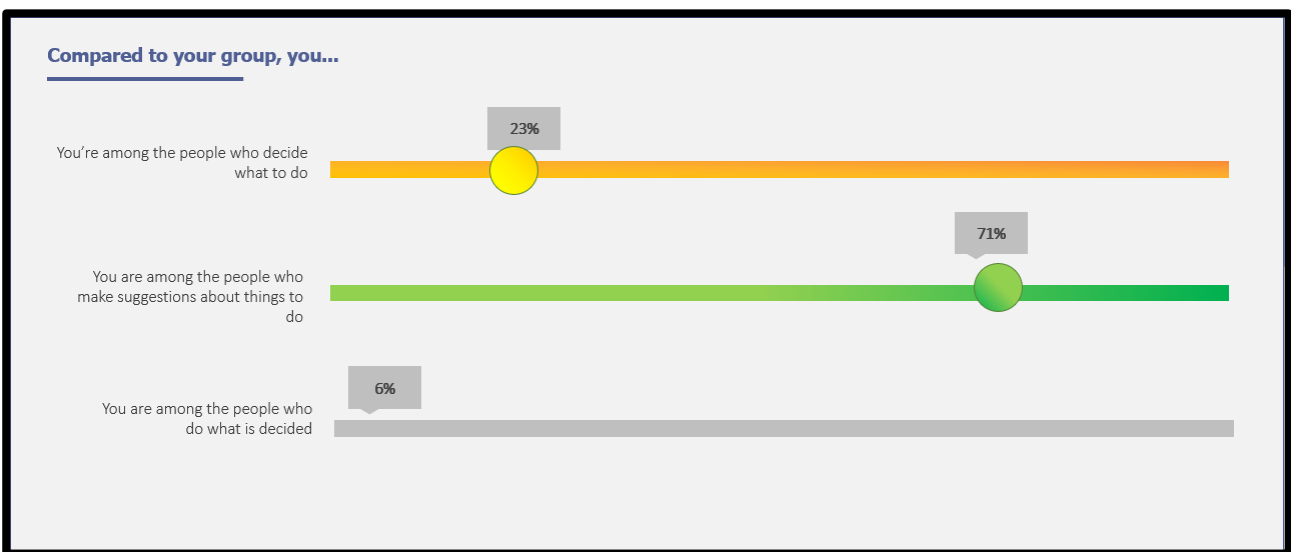


Chart 3. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you..."

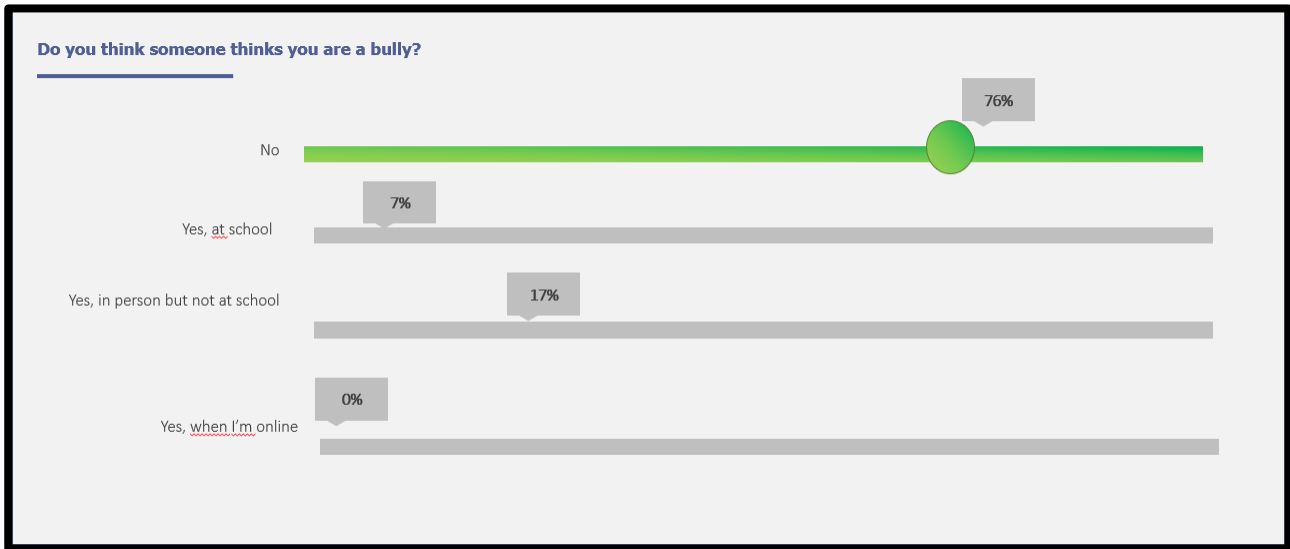


Chart 4. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

Regarding the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (82%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties (Chart 2).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (71%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to carry out (Chart 3), while 76% of participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 4).



Chart 5. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 86% of the participants declare that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 5).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 1).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	12.8
	Democratic	87.2
Power management	Decide	15.1
	Propose	77.9
	Execute	7.0

Table 1. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 87.2% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group to be a democratic process (Table 1), while 77.9% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 1).

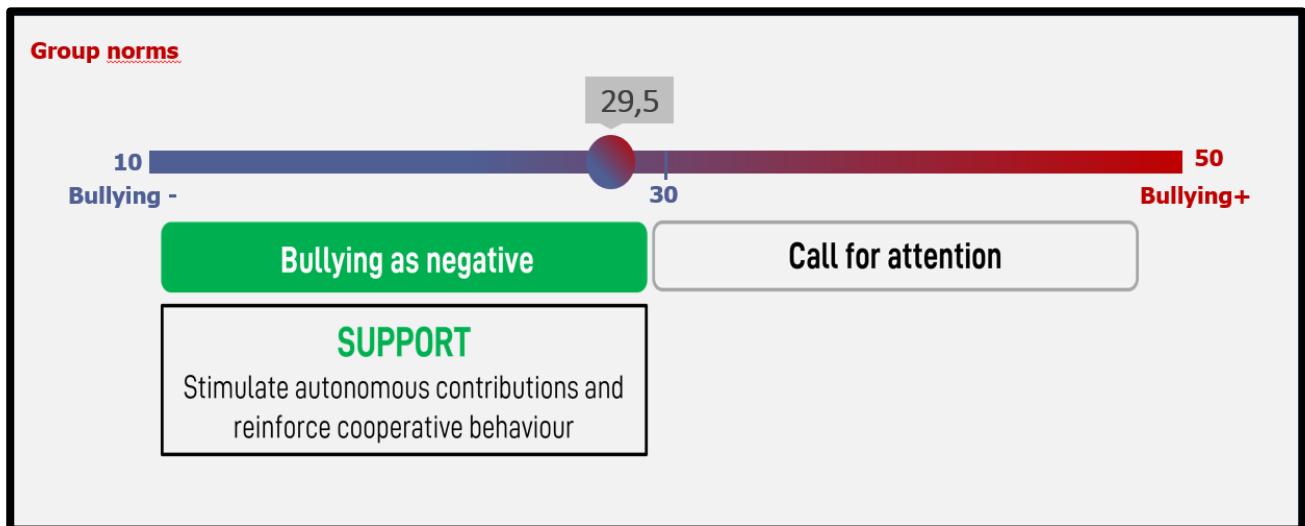


Chart 6. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

With regard to the norms of the group to which one belongs, Bulgarian participants show on the SAFER questionnaire that they perceive bullying as something negative (we are below the cut-off point of 30), thus being able to state that the phenomenon of bullying is seen as negative, the absence

of which is capable of stimulating autonomous contributions and reinforcement of cooperative behaviour (Chart 6).

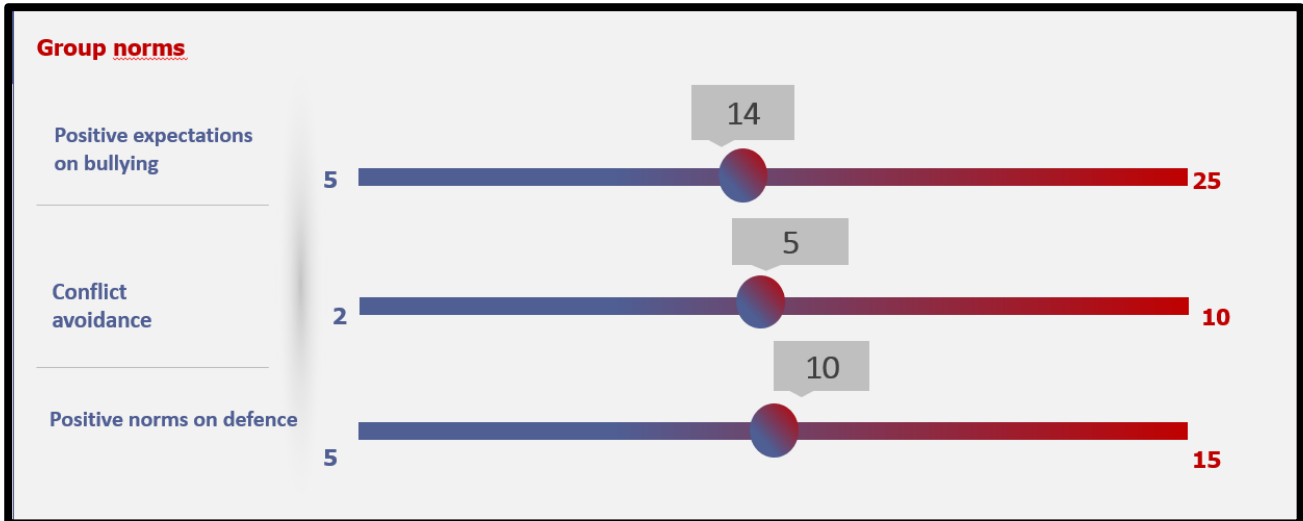


Chart 7. Group norms regarding bullying.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (14 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (5 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 10 out of 15) (Chart 7).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 2).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	34.1	10.2	22.7	33.0
Undergo verbal attacks	40.9	12.5	17.0	29.6
Promoting verbal attacks	63.6	13.6	13.6	9.2
Defending	22.7	9.1	26.1	42.1
Undergoing physical attacks	64.8	0	15.9	19.3
Promoting physical attacks	84.1	1.1	11.4	3.4

Table 2. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the Bulgarian students claim to have witnessed violent episodes mainly inside the school (33%), and again inside the school, 29.6% of the sample claims to have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (42.1%) some of their classmates from such episodes. Moreover, again at school 19.3% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state that they have made physical attacks on other members of the group did so outside school in 11.4% of cases (Table 2).

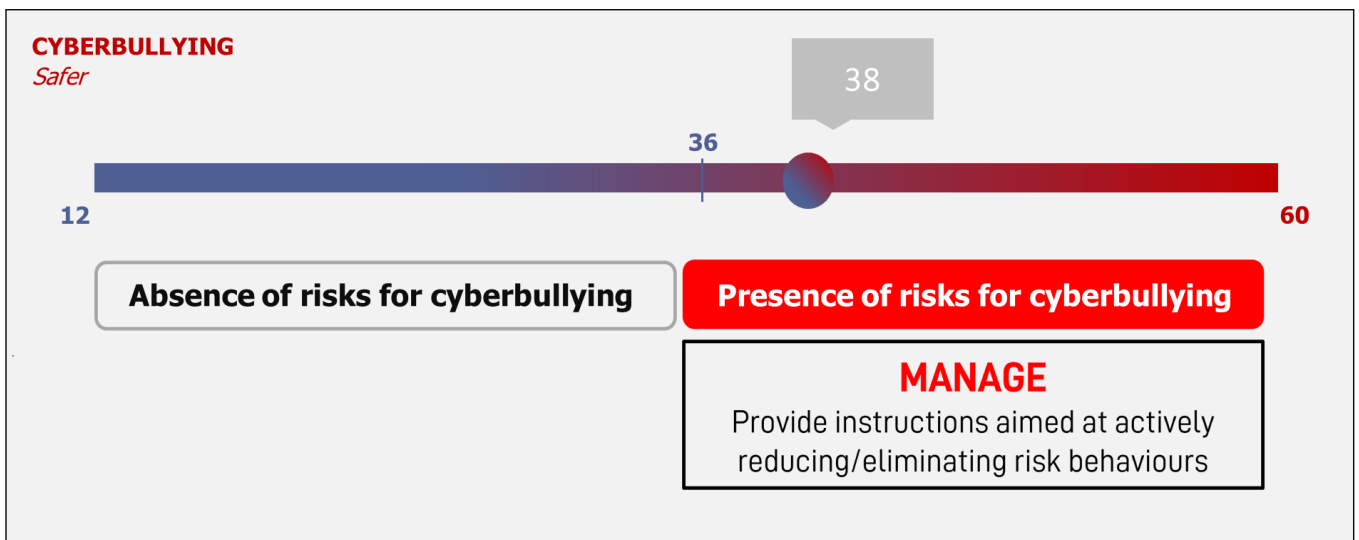


Chart 8. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

With regard to the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 38), the average score obtained by the Bulgarian subject group shows a perception of the presence of risk of this phenomenon slightly above the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 8).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	2
Benefits	2	10	5
Privacy	2	10	5
Behaviours	2	10	5
Beliefs	6	30	20
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 3. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the minimum and maximum theoretical values.

With regard to the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 7, the scores obtained are also all intermediate in nature (Table 3).

The following chart (Chart 9) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between aggression/violence phenomena and situations closer to outright bullying.



Chart 9. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

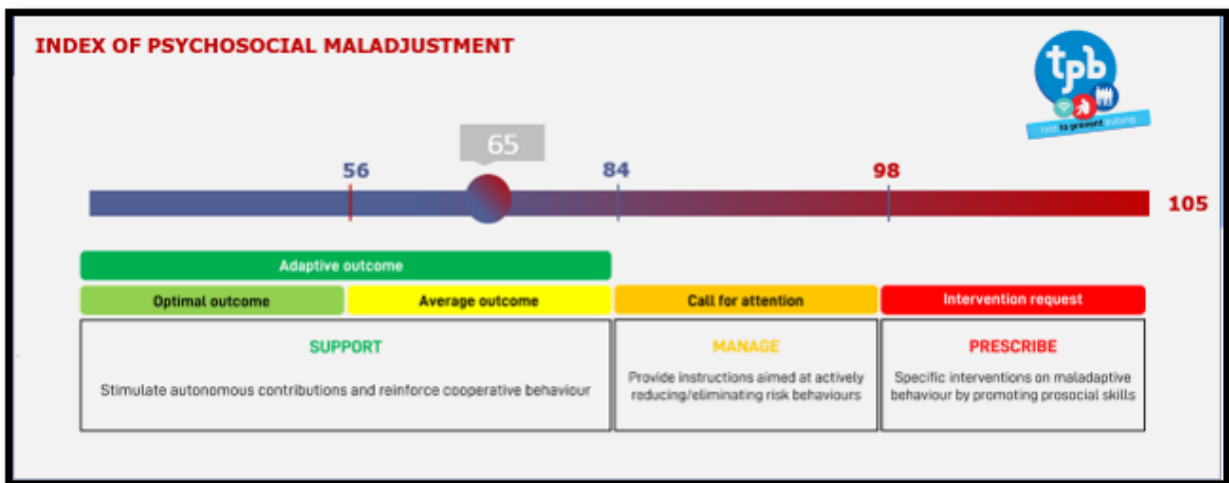


Chart 10. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 10 above shows the performance in the group of Bulgarian subjects by means of the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 65, which therefore places the outcome in an average range.

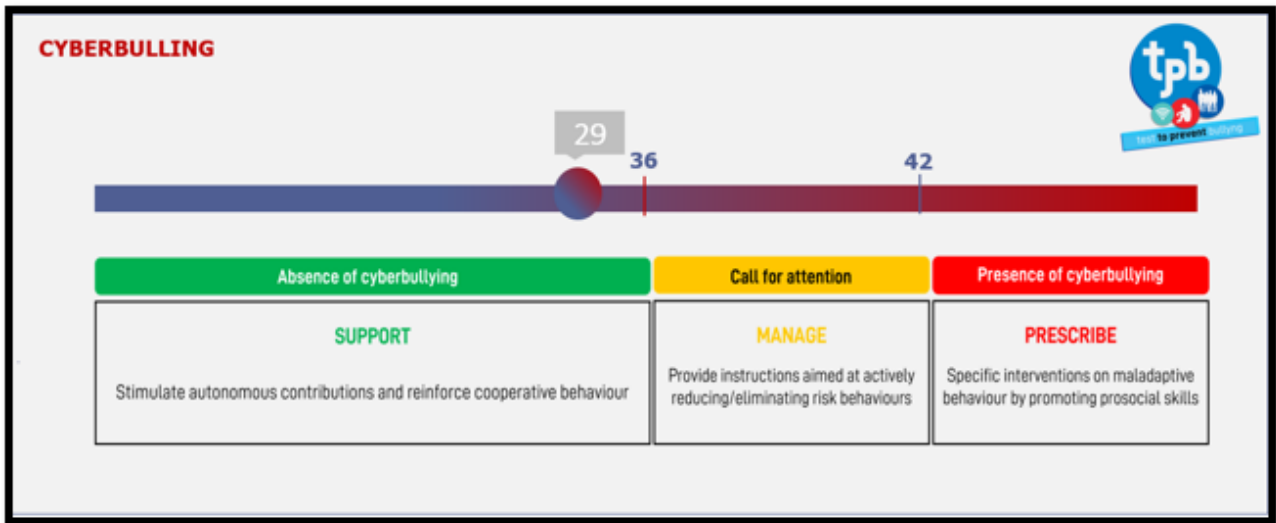


Chart 11. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

With regard to the dimension of cyberbullying, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 11).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	16	15
Family	5	25	15	15
Peer group	10	50	30	30

Table 4. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

Table 4 shows how the dimensions of bullying declined within the school, family and peer group are fully average (although two scores, School and Peer group, slightly exceed the critical threshold) (Table 4).

Cyprus

The sample of Cypriot participants consists of a total of 108 students, with an average age of 10.25 ± 0.67 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 12).

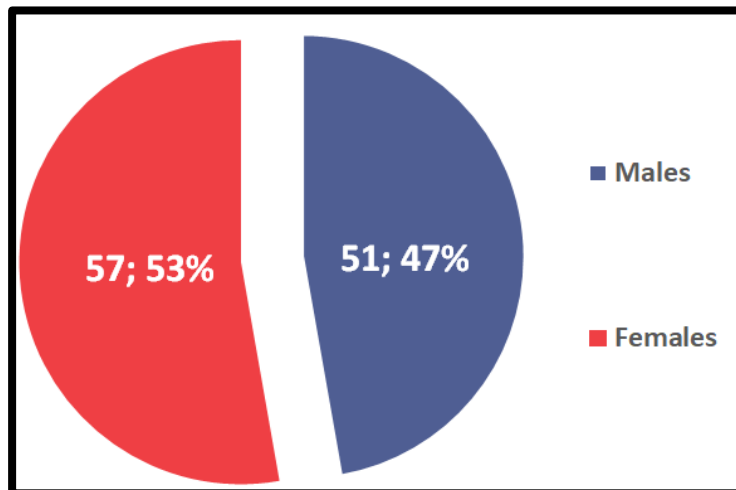


Chart 12. Frequency distribution for males and females in the overall sample



Image 2. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows that, in general for the Cypriot sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 2).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of Cyprus participants in the SAFER project (Charts 13, 14, 15 and 16).

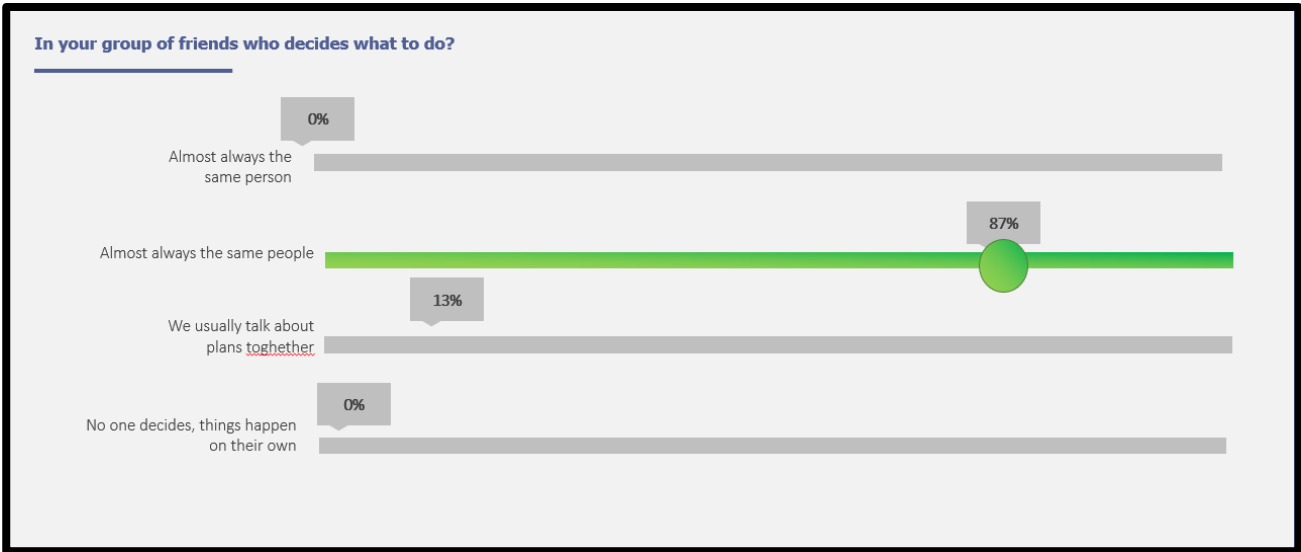


Chart 13. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?".

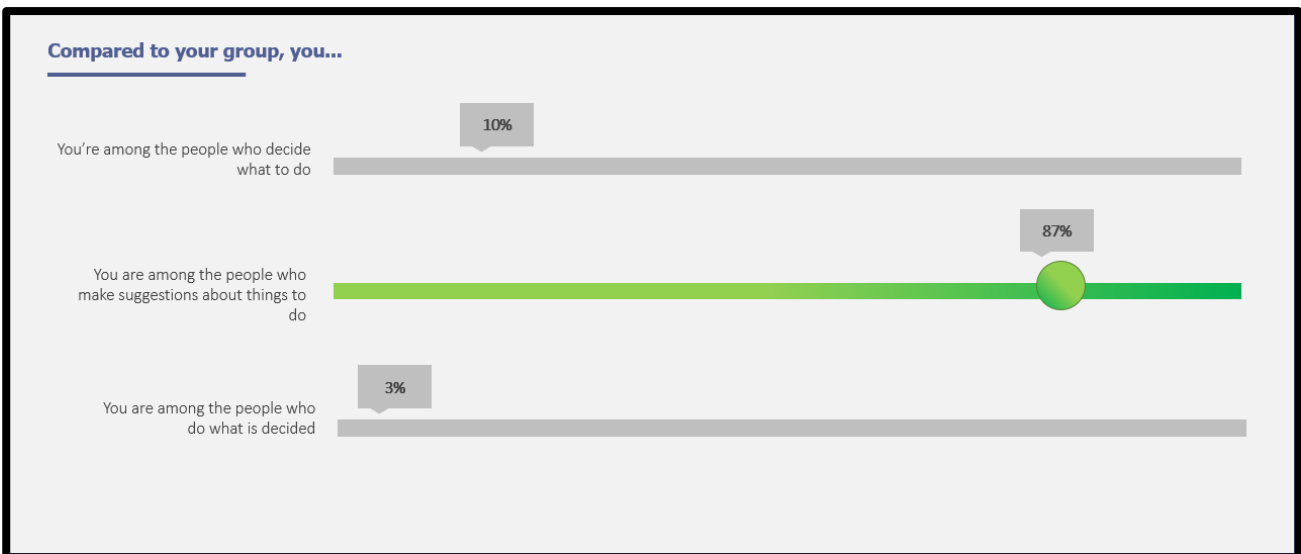


Chart 14. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you...".



Chart 15. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

With regard to the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (87%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties (Chart 13).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (87%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to carry out (Chart 14), while 92% of participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 15).

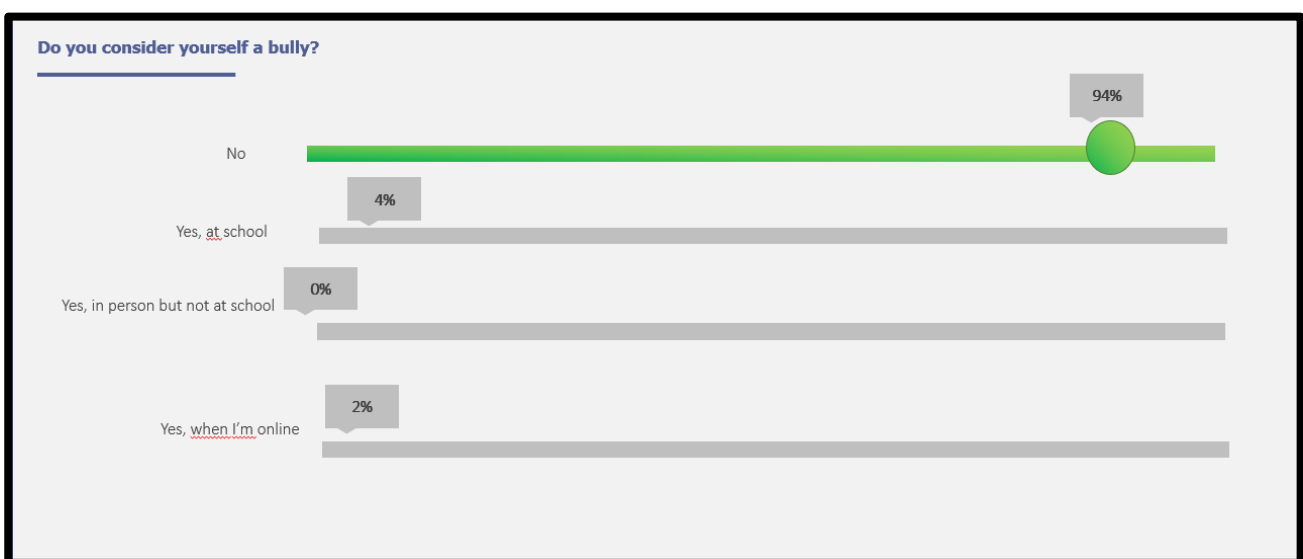


Chart 16. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 94% of the participants state that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 16).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 5).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	22.2
	Democratic	77.8
	Decide	16.7
	Propose	52.8
	Execute	25.9

Table 5. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 77.8% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group as a democratic process (Table 9), while 52.8% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 5).

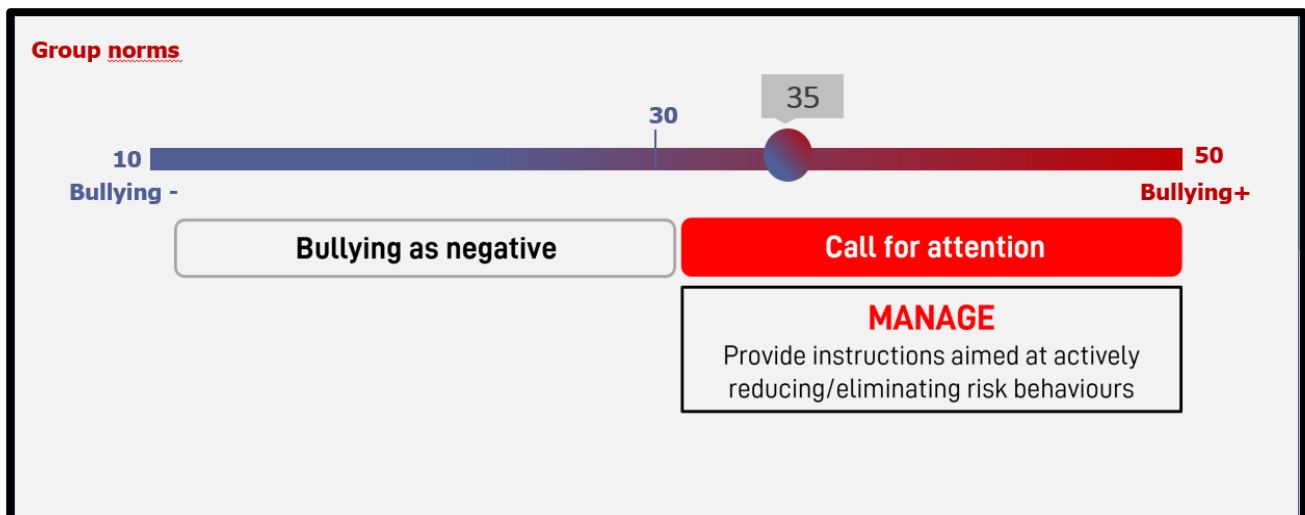


Chart 17. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

With regard to the norms of the group to which one belongs, Cypriot participants show on the SAFER questionnaire that they do not perceive bullying as something negative (we are above the cut-off point of 30, with a score of 35), thus being able to state that there must be a demand for attention to this

phenomenon on the part of the school authority through specific instructions to actively reduce/eliminate the risk of bullying (Chart 17).

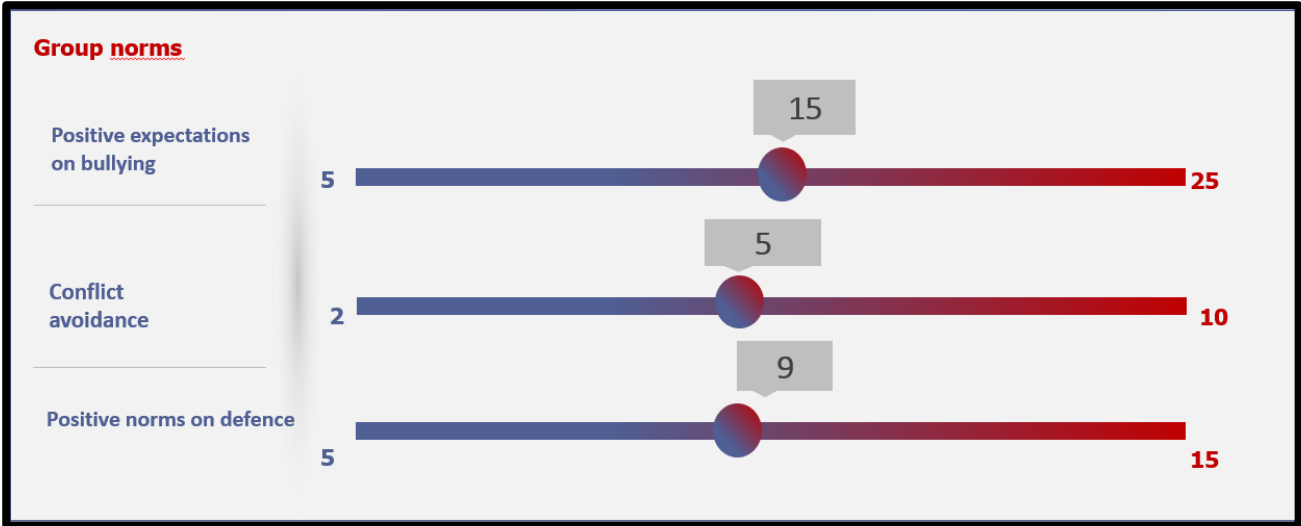


Chart 18. Group norms regarding bullying.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (15 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (5 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 9 out of 15) (Chart 18).

The following table shows the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 6).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	45.4	10.2	6.5	37.9
Undergo verbal attacks	55.6	3.7	10.2	30.5
Promoting verbal attacks	78.7	2.8	3.7	14.8
Defending	27.8	5.6	18.5	48.1
Undergoing physical attacks	72.2	8.3	1.9	17.6
Promoting physical attacks	88.0	0	1.9	10.1

Table 6. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Cypriot students declares to have witnessed episodes of violence mainly inside the school (37.9%), and again inside the school 30.5% of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (48.1%) some of their companions from such episodes. Moreover, again at school 17.6% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state that they have carried out physical attacks on other members of the group did so within the school in 10.1% of cases (Table 6).

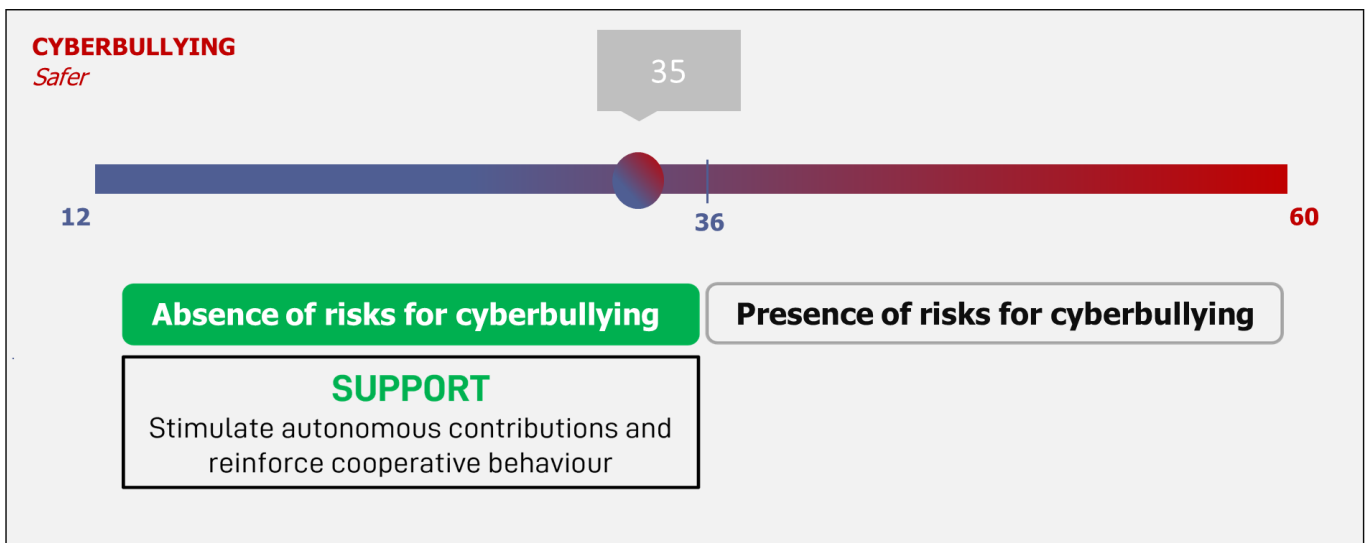


Chart 19. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

With regard to the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 35), the average score obtained by the group of Cypriot subjects shows the perceived absence of this phenomenon, placing the score slightly below the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 19).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	2
Benefits	2	10	5
Privacy	2	10	8
Behaviors	2	10	3
Beliefs	6	30	15
Direct Knowledge	0	2	2

Table 7. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the observed minimum and maximum values.

As for the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 7, the scores obtained are also all intermediate in nature (Table 7).

The following chart (Chart 20) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between phenomena of aggression/violence and situations closer to outright bullying.

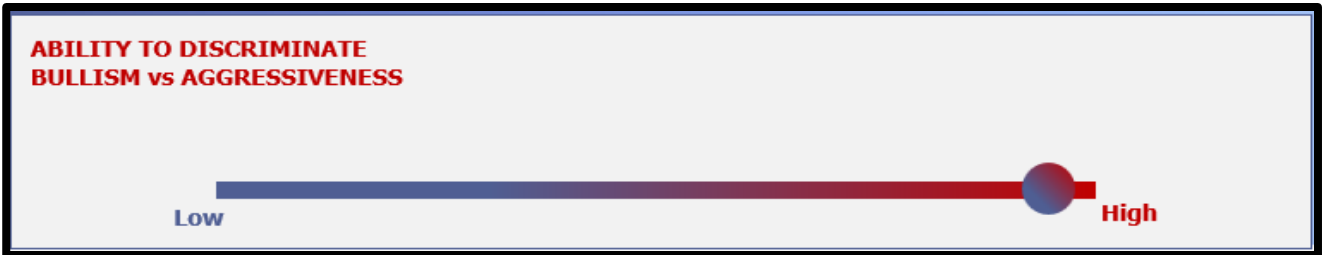


Chart 20. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

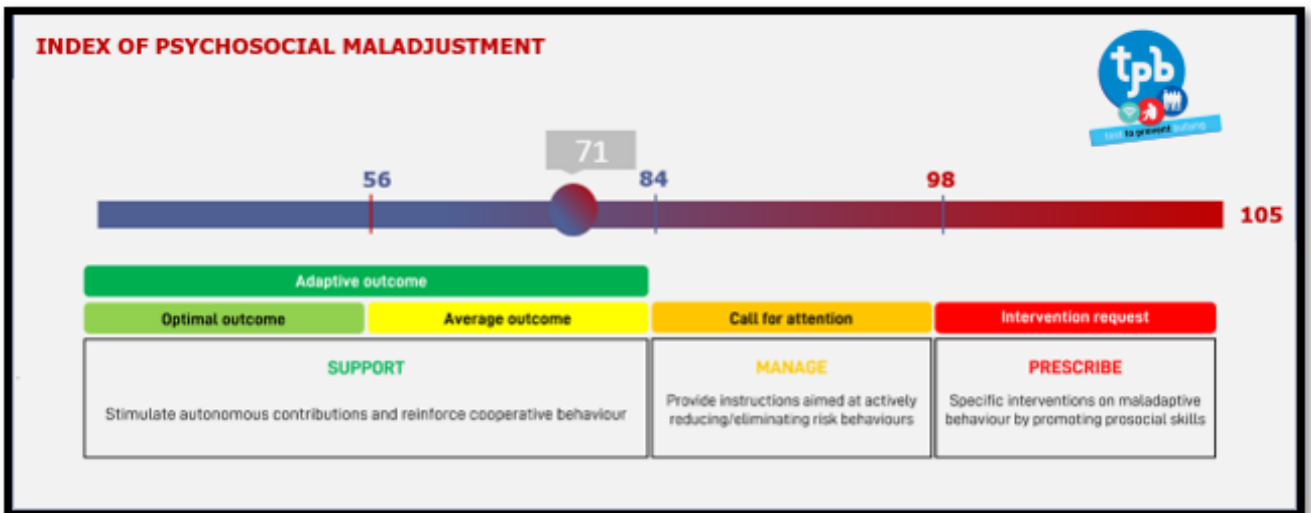


Chart 21. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 21 depicts the performance in the group of Cypriot subjects on the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 71, which therefore places the outcome within a medium range.

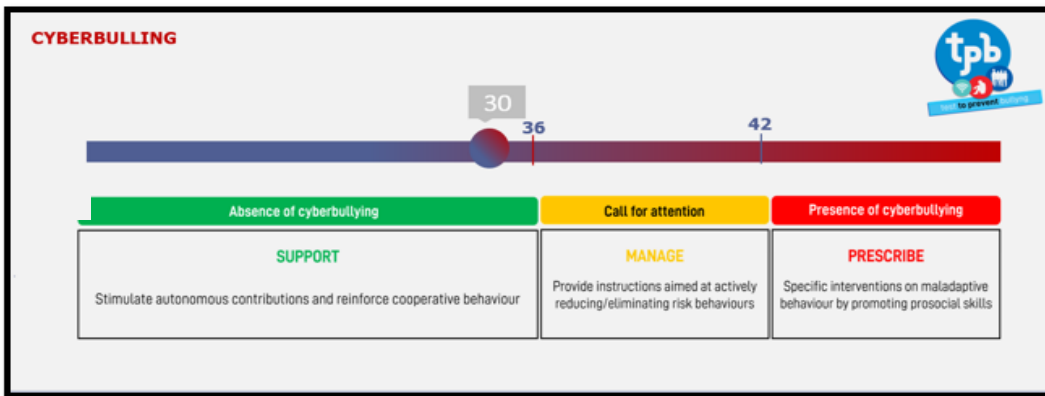


Chart 22. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

Regarding the dimension of cyberbullying, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 22).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	18	15
Family	5	25	16	15
Peer group	10	50	33	30

Table 8. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

Table 8 above shows how the dimensions of bullying declined within the school, the family and the peer group, appears to be fully average (although the three scores are slightly above the critical threshold) (Table 8).

Greece

The sample of Greek participants consists of a total of 133 students, with an average age of 10.64 ± 1.30 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 23).

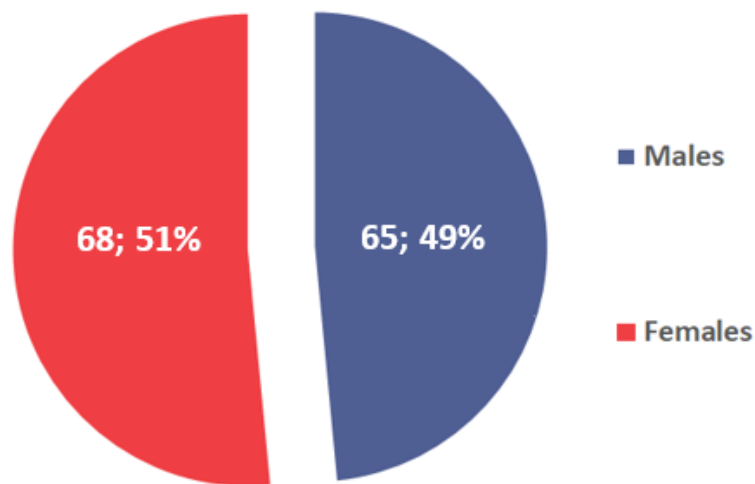


Chart 23. Frequency distribution for males and females in the overall sample.



Image 3. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows that, in general for the Greek sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 3).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of Greek participants in the SAFER project (Chart 24, 25, 26 and 27).

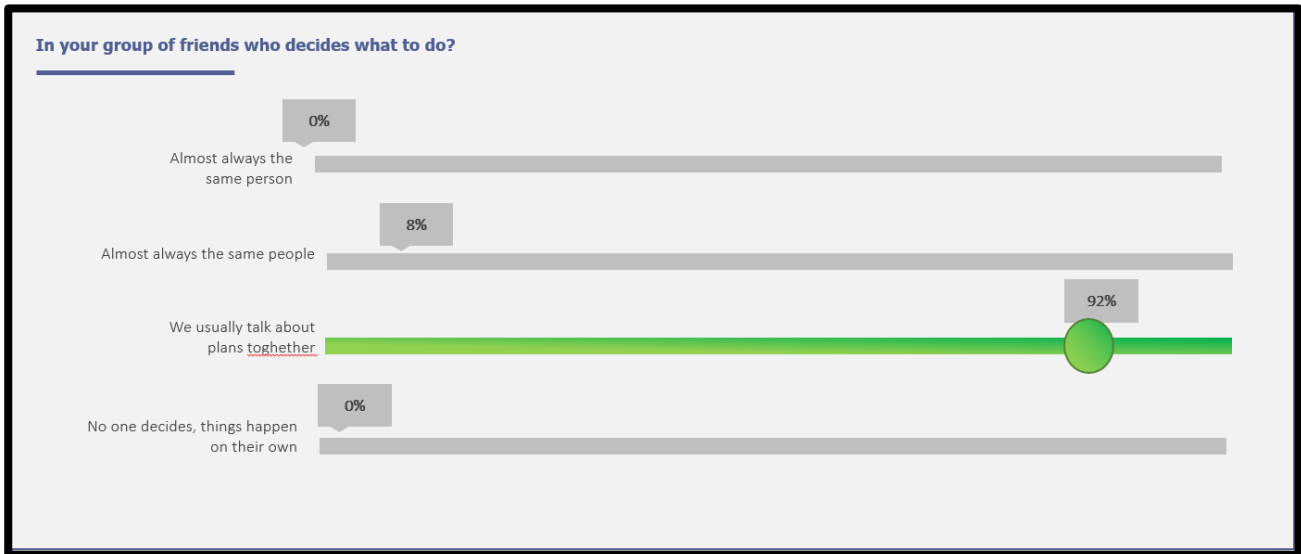


Chart 24. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?".

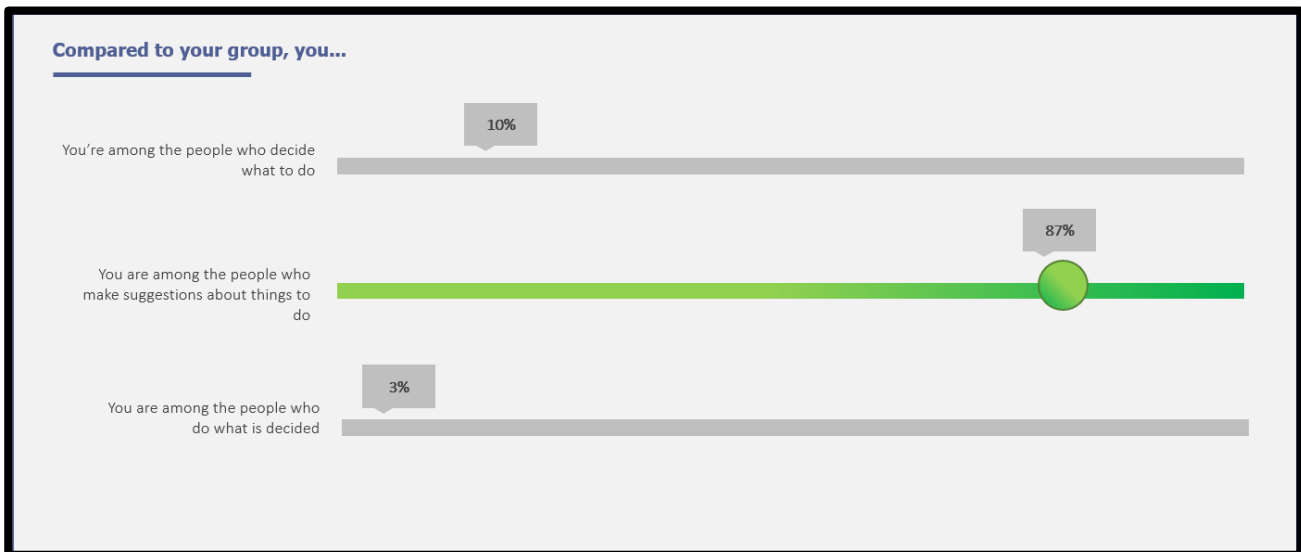


Chart 25. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you...".

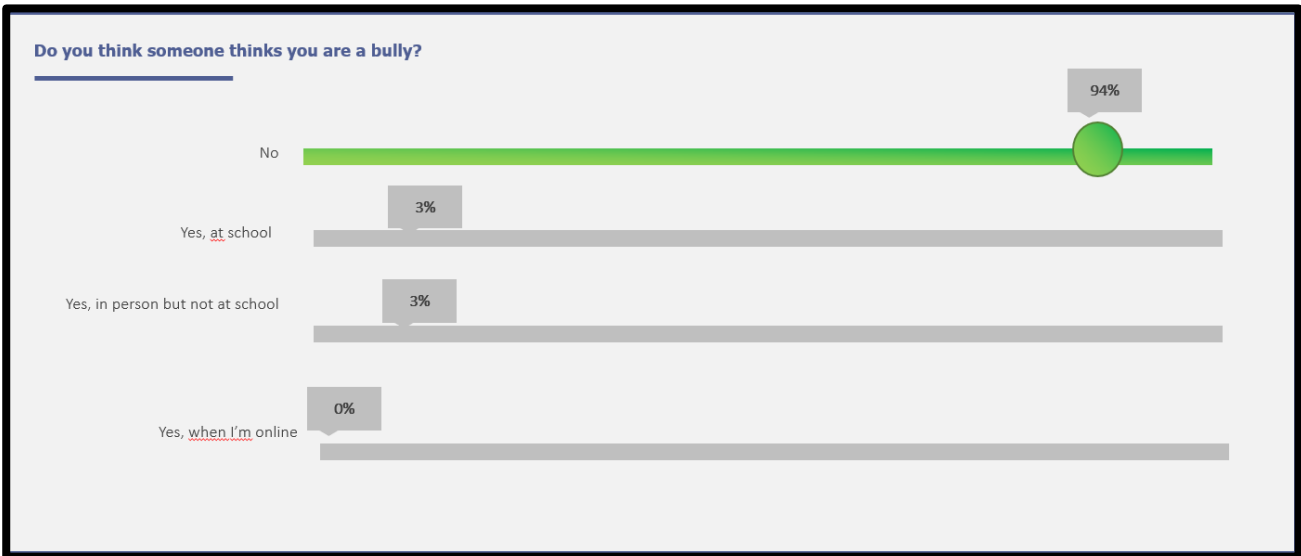


Chart 26. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

With regard to the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (92%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties, resulting from talking to each other among group members and creating a shared plan (Chart 24).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (87%) say they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to be carried out (Chart 25), while 94% of participants say they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 26).

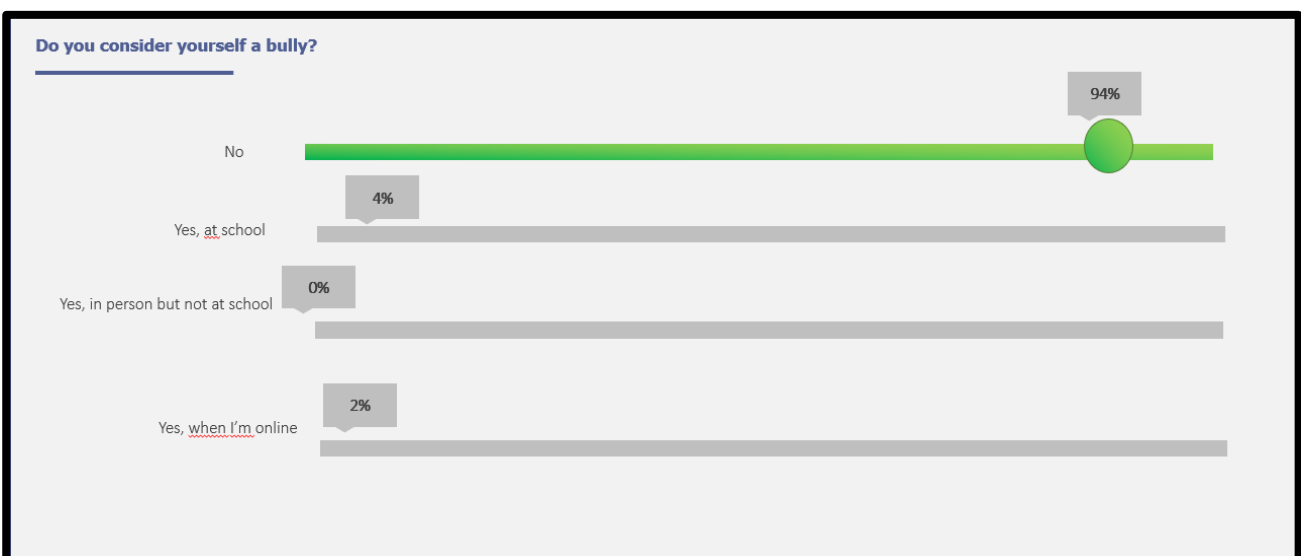


Chart 27. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 94% of the participants declare that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 27).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 9).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	13.2
	Democratic	86.8
Power management	Decide	21.7
	Propose	68.2
	Positive norms on defence	10.1
	Execute	

Table 9. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 86.8% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group to be a democratic process (Table 9), while 68.2% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 9).

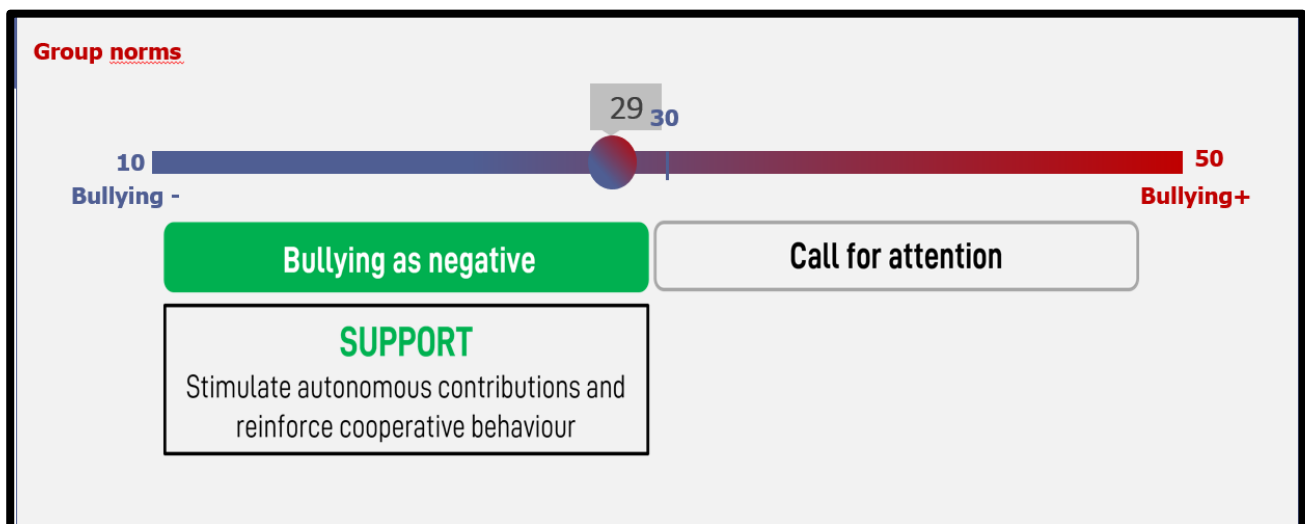


Chart 28. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

Regarding the norms of the group to which one belongs, Greek participants show on the SAFER questionnaire that they perceive bullying as something negative (we are below the cut-off point of

30, with a score of 29), the absence of which is able to stimulate autonomous contributions and reinforcements to cooperative behaviour (Chart 28).

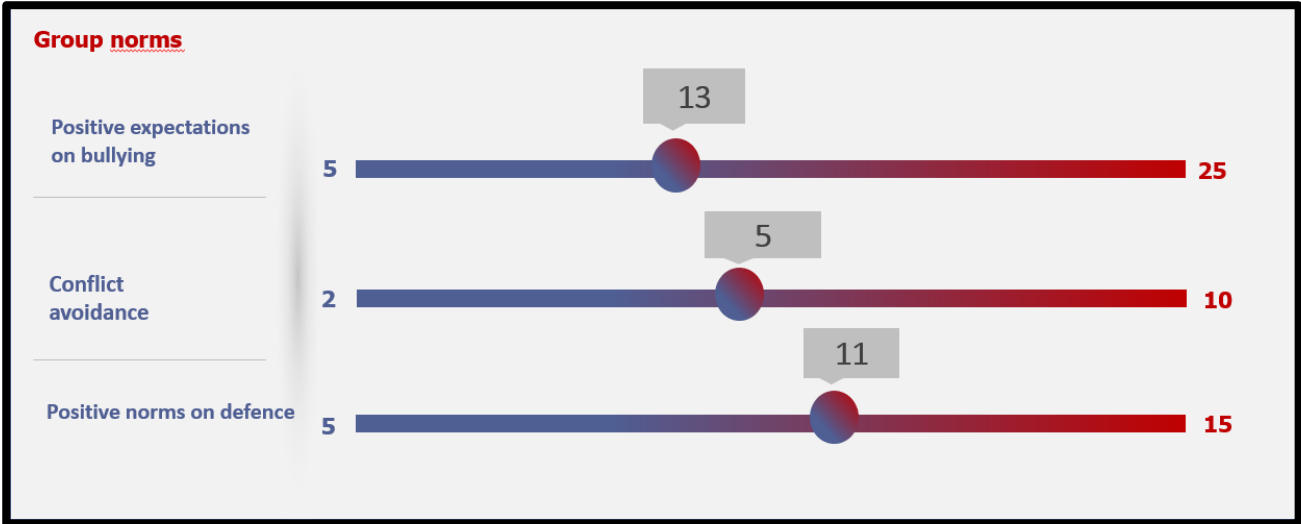


Chart 29. Group norms regarding the perception of bullying incidents.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (13 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (5 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 11 out of 15) (Chart 29).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 10).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	49.6	3.8	18.8	27.8
Undergo verbal attacks	59.4	4.5	15.0	21.1
Promoting verbal attacks	82.0	1.5	10.5	6.0
Defending	25.6	5.3	19.5	49.6
Undergoing physical attacks	74.4	0	11.3	14.3
Promoting physical attacks	91.7	0	4.5	3.8

Table 10. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Greek students declares to have witnessed episodes of violence mainly inside the school (27.8%), and again inside the school 21.1% of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (49.6%) some of their companions from such episodes. In addition, again at school 14.3% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state they have carried out physical attacks on other members of the group did so outside the school in 4.5% of cases (Table 10).

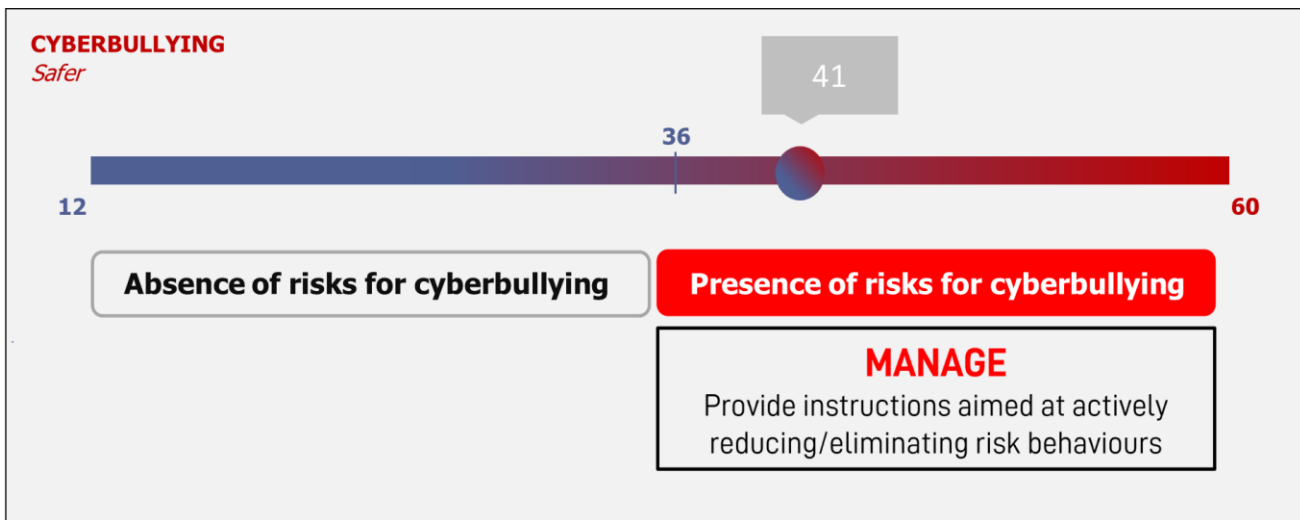


Chart 30. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

Concerning the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 41), the average score obtained by the Greek subject group shows the perception of the presence of risk for this phenomenon, placing the score above the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 30).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	3
Benefits	2	10	7
Privacy	2	10	5
Behaviours	2	10	6
Beliefs	6	30	19
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 11. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the observed minimum and maximum values.

The scores obtained for the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 11, are also all intermediate in nature (Table 15).

The following chart (Chart 31) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between aggression/violence phenomena and situations closer to outright bullying.



Chart 31. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

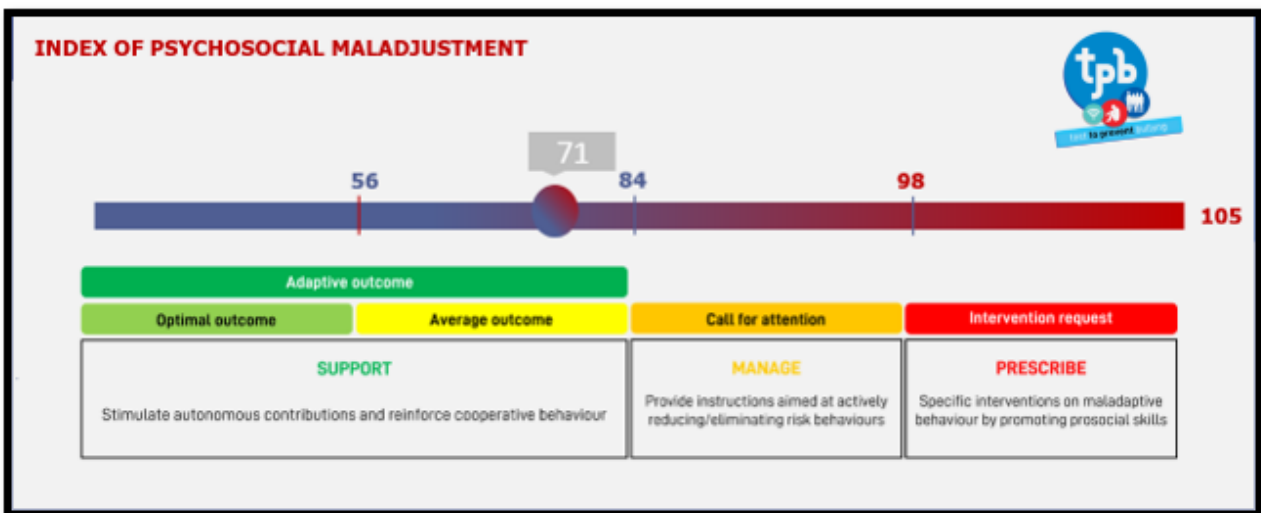


Chart 32. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 32 depicts the performance in the group of Greek subjects on the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 71, which therefore places the outcome in an average range.

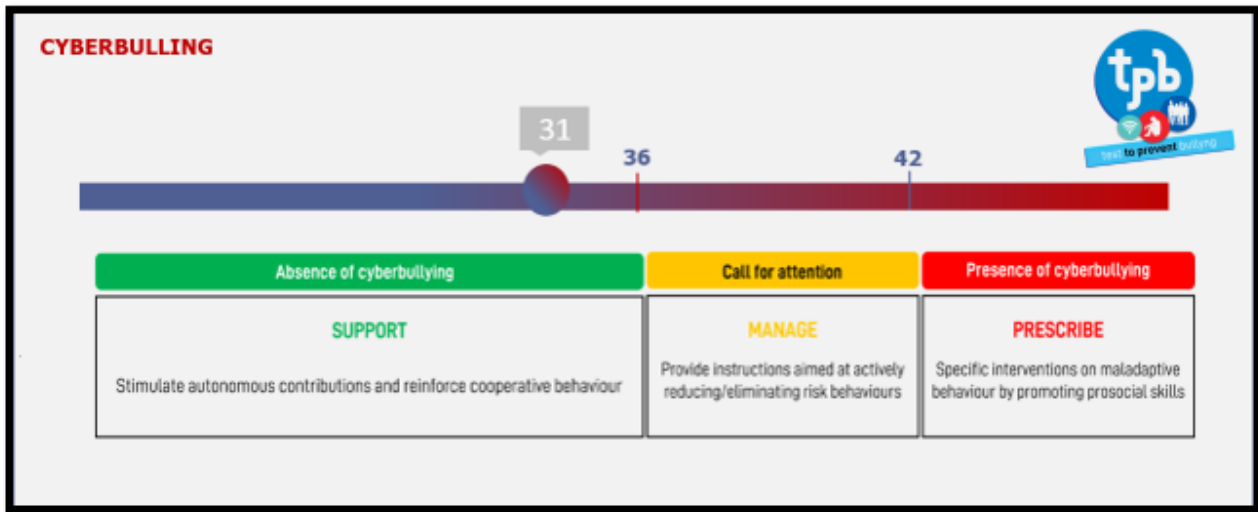


Chart 33. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

With regard to the cyberbullying dimension, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled as 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 33).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	18	15
Family	5	25	16	15
Peer group	10	50	33	30

Table 12. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

The table above shows how the dimensions of bullying declined within the school, the family and the peer group, appear to be fully average (although the three scores are slightly above the critical threshold) (Table 12).

Italy

The sample of Italian participants consists of a total of 295 students, with an average age of 10.47 ± 1.38 years. The gender distribution of the total participants is homogeneous (Chart 34).

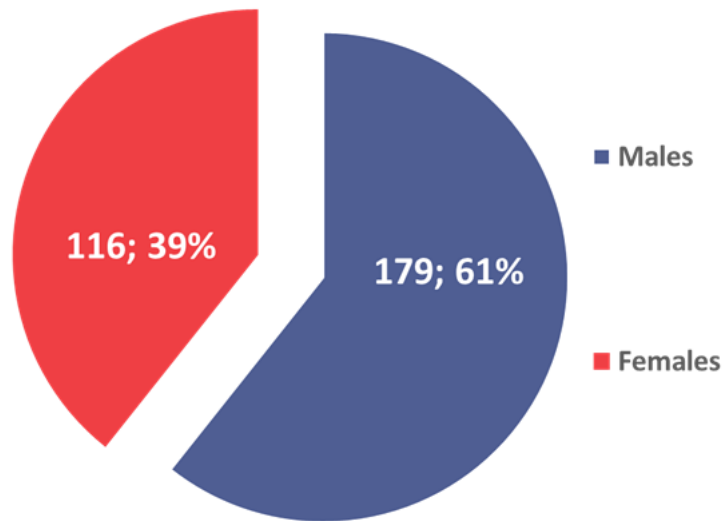


Chart 34. Frequency distribution for males and females in the overall sample



Image 4. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows how, in general for the Italian sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 4).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of participants from Italy in the SAFER project (Charts 35, 36, 37 and 38).



Chart 35. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?".

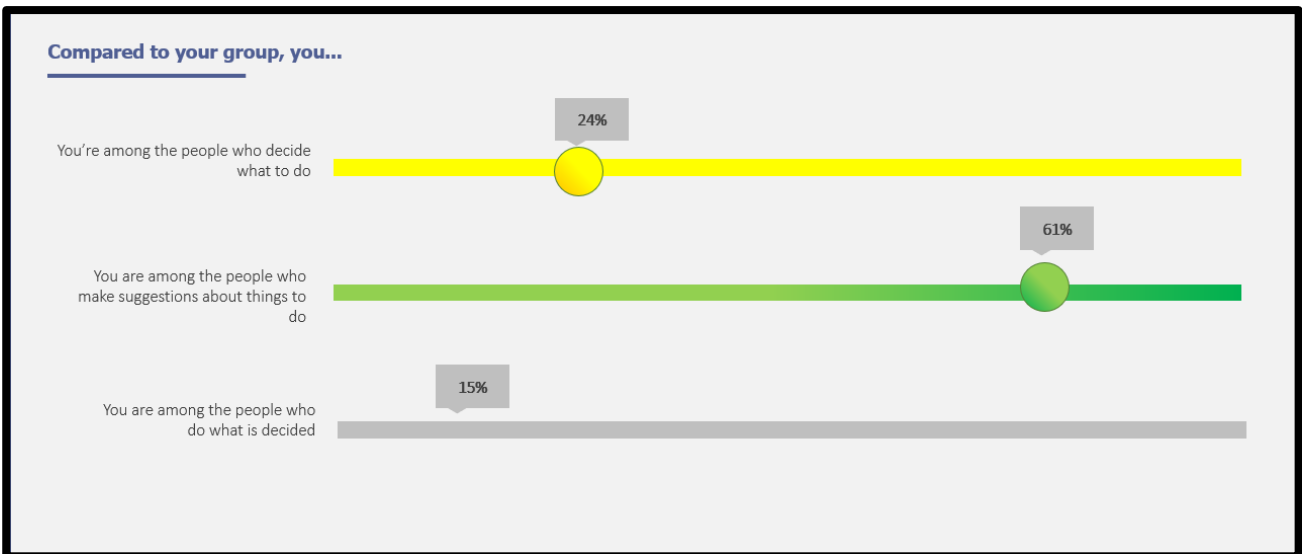


Chart 36. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you...".

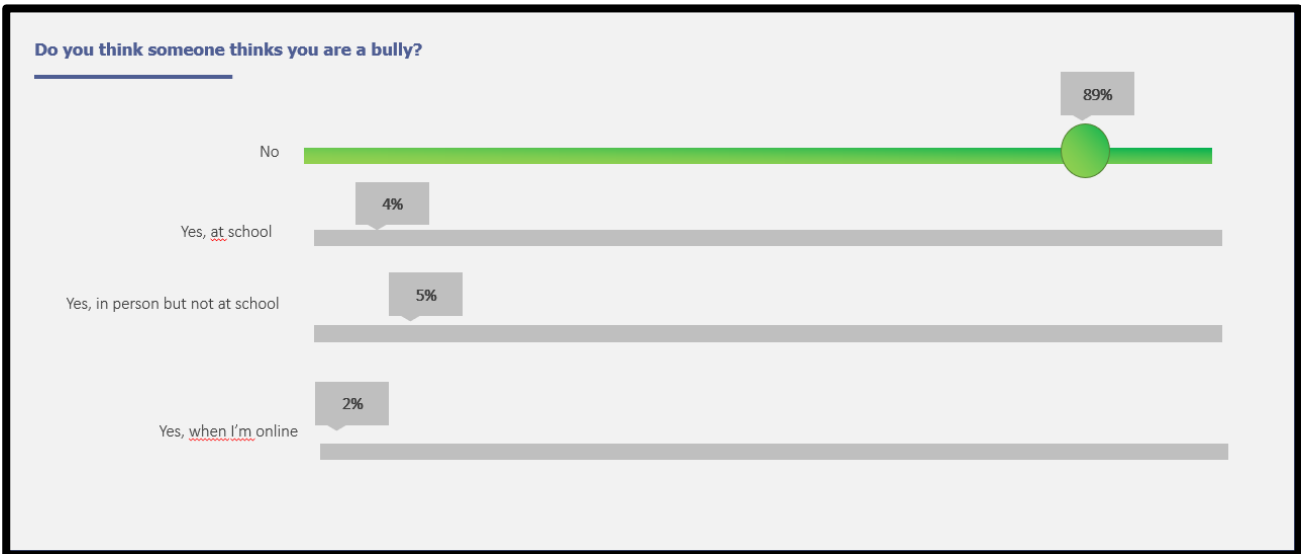


Chart 37. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

With regard to the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (77%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties, resulting from talking to each other among group members and creating a shared plan (Chart 35).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (61%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to carry out (Chart 36), while 89% of participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 37).

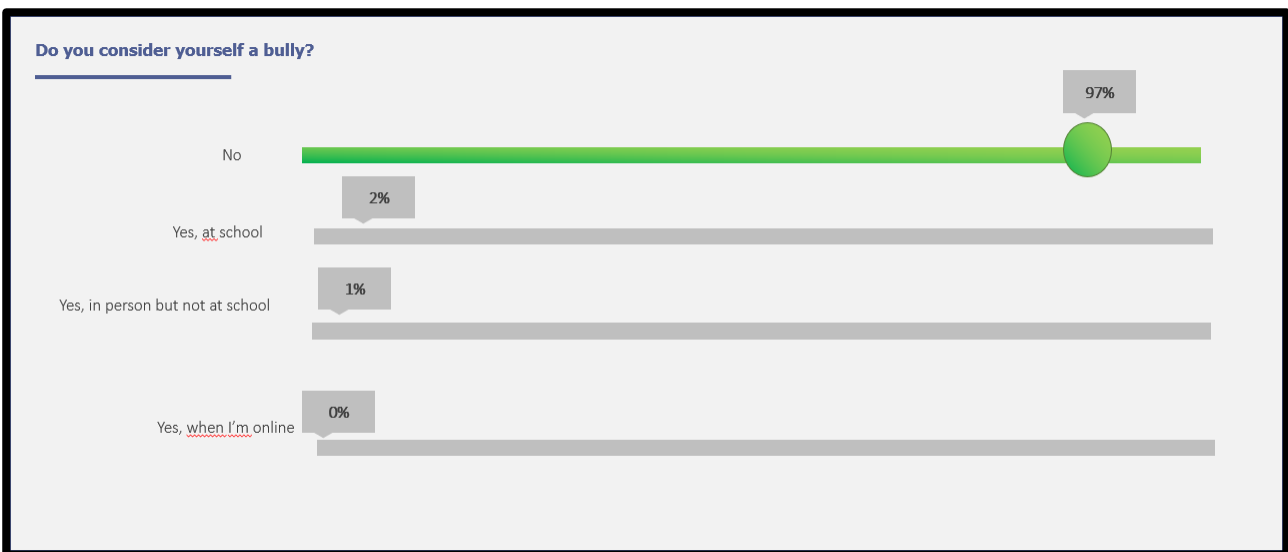


Chart 38. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 97% of the participants state that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 38).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 13).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	12.9
	Democratic	87.1
Power management	Decide	18.7
	Propose	69.5
	Execute	11.8

Table 13. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 87.1% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group to be a democratic process (Table 13), while 69.5% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 13).

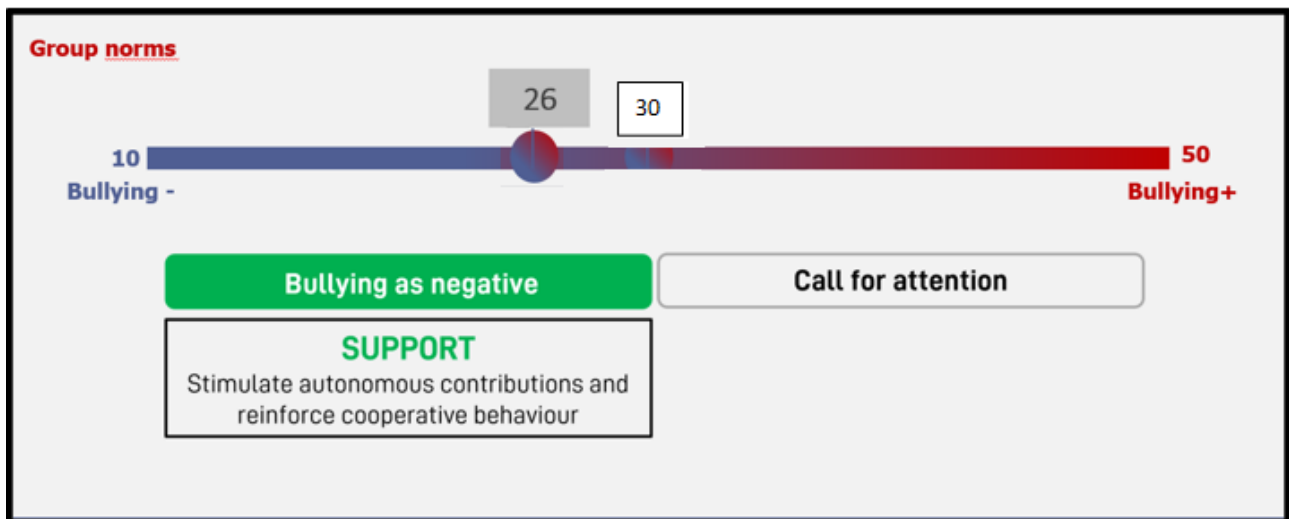


Chart 39. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

With regard to the norms of the group to which one belongs, the Italian participants show in the SAFER questionnaire that they perceive bullying as something negative (we are below the cut-off

point of 30, with a score of 26), the absence of which is able to stimulate autonomous contributions and reinforcements to cooperative behaviour. (Chart 39).

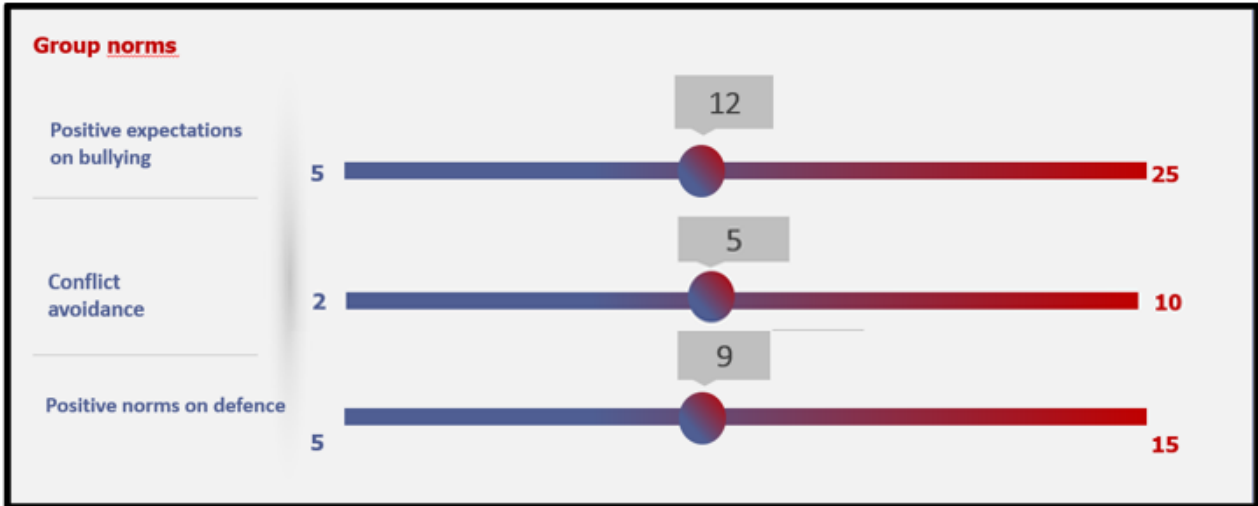


Chart 40. Group norms regarding perceptions of bullying incidents.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (12 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (5 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 9 out of 15) (Chart 40).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group.

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	50.5	4.4	16.3	28.8
Undergo verbal attacks	48.1	4.7	20.7	26.5
Promoting verbal attacks	80.0	0.7	9.2	10.1
Defending	89.2	1.7	4.7	4.4
Undergoing physical attacks	85.1	1.0	9.8	4.1
Promoting physical attacks	31.5	7.5	34.6	26.4

Table 14. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer (group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Italian students declares that they witness episodes of violence mainly inside the school (28.8%), and again inside the school 26.5% of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, while having had to defend some of their companions from such episodes during school activities (4.4%) or out of school (4.7%). Moreover, out of school, 9.8% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state that they have carried out physical attacks on other members of the group, do so outside the school (34.6%) (Table 14).

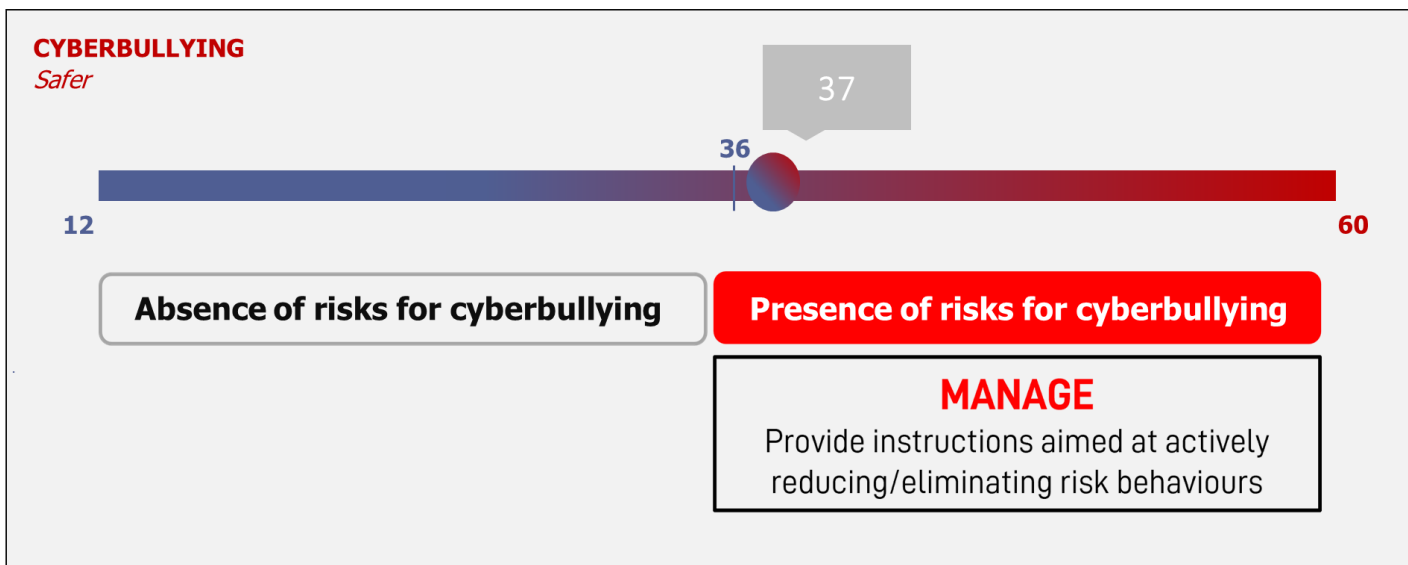


Chart 41. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

With regard to the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 37), the average score obtained by the group of Italian subjects shows the perception of the presence of risk for this phenomenon, placing the score just above the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 41).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	3
Benefits	2	10	5
Privacy	2	10	5
Behaviours	2	10	4
Beliefs	6	30	19
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 15. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the theoretical minimum and maximum values.

With regard to the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in the table above, the scores obtained are also all intermediate in nature (Table 15).

The following chart (Chart 42) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between phenomena of aggression/violence and situations closer to outright bullying.

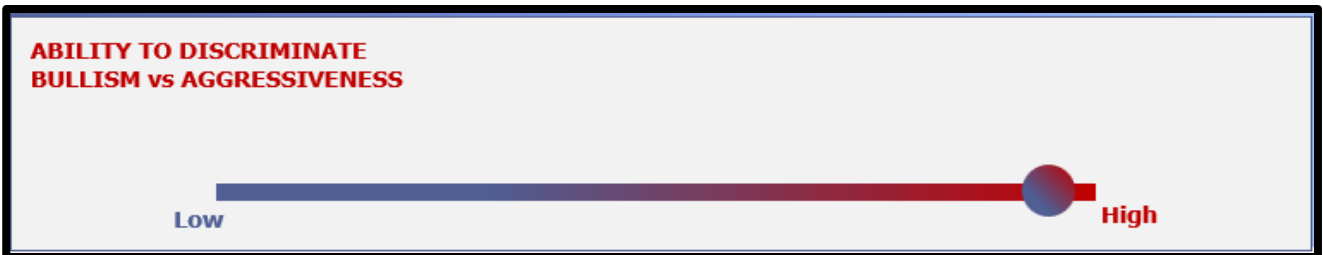


Chart 42. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

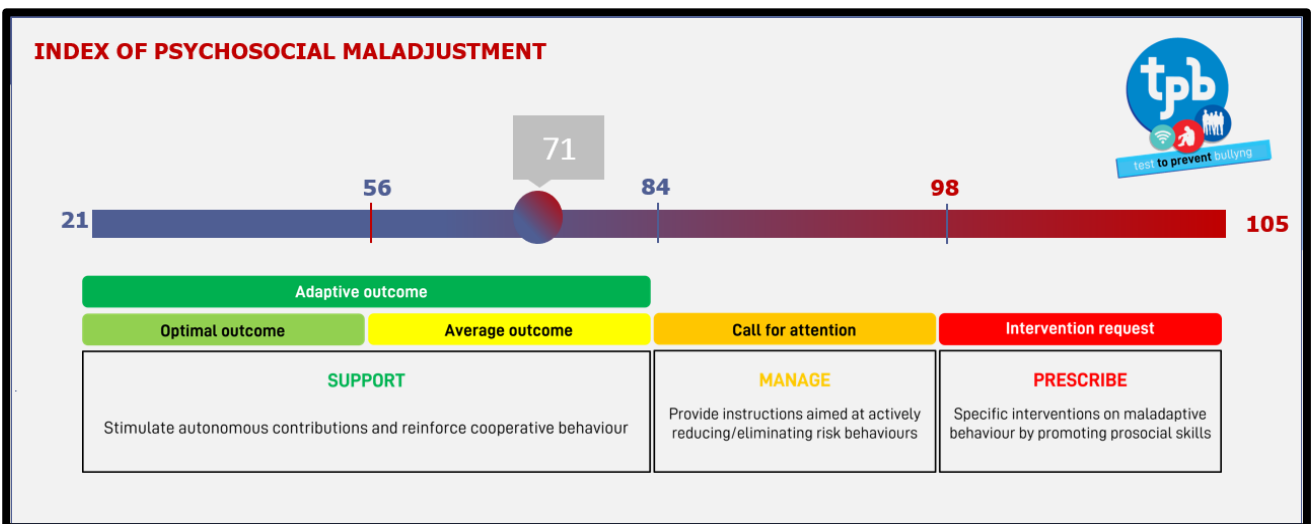


Chart 43. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 43 represents the performance of the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test in the group of Italian subjects. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 71, which therefore places the result obtained in an average range.

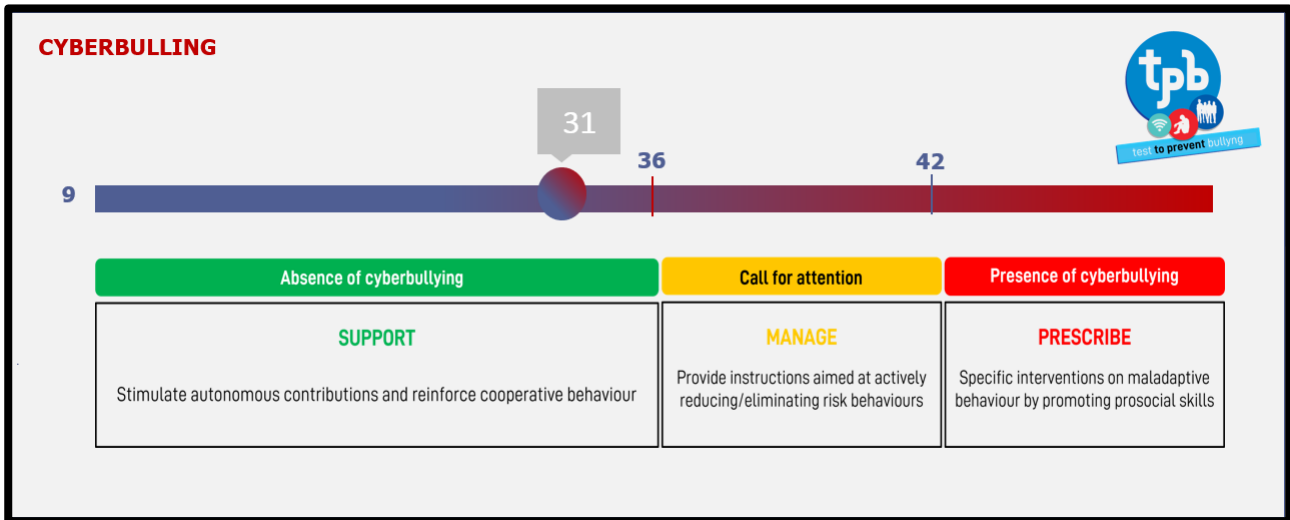


Chart 44. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

With regard to the dimension of cyberbullying, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 44).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	18	15
Family	5	25	17	15
Peer group	10	50	34	30

Table 16. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

The table above shows how the dimensions of bullying within the school, family and peer group are above average (Table 16), positioning slightly above the critical threshold values.

North Macedonia – Albanian classes

The sample of participants from Albanian classes in North Macedonia consists of a total of 102 students, with an average age of 12.44 ± 1.31 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 45).

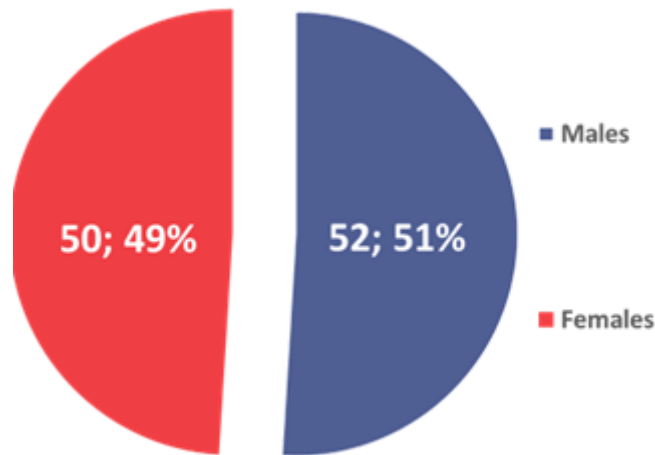


Chart 45. Frequency distribution for males and females of the overall sample



Image 5. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows how, in general for this sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 5).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of participants from Albanian classes in North Macedonia in the SAFER project (Chart 46, 47, 48 and 49).

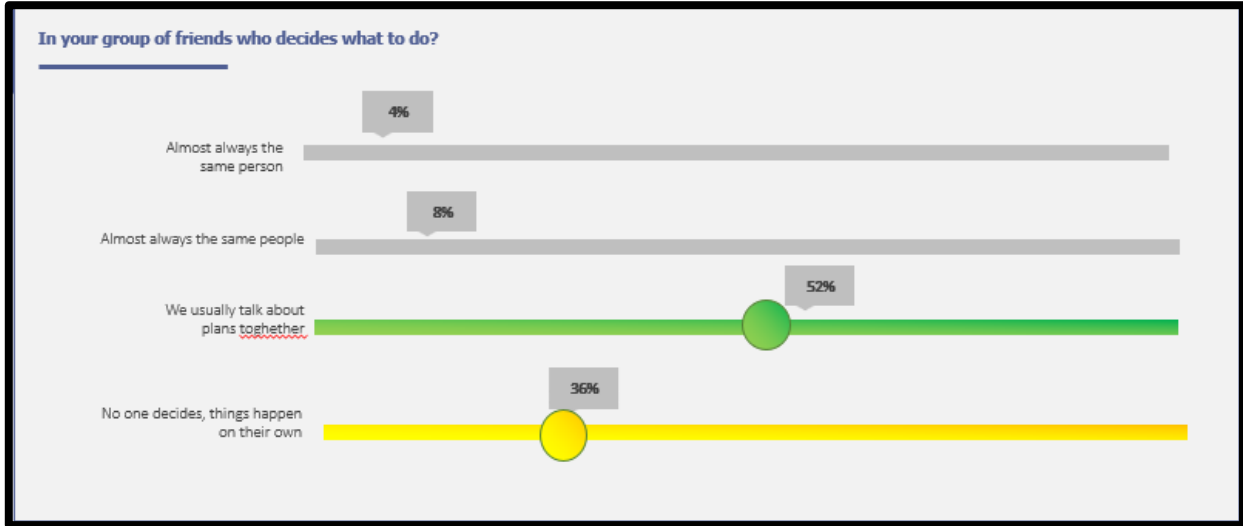


Chart 46. Response frequencies to the question: “In your group of friends who decides what to do?”.

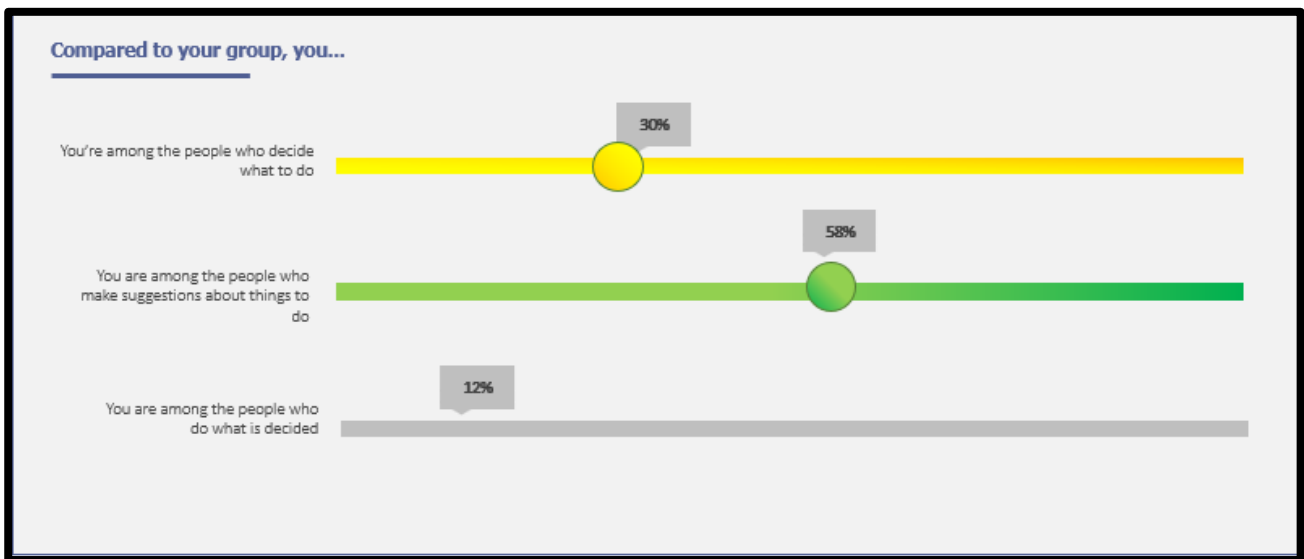


Chart 47. Response frequencies to the question: “Compared to your group, you...”.

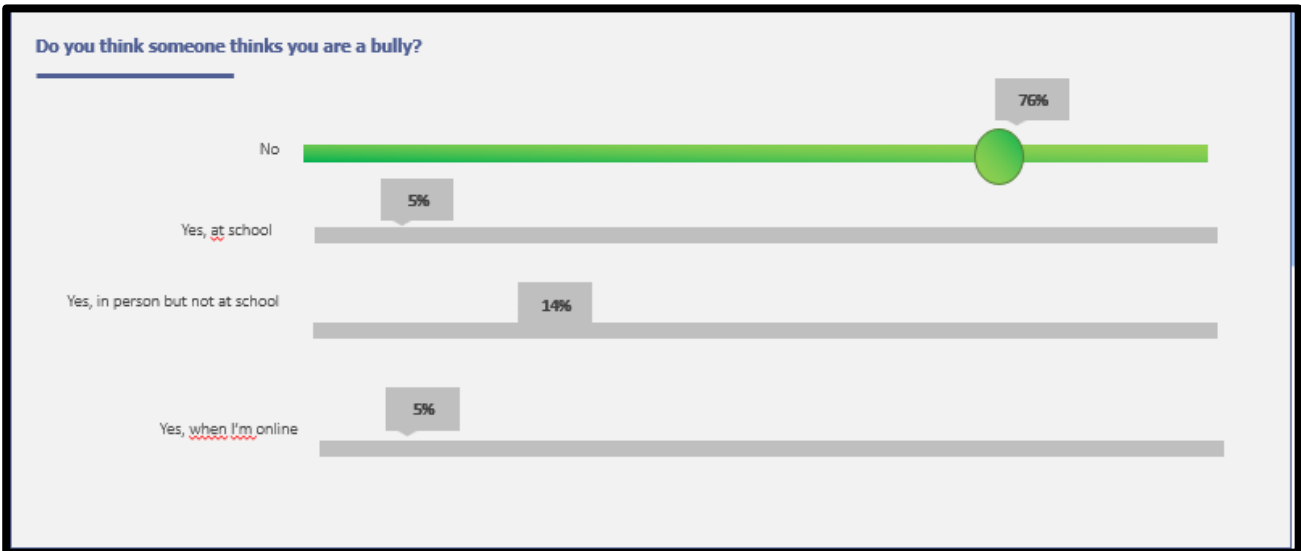


Chart 48. Response frequencies to the question: “Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?”.

Regarding the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (52%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties, resulting from talking to each other among group members and creating a shared plan (Chart 46).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (58%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to carry out (Chart 47), and about three quarters of the participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies.

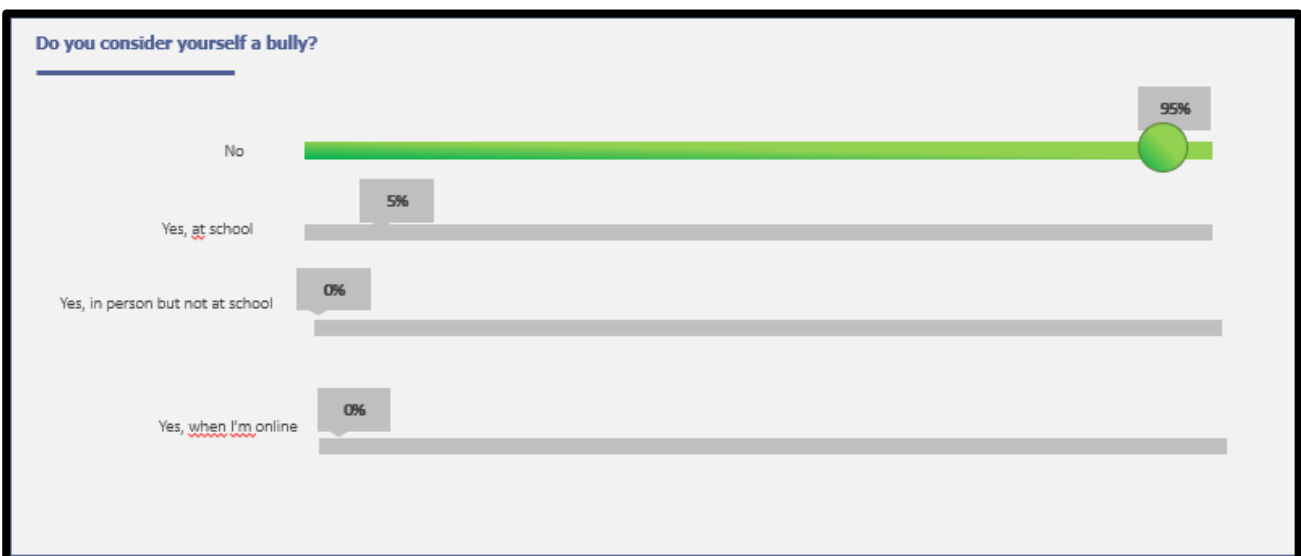


Chart 49. Response frequencies to the question: “Do you consider yourself a bully?”.

Finally, 95% of the participants declare that they do not self-perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 49).

This is followed by a table representing the participants experience of affiliation within the group (Table 17).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	21.7
	Democratic	78.3
Power management	Decide	32.6
	Propose	45.7
	Execute	21.7

Table 17. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 78.3% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group to be a process of a democratic nature (Table 17), while 45.7% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed, rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 17).

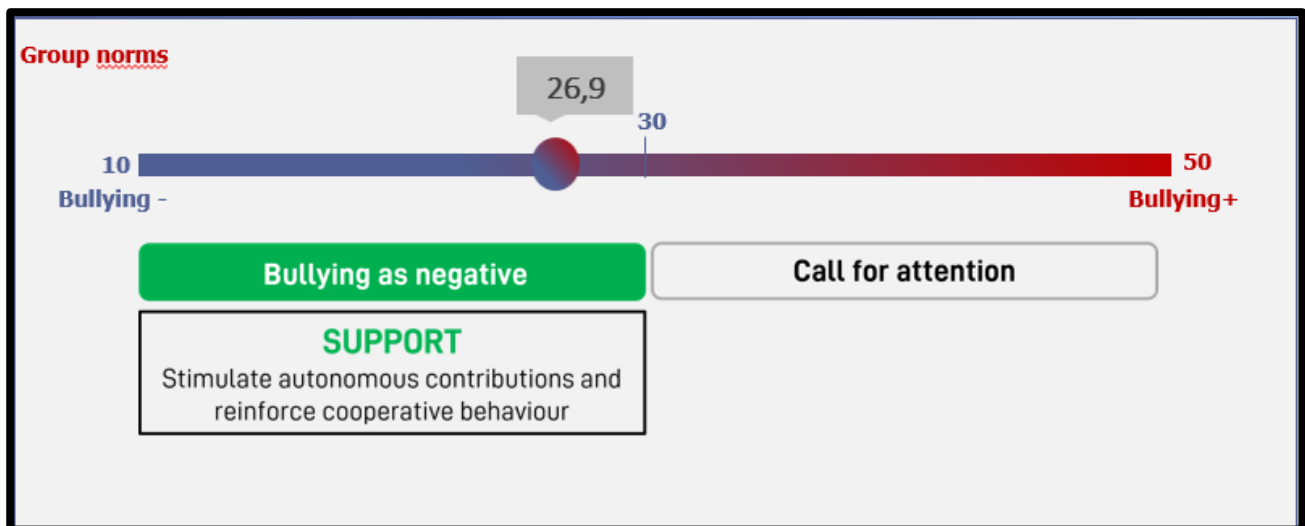


Chart 50. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

Regarding the norms related to the group they belong to, the Albanian participants show on the SAFER questionnaire that they perceive bullying as something negative (we are below the cut-off

point of 30), the absence of which is able to stimulate autonomous contributions and reinforcements to cooperative behaviour (Chart 50).

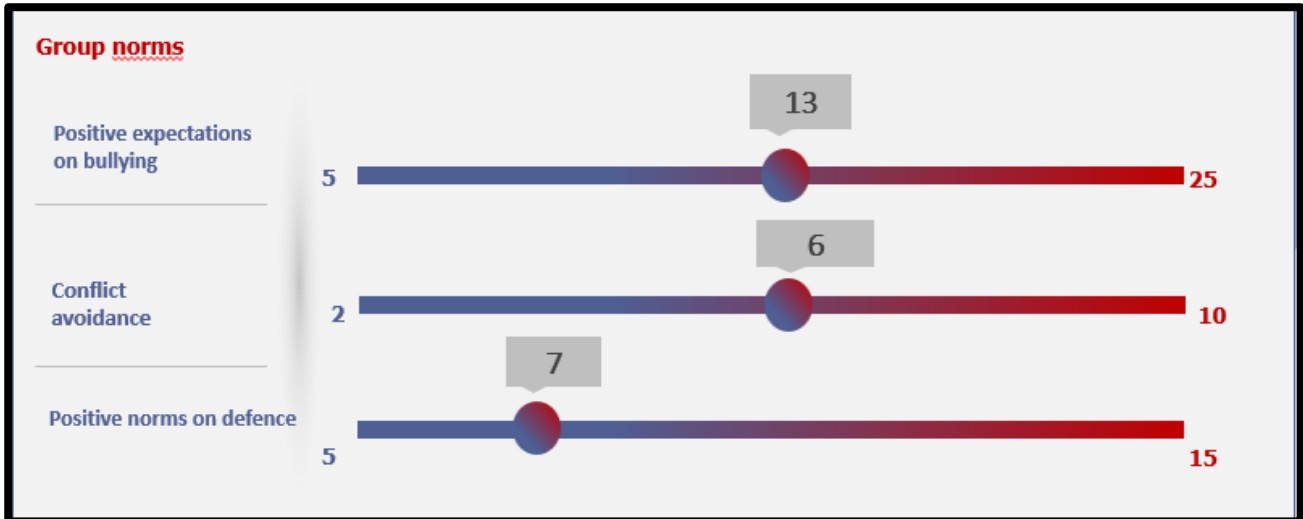


Chart 51. Group norms regarding bullying.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarized towards the positive or negative extreme) with regard to the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (13 out of 25) and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (6 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 7 out of 15) (Chart 51).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 18).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	53.9	6.9	18.6	20.6
Undergo verbal attacks	73.5	7.8	3.9	14.8
Promoting verbal attacks	85.3	5.9	4.9	3.9
Defending	20.6	15.7	30.4	33.3
Undergoing physical attacks	80.4	2.0	2.9	14.7
Promoting physical attacks	90.2	2.0	3.9	3.9

Table 18. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Albanian students declares to have witnessed episodes of violence mainly inside the school (20.6%) and, again inside the school, 14.8% of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (33.3%) some of their companions from such episodes. In addition, again at school, 14.7% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who claim to have made physical attacks on other group members do so outside (3.9%) and inside the school (3.9%) (Table 18)

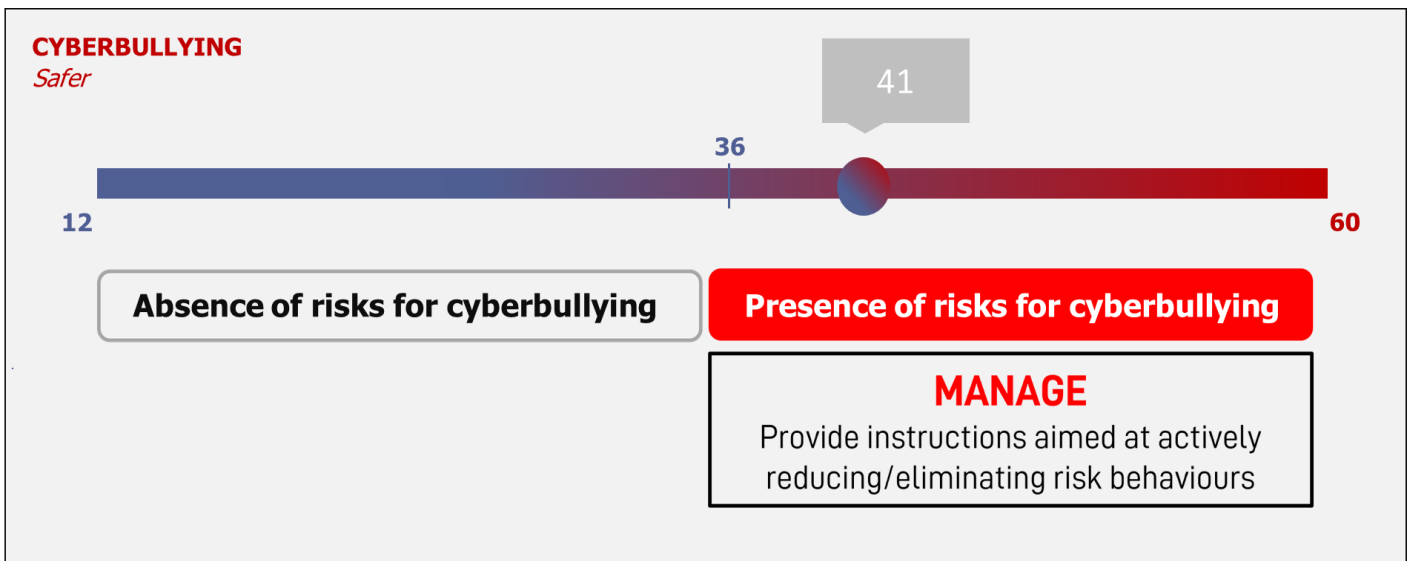


Chart 52. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

Regarding the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 41), the average score obtained by this group of subjects shows the perception of the presence of risk of this phenomenon slightly above the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 52).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	3
Benefits	2	10	5
Privacy	2	10	7
Behaviours	2	10	7
Beliefs	6	30	18
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 19. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the theoretical minimum and maximum values.

As for the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 3, the scores obtained are also all intermediate, and therefore demand attention to the risk of problematic behaviour emerging.

The following chart (Chart 53) also shows how subjects are fully able to differentiate between aggression/violence phenomena and situations closer to outright bullying.

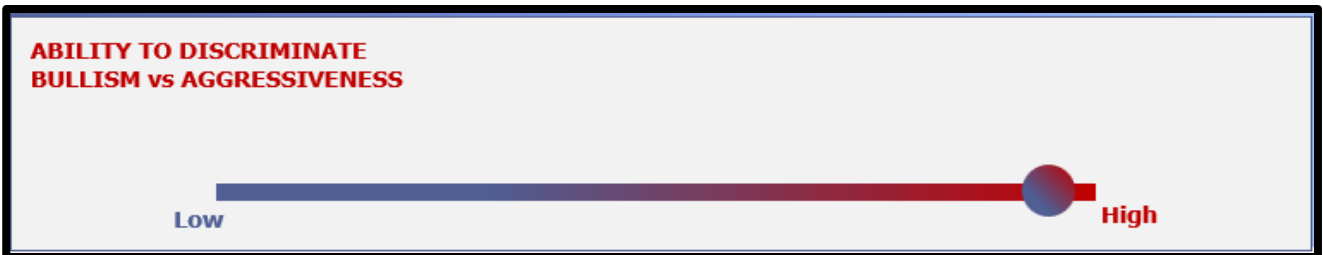


Chart 53. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

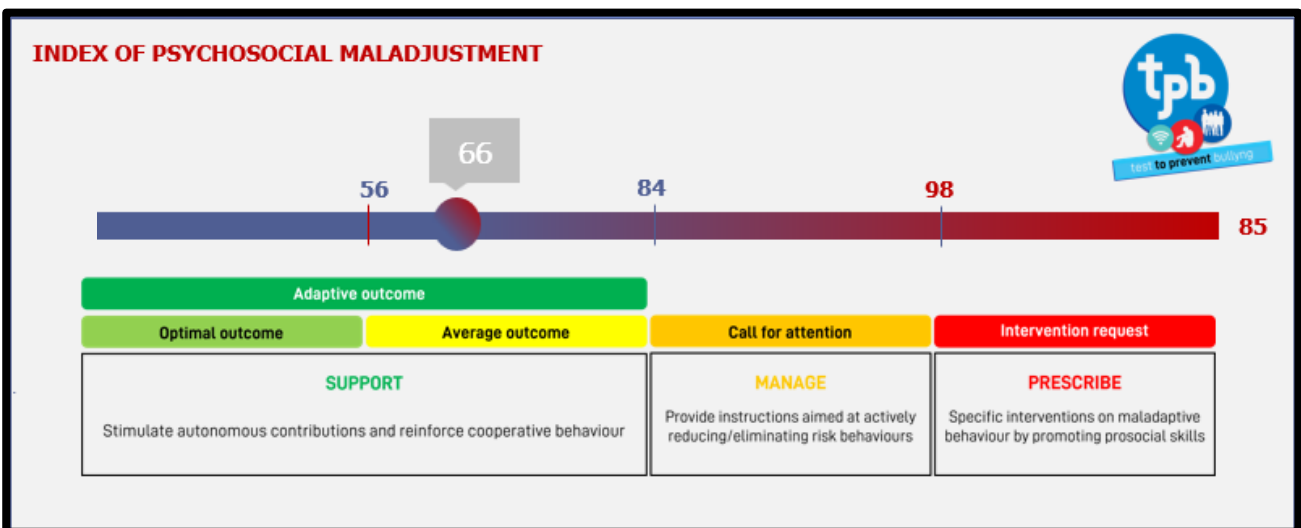


Chart 54. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 54 above represents the performance of the group of students from Albanian classes in North Macedonia for the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 66, which therefore places the outcome obtained in an average range.

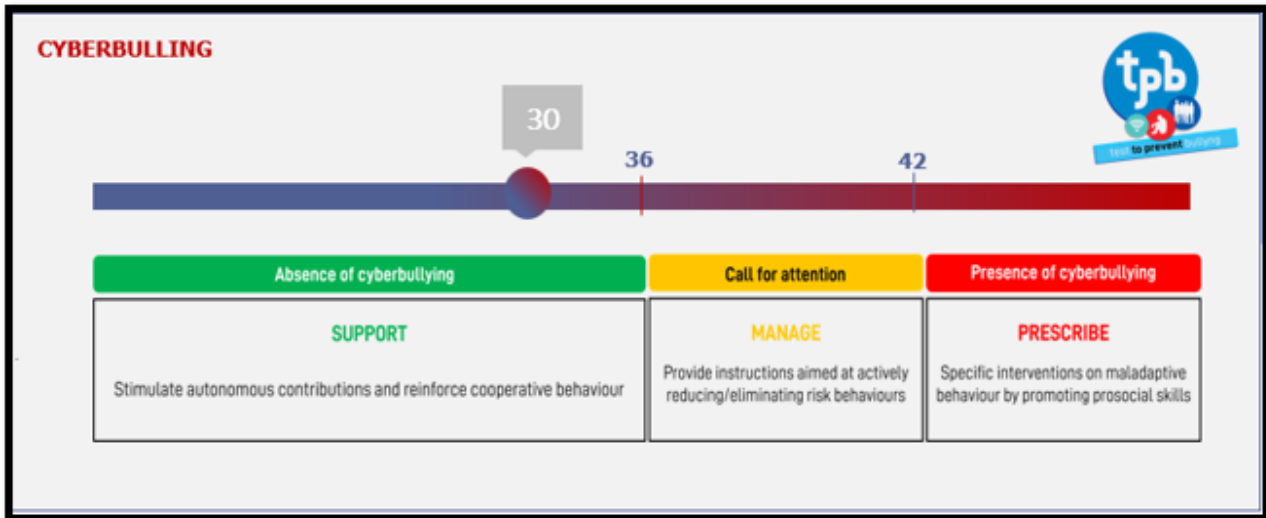


Chart 55. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

Regarding the cyberbullying dimension, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled as 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 55).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	17	15
Family	5	25	15	15
Peer group	10	50	32	30

Table 20. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

The table above shows how the dimensions of bullying declined within the school, family and peer group are fully average (although two scores, School and Peer group, slightly exceed the critical threshold) (Table 20).

North Macedonia – Macedonian classes

The sample of participants from Macedonian classes in North Macedonia consists of a total of 94 students, with an average age of 12.62 ± 1.16 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 56).

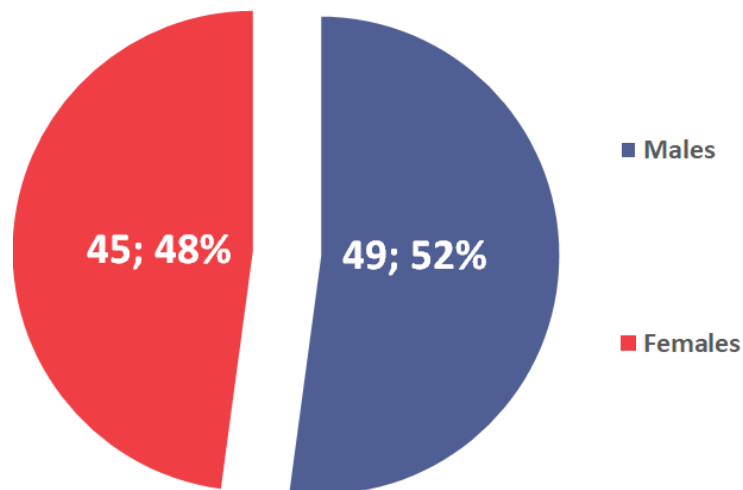


Chart 56. Frequency distribution for males and females in the overall sample



Image 6. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows that, in general for this sample of Macedonian classes in North Macedonia, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 6).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of this group of participants in the SAFER project (Charts 57, 58, 59 and 60).



Chart 57. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?".

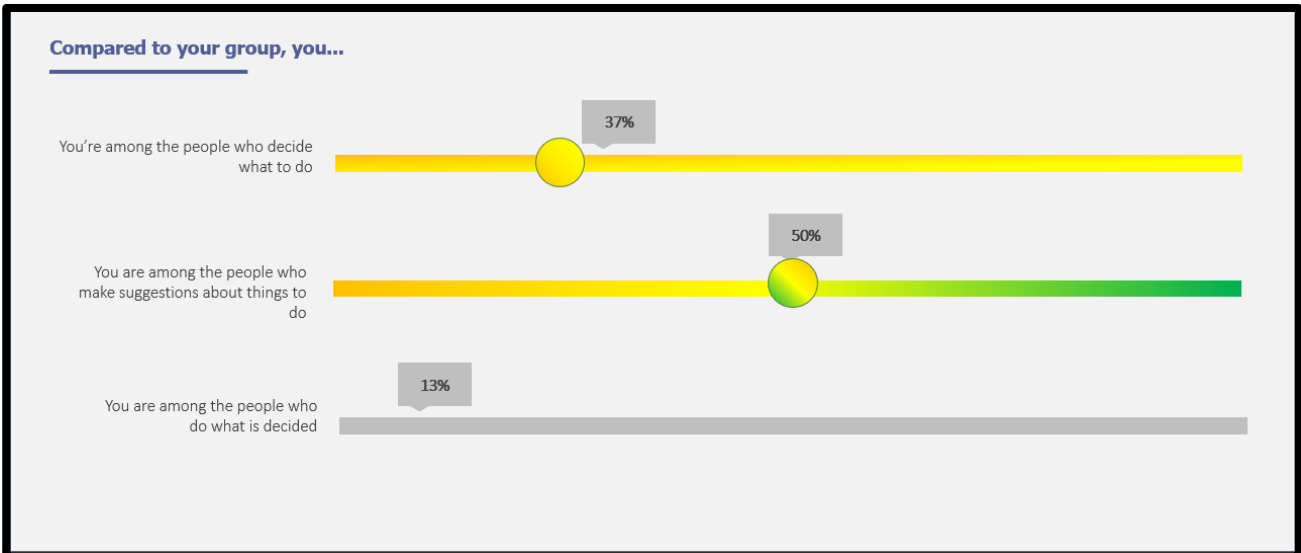


Chart 58. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you...".

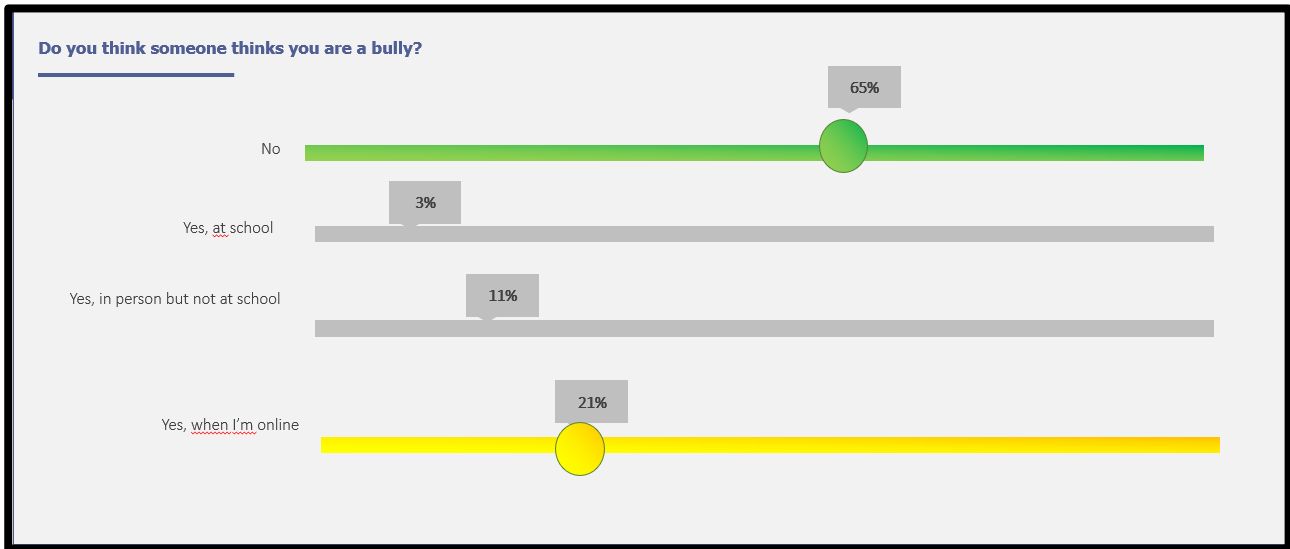


Chart 59. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

With regard to the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (92%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties, resulting from talking to each other among group members and creating a shared plan (Chart 57).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (50%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to be carried out (Chart 58), while 65% of participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 59).

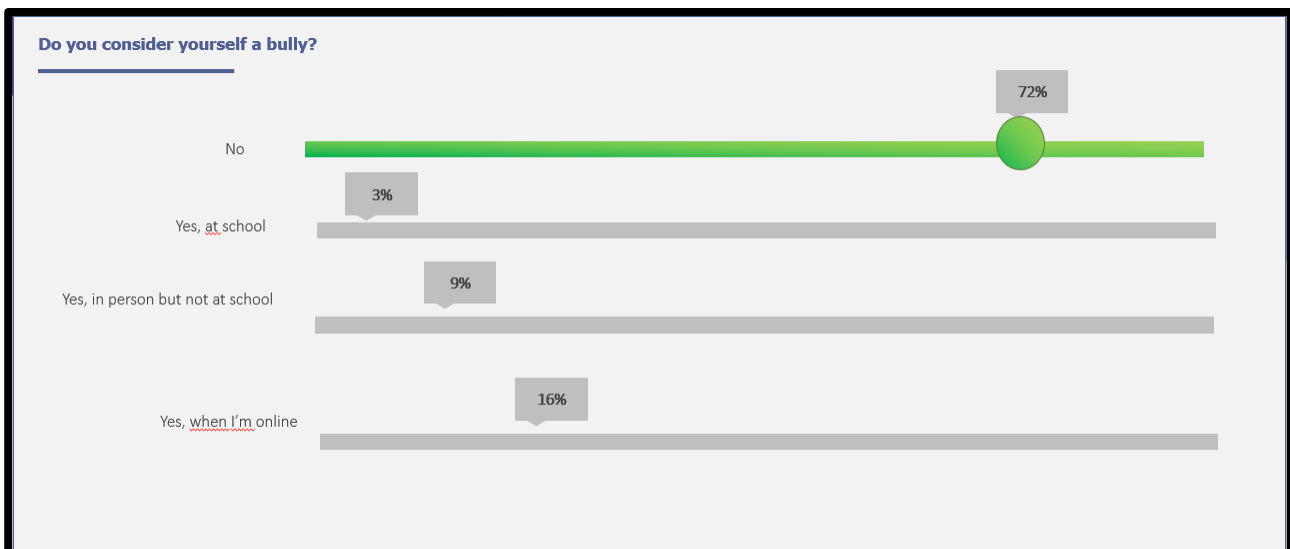


Chart 60. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 72% of the participants state that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 60).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 21).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	34.1
	Democratic	65.9
Power management	Decide	38.5
	Propose	51.6
	Execute	9.9

Table 21. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 65.9% of the students stated that they considered affiliation with the peer group to be a democratic process (Table 21), while 51.6% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 21).

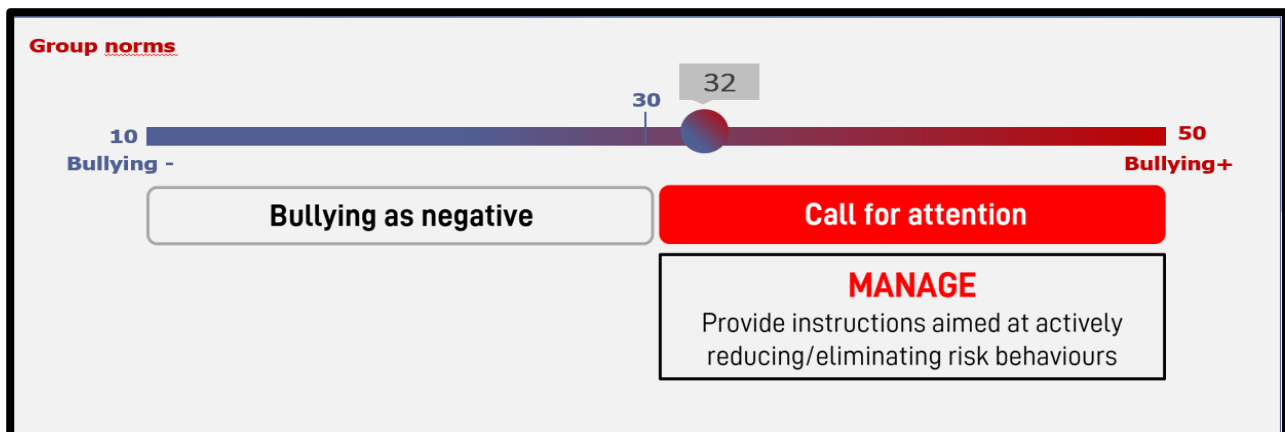


Chart 61. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

With regard to the norms of the group to which one belongs, participants from Macedonian classes in North Macedonia show on the SAFER questionnaire that they do not perceive bullying as something negative (we are above the cut-off point of 30, with a score of 32), thus being able to state that there must be a demand for attention to this phenomenon on the part of the school authority through specific instructions to actively reduce/eliminate the risk of bullying (Chart 61).

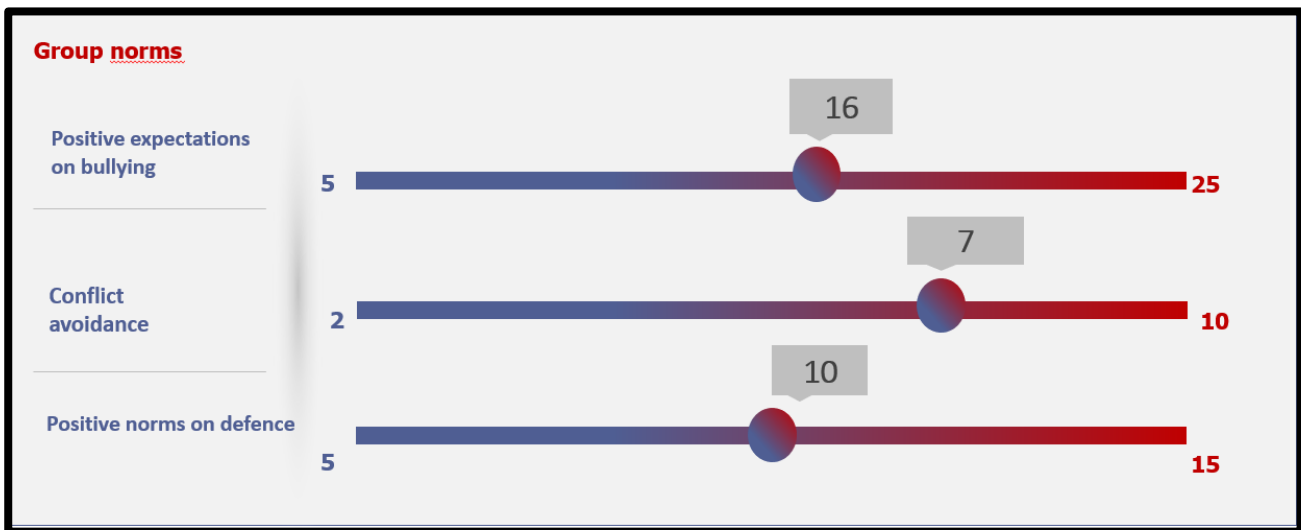


Chart 62. Group norms regarding perceptions of bullying incidents.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (16 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (7 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 10 out of 15) (Chart 62).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 22).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	43.6	7.4	6.4	42.6
Undergo verbal attacks	48.9	10.6	11.7	28.8
Promoting verbal attacks	63.8	3.2	11.7	21.3
Defending	36.2	5.3	19.1	39.4
Undergoing physical attacks	53.2	6.4	11.7	28.7
Promoting physical attacks	61.7	5.3	12.8	20.2

Table 22. Percentage (%) of children experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Macedonian students declares that they witness episodes of violence mainly inside the school (42.6%), and again inside the school 28.8%

of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (39.4%) some of their companions from such episodes. Moreover, again at school, 28.7% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state that they have made physical attacks on other members of the group did so inside the school in 20.2% of cases (Table 22).

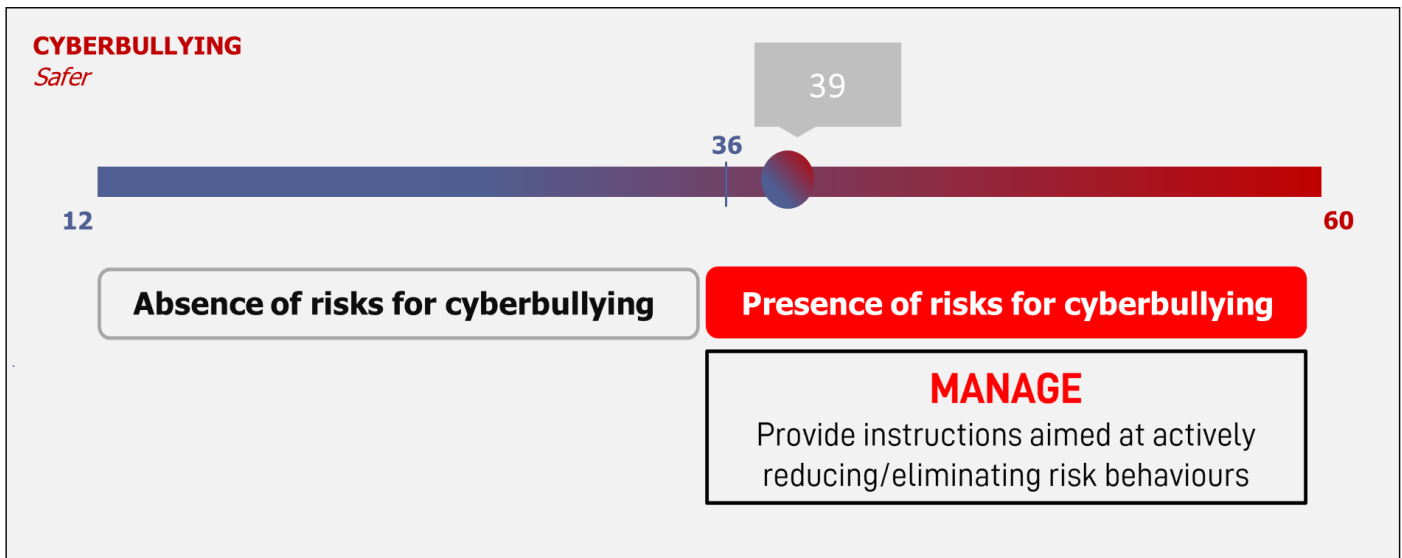


Chart 63. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

Regarding the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 39), the average score obtained by this group of subjects shows the perception of the presence of risk for this phenomenon, placing the score above the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 63).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	4
Benefits	2	10	8
Privacy	2	10	7
Behaviors	2	10	6
Beliefs	6	30	13
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 23. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the theoretical minimum and maximum values.

Regarding the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 23, the scores obtained are also all intermediate in nature (Table 23).

The following chart (Chart 64) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between phenomena of aggression/violence and situations closer to outright bullying.

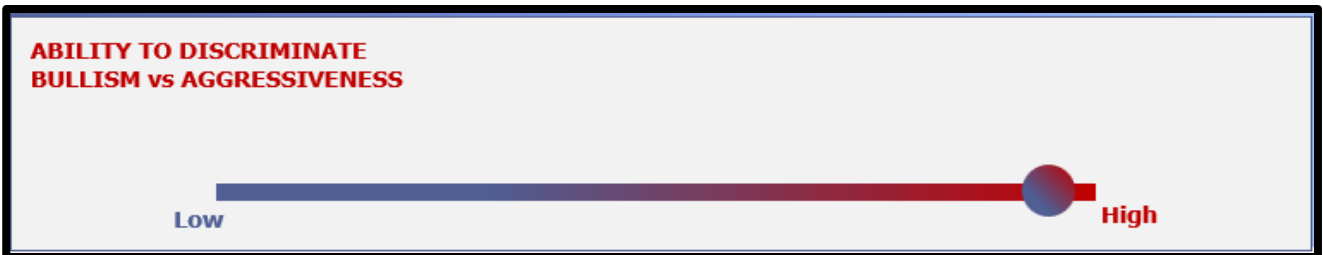


Chart 64. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

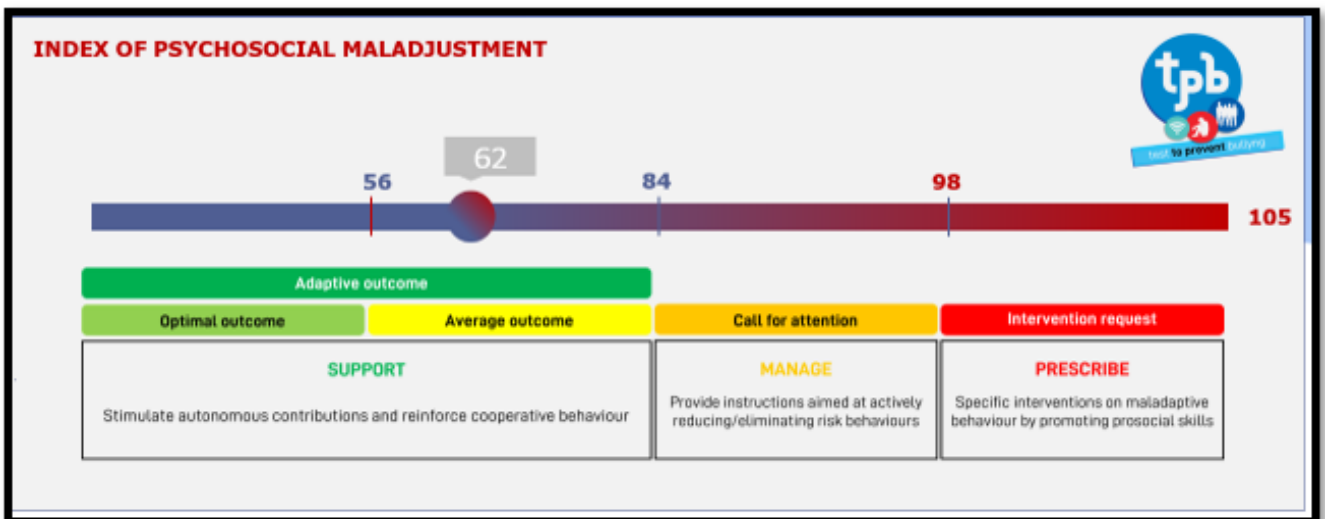


Chart 65. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 65 depicts the performance in this group of subjects on the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects scored 62, which therefore places the outcome within a medium range.

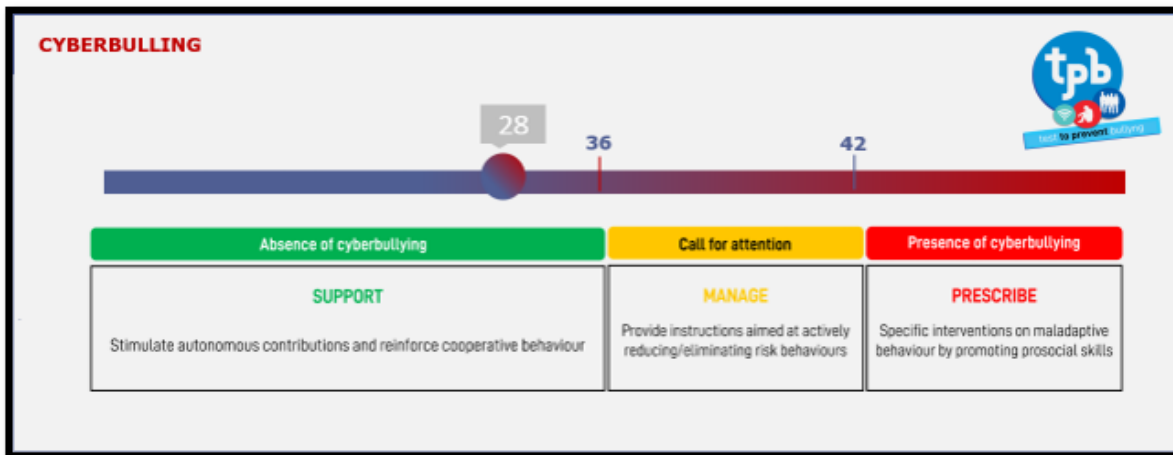


Chart 66. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

With regard to the cyberbullying dimension, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled as 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 66).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	15	15
Family	5	25	14	15
Peer group	10	50	30	30

Table 24. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

Table 24 shows, in line with Chart 14, how the dimensions of bullying within the school, the family and the peer group are fully average (Table 24).

Portugal

The sample of Portuguese participants consists of a total of 80 students, with an average age of 12.19 ± 1.97 years. The gender distribution for the total number of participants is homogeneous (Chart 67).

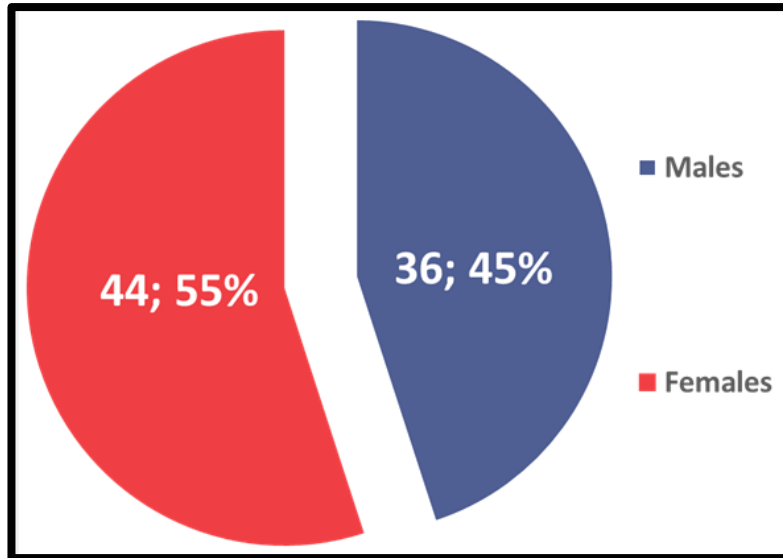


Chart 67. Frequency distribution for males and females in the overall sample



Image 7. Ranking in the use of social media.

The image above shows how, in general for the Portuguese sample, the most used social media is Whatsapp, followed by Instagram in second position and, in third position, YouTube, Facebook or Twitch (Image 7).

Below are four Charts describing the affiliation behaviour of Portugal's participants in the SAFER project (Chart 68, 69, 70 and 71).

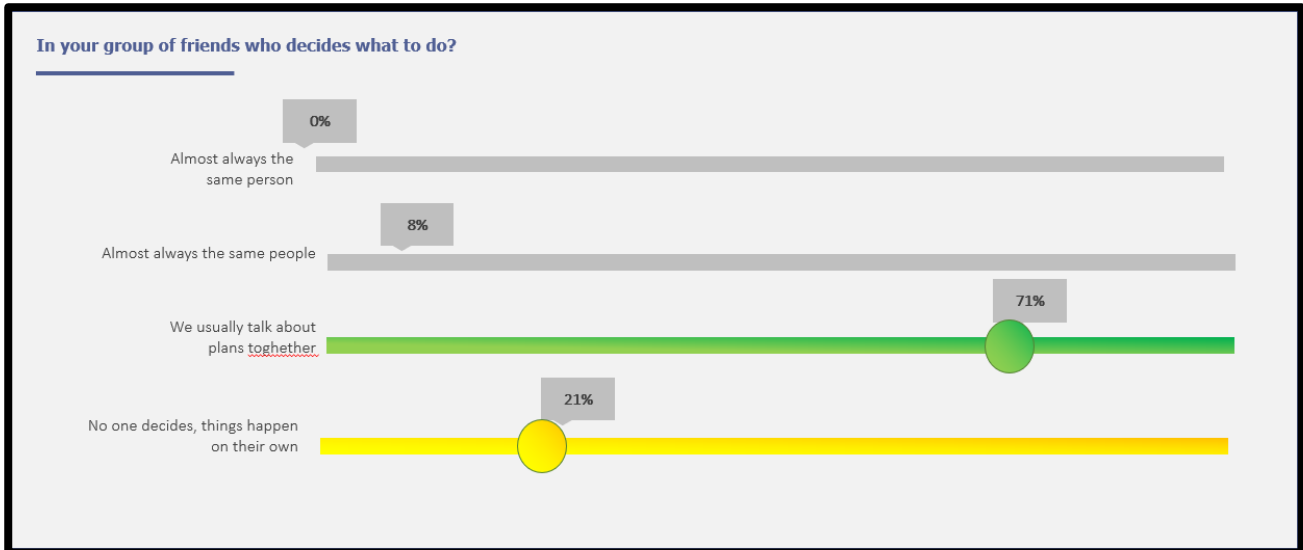


Chart 68. Response frequencies to the question: "In your group of friends who decides what to do?".

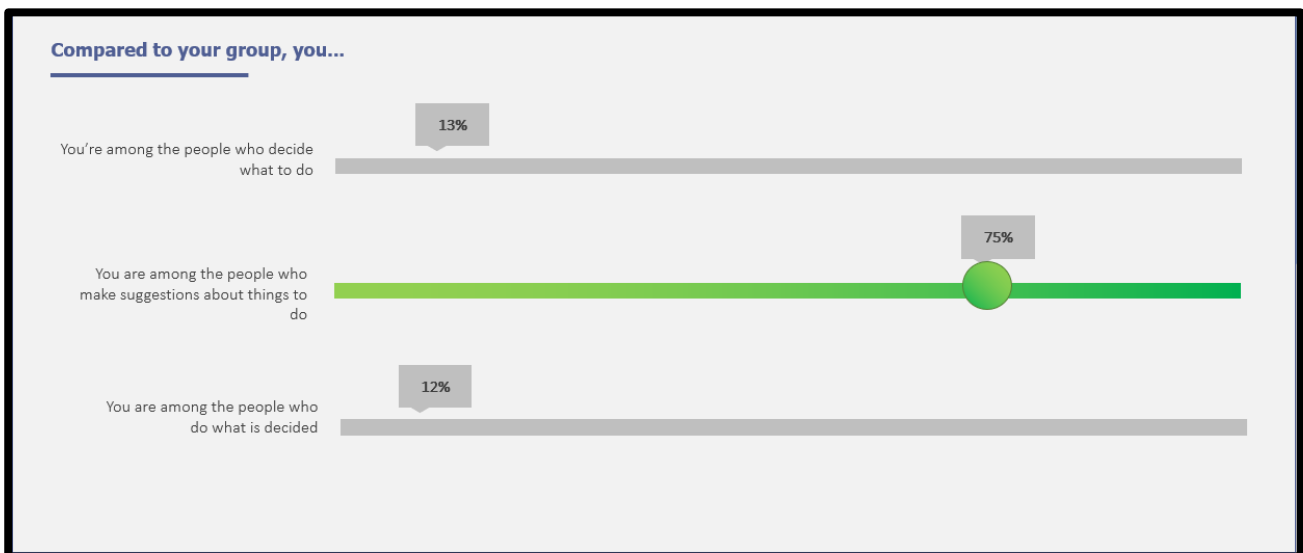


Chart 69. Response frequencies to the question: "Compared to your group, you...".

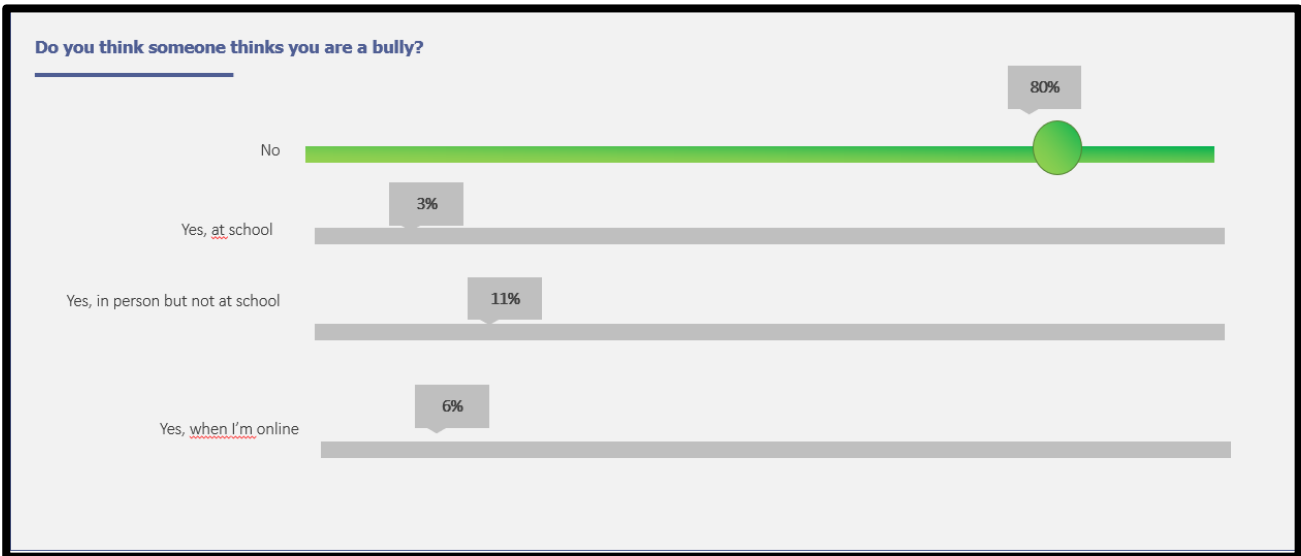


Chart 70. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you think someone thinks you are a bully?".

Concerning the decision-maker within the group of friends, we see how the majority of respondents (71%) identify decision-making as a process of agreement between the parties, arising through talking to each other among group members and creating a shared plan (Chart 68).

Within the group, the majority of subjects (75%) state that they actively make suggestions within the group about possible activities to be carried out (Chart 69), while 80% of participants state that they do not feel identified by others as bullies (Chart 70).

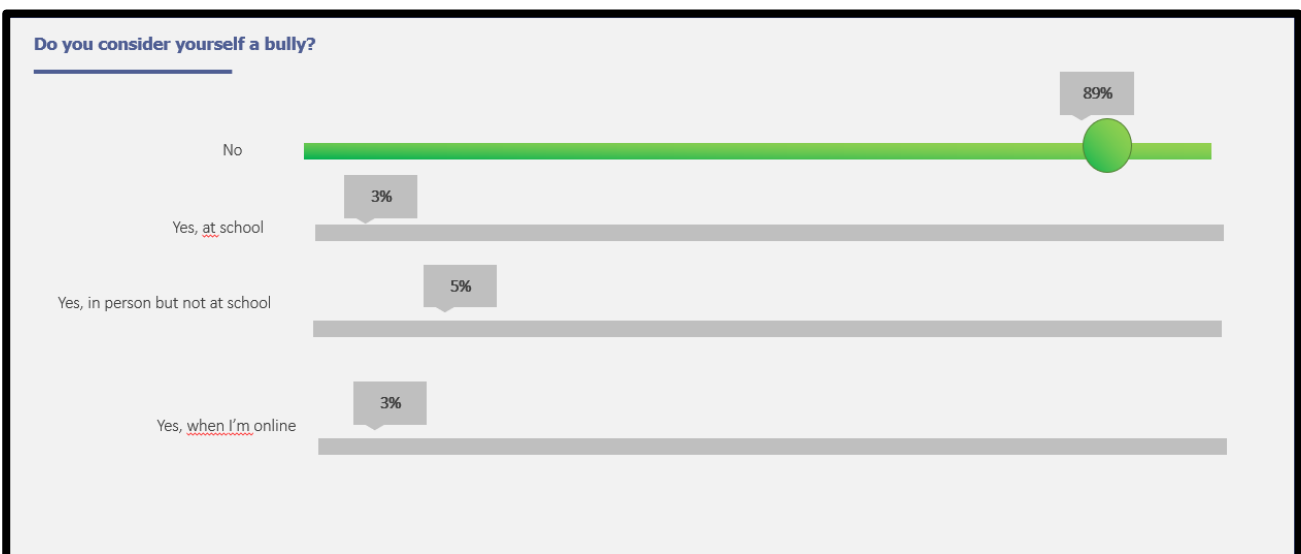


Chart 71. Response frequencies to the question: "Do you consider yourself a bully?".

Finally, 89% of the participants state that they do not perceive themselves as bullies within their group of friends (Chart 71).

This is followed by a Chart representing the participants' experience of affiliation within the group (Table 25).

		Percentage (%)
Group affiliation	Hierarchical	30.0
	Democratic	70.0
Power management	Decide	21.3
	Propose	65.0
	Execute	13.8

Table 25. Response frequencies about group affiliation and power management.

As many as 70% of the students stated that they consider affiliation with the peer group as a democratic process (Table 25), while 65% stated that they see power within the group as something that is proposed rather than unilaterally decided or passively executed (Table 25).

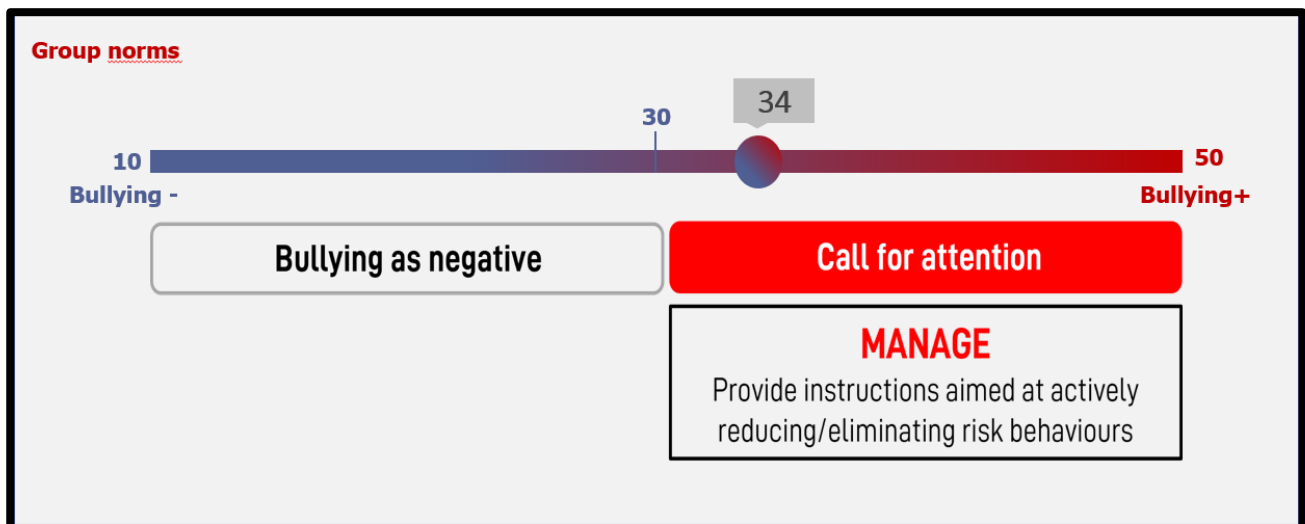


Chart 72. Perception of bullying in the peer group.

With regard to the norms of the group to which they belong, Portuguese participants show in the SAFER questionnaire that they do not perceive bullying as something negative (we are above the cut-off of 30, with a score of 34), thus affirming that there must be a demand for attention to this

phenomenon on the part of the school authority through specific instructions aimed at actively reducing/eliminating the risk of bullying behaviour (Chart 72).

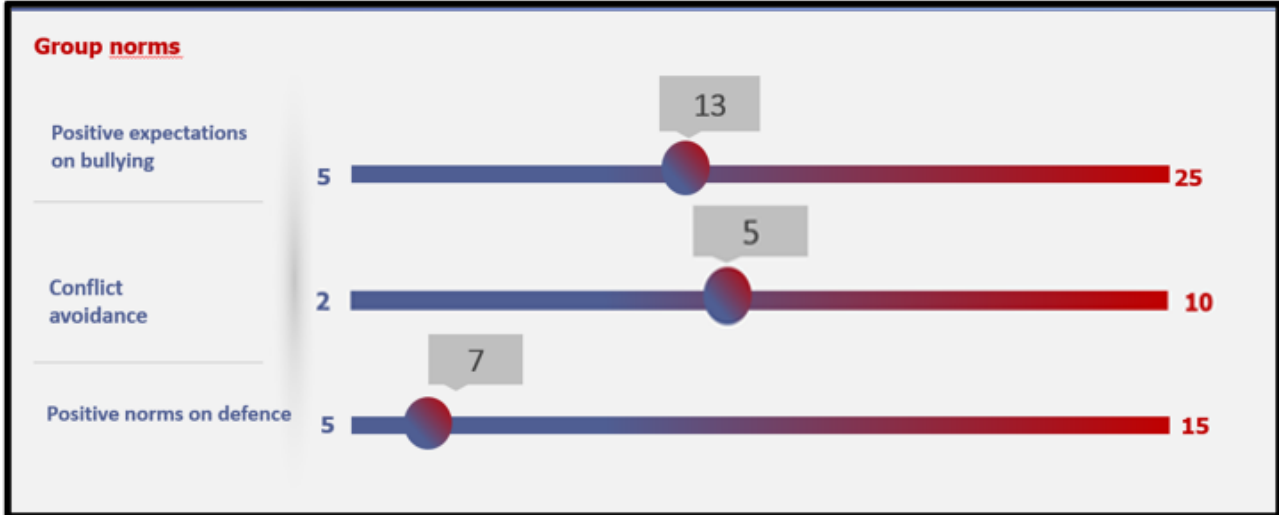


Chart 73. Group norms regarding perceptions of bullying incidents.

With regard to further perceptions concerning group norms, it appears that the group of participants obtains an intermediate score (i.e. not polarised towards the positive or negative extreme) concerning the possibility of considering bullying as also having positive characteristics (13 out of 25), and that they consider the emergence of possible conflicts within the peer group both to be avoided (5 out of 10) and to be solved by an intervention (i.e. Positive norms on defence; 7 out of 15) (Chart 73).

The following table show the perception about the prevalence of violent behaviour and origin of abuse within the peer group (Table 26).

	No	Yes (online)	Yes (out of school)	Yes (School)
Witnessing	43.8	12.5	13.8	30.0
Undergo verbal attacks	51.3	6.3	13.8	28.8
Promoting verbal attacks	83.8	2.5	6.3	7.5
Defending	33.8	3.8	15.0	47.5
Undergoing physical attacks	80.0	1.3	8.8	10.0
Promoting physical attacks	92.5	0	3.8	3.8

Table 26. Percentage (%) of children experiencing experiencing violent behaviour and origin of abuse (within the peer group online, out of school or at school).

Among those who answered "Yes", the majority of the group of Portuguese students declares to have witnessed episodes of violence mainly inside the school (30%), and again inside the school 28.8% of the sample state that they have been subjected to episodes of verbal violence, as well as having had to defend (47.5%) some of their companions from such episodes during school activities. Moreover, again at school, 10% of the subjects state that they have been subjected to physical attacks, while those who state that they have carried out physical attacks on other members of the group do so both outside the school (3.8%) and inside it (3.8%) in equal measure (Table 26).

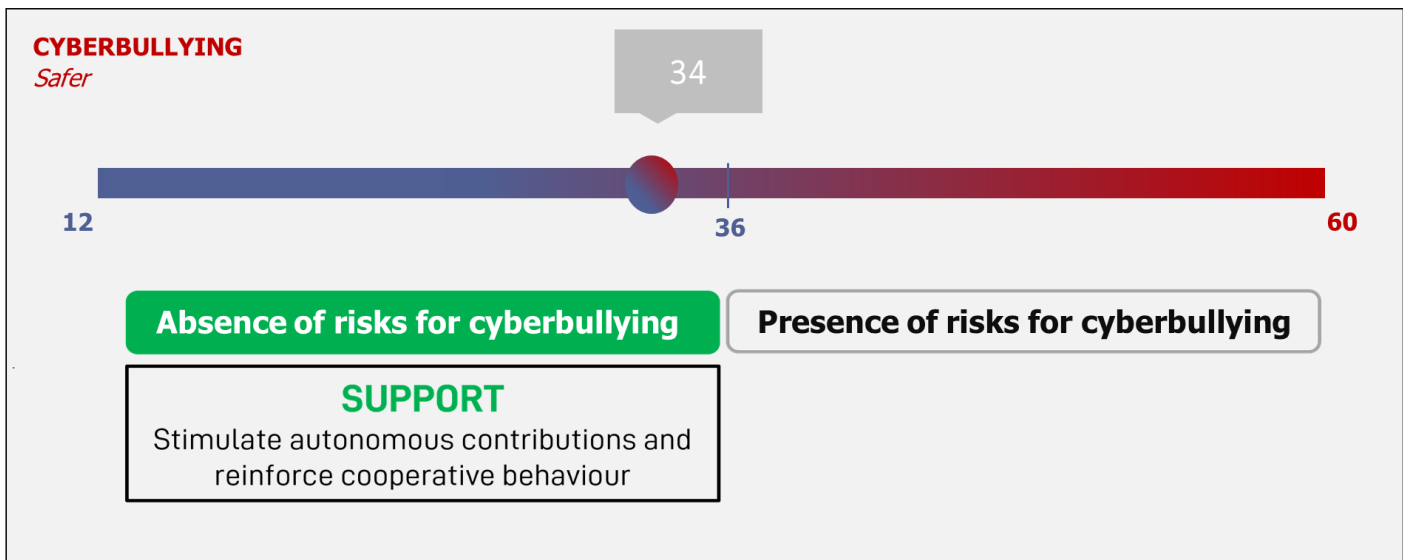


Chart 74. Perception of absence or presence of bullying within the group.

With regard to the cyberbullying score obtained on the SAFER questionnaire (i.e. 34), the average score obtained by the Portuguese subject group does not show the perception of the presence of this phenomenon, placing the score below the cut-off (i.e. 36) (Chart 74).

Cyberbullying dimensions	Min	Max	Score
Identity	1	5	2
Benefits	2	10	5
Privacy	2	10	5
Behaviors	2	10	3
Beliefs	6	30	18
Direct Knowledge	0	2	1

Table 27. Scores on the bullying dimensions measured by the 'SAFER' questionnaire.

Note. The 'Min' and 'Max' columns contain the theoretical minimum and maximum values.

Regarding the sub-dimensions of cyberbullying, shown in Table 27, the scores obtained are also all intermediate in nature (Table 27).

The following chart (Chart 75) also shows us how subjects are fully able to differentiate between phenomena of aggression/violence and situations closer to outright bullying.

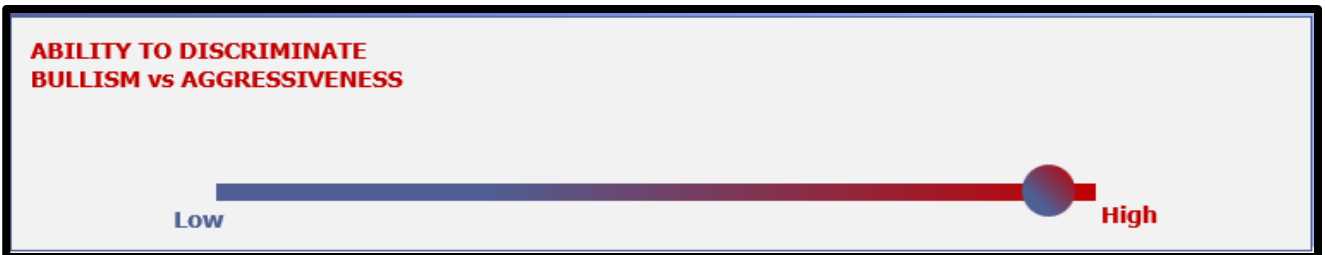


Chart 75. Ability to discriminate bullying incidents from aggressive incidents.

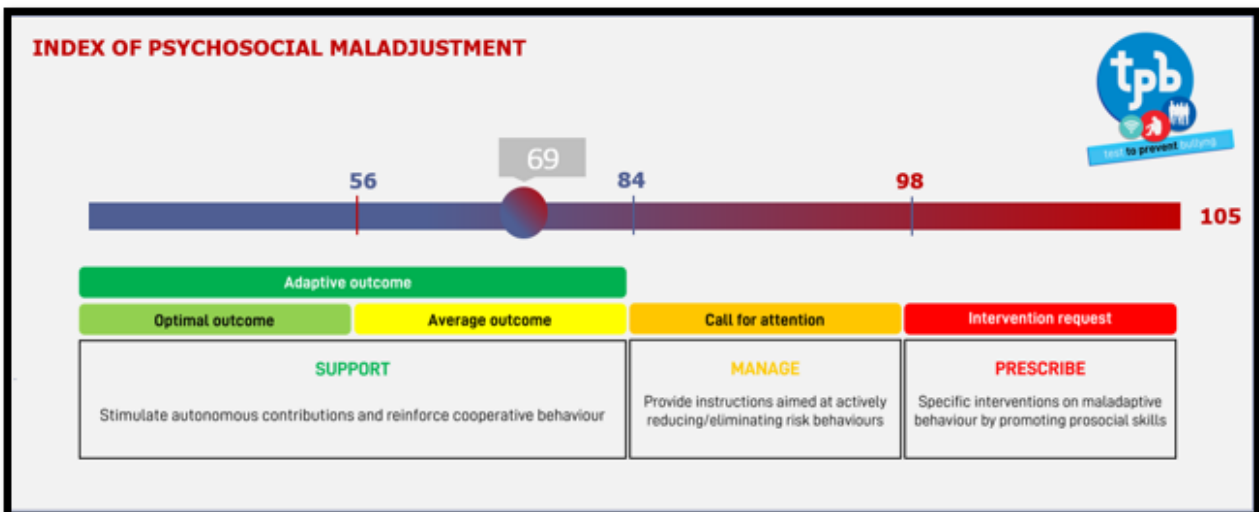


Chart 76. Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment measured by TPB test.

Chart 76 represents the performance in the Portuguese subject group for the Index of Psychosocial Maladjustment of the TPB test. The results show that, on average, the subjects have a score of 69, which therefore places the outcome within a medium range.

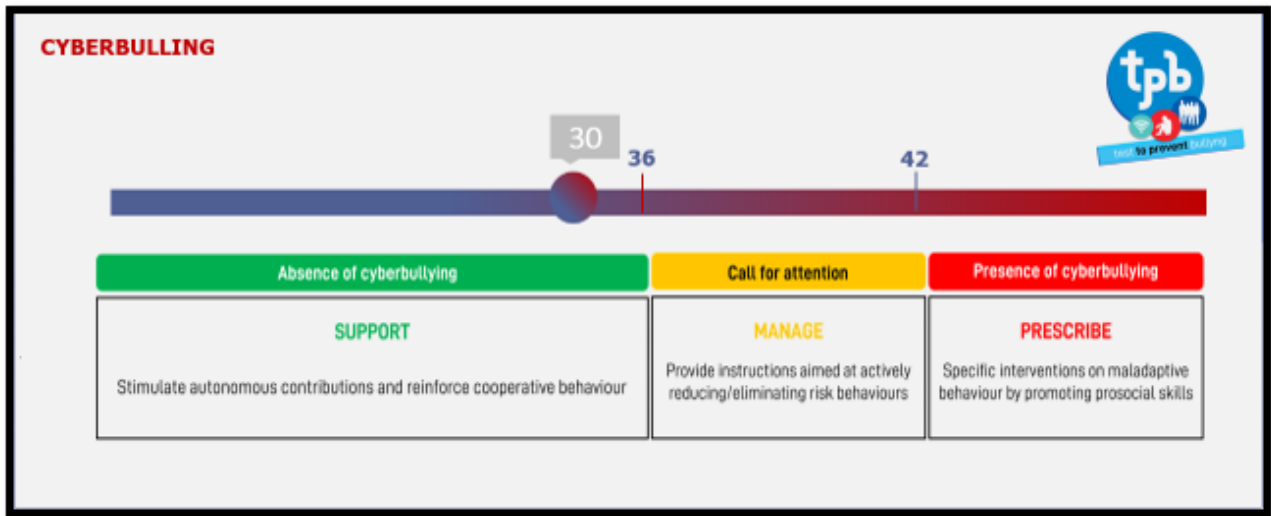


Chart 77. Measure concerning Cyberbullying by TPB test.

With regard to the dimension of cyberbullying, again measured by the TPB test, a very positive situation can be observed, labelled 'absence of cyberbullying' (Chart 77).

TPB Situational indicators	Min	Max	Score	Critical threshold
School	5	25	17	15
Family	5	25	15	15
Peer group	10	50	33	30

Table 28. Situational indicators of bullying by TPB test.

Table 28 shows how the dimensions of bullying within the school, family and peer group are fully within the average range (Table 28), although some values are slightly above the critical threshold values.

Discussion

The following lines will summarise and compare the results obtained by the different nations that were involved in the SAFER project.

With regard to Bulgaria, in 82% of cases, decisions within the group are always taken by the same small number of people. This perception, however, does not lead to the process of decision-making within the group being experienced as more hierarchical, but rather the group is always perceived as being underpinned by democratic principles. How so? Most likely because 71% of the participants feel that they are an integral part of the group making decisions, thus perceiving the dynamics within that more or less restricted circle of people as democratic. There is also a great perception that no one could ever point at them as a bully (76%) while the vast majority of them (86%) do not consider themselves as such. About half of the subjects claim to have witnessed bullying, while about 75% claim to have experienced physical bullying attacks themselves.

The SAFER questionnaire revealed the presence of cyberbullying among the Bulgarian participants to a statistically significant extent. The Bullying Prevention Test (TPB), on the other hand, revealed a general level of bullying among the Bulgarian subjects that did not pass the cut-off for statistical significance, as did cyberbullying. We are probably in a borderline situation where the two instruments, through the use of different stimuli, capture quantitatively different nuances of a single phenomenon. Such measurement, 'on the borderline' between significance and non-significance, is enriched by the information detected separately by the two instruments, showing the presence of a phenomenon that needs to be managed, but is still at intermediate levels.

In the case of Cyprus, similarly to Bulgaria, the majority of the participants attribute the decisions taken in the peer group to a small number of members (87%), but as they consider themselves to be an integral part of this subgroup, they are led to perceive their group as democratic. Cypriot participants claim to have been attacked equally physically (63.3%) and verbally (55.9%), but above all they claim to have been initiators of physical bullying in 84.6 % of cases. Cyberbullying was found to be non-statistically significant both when detected using the SAFER questionnaire and the TPB test.

The Greek group, on the other hand, is characterised by the fact that decisions are not always taken by the same people, but are instead made by all members of the group, thus exerting equal weight on the final decision. This is consistent with perceiving one's group, and its decisions, as based on democracy rather than a hierarchical decision-making approach. Compared to countries such as

Cyprus, the occurrence of bullying at school, both acted upon and experienced, is much less frequent. Cyberbullying in Greece, on the other hand, appears significantly present in the SAFER questionnaire measures, but not in the TPB test results. This, again, may be due both to the fact that cyberbullying is only one of the aspects measured by TPB, but mainly to the different mediums used by the two instruments.

The group of Italian subjects presents itself as strongly democratic in the management of the group, characterised by strong participation in the decisions taken by peers. Participants from Italy state that they feel part of the group's decision-making process, and therefore perceive the group itself as characterised by democratic values. Furthermore, 89% of the participants believe that others do not see them as bullies, and 97% do not perceive themselves as such. Finally, the phenomena of cyberbullying emerged as statistically significant for the results obtained on the SAFER test, but (as in other cases) were not found to be so on the TPB test. In the latter test, levels of bullying in general were also found to be unremarkable.

Considering the Albanian classes in North Macedonia, most participants indicate that they belong to a democratic group and are among those who suggest new initiatives or activities to be carried out. Furthermore, more than 70% of the participants believe that no one could ever point at them as a bully, and 95% of them do not consider themselves as such. About half of the subjects claim to have witnessed bullying, while about 75% claim to have experienced physical bullying attacks themselves. Interestingly, Cyberbullying in Albanian classes appears significantly present in the SAFER questionnaire measures, but not in the TPB test results. Also in this case, as for Bulgarian and Greek subjects, we are in the presence of 'borderline' levels of cyberbullying, intermediate, being recognised as statistically significant by the SAFER questionnaire, while not significant by the TPB test. Again, the different nature of the materials proposed by the two instruments must have captured partly different facets of the bullying phenomenon.

On the other hand, the Macedonian classes in North Macedonia show a higher occurrence of bullying at school, while cyberbullying is present, to a significant extent, for the SAFER questionnaire but not for the TPB test. In addition, there are more cases of witnessing bullying than in other countries (75%), but the peer group is perceived as democratic, and decisions are made by all its members in rotation.

Finally, in Portugal, the group is perceived by peers as highly participative and democratic, in which decisions are made and shared among all group members. The percentage of participants who do not consider themselves to be bullies (89%) and who do not think it is possible for other members to

consider them as such (80%) is particularly high compared to Macedonian subjects, while these percentages appear lower than those observed in Greece and Cyprus. Furthermore, there is a non-significant number of reported incidents of bullying and cyberbullying.

Looking at the whole data set and comparing the different national contexts, some considerations can be made. Firstly, it must be taken into account that the schools taking part in the study are, in all likelihood, schools sensitive to the problem of bullying and consequently the sample of respondents cannot be considered representative of a general population. Moreover, the respondents are generally good Internet users, despite their young age, with particular use of WhatsApp and Instagram.

It is well known how group membership can have an influence on behavior associated with bullying risk, the results suggest that in most countries kids feel they belong to democratic type groups where decisions are made together, and most kids feel they can express their opinion on things to do. This naturally makes group membership a protective factor against bullying: democratic groups tend to protect their members more and allow fewer aggressive acts to occur within the group.

Congruently in all countries, few young people identify themselves as bullies or think they can be referred to as such by others. It is, however, worth noting that in Bulgaria and Albania more than 10% of the participants think they can be identified as bullies, a percentage that is significantly lower in the other countries, at around 4%. Similarly, it should be pointed out that among the Macedonian participants, more than 20% consider themselves to behave like bullies in the online environment; this number appears to be in contrast to the situation in other countries where very few participants identify themselves as online bullies. The numbers recorded, although modest, should not be underestimated as they are indicative of the presence of typical bullying behaviours.

It would be surprising to imagine very high percentages in a school context and the presence of a few units is, in fact, an index of presence. This data calls for prevention interventions and above all the promotion of pro-social behaviour, capable of limiting the phenomenon and encouraging the establishment of moments of educational and emotional well-being.

This consideration acquires greater significance if we acknowledge the fact that in all the realities examined there seem to be positive social norms regarding being overbearing and the use of avoidance as conflict management strategies: if one were to witness aggressive or humiliating acts towards a student at school, it is considered positive not to intervene. A different picture emerges with respect to positive norms on defence: for example, in Greece, kids noted that if someone was attacked or humiliated in the school context, they would immediately be defended by other people as

well as by the context itself; this seems to be the variable most capable of mediating the risk of bullying, since positive beliefs on aggression are quite widespread in all countries, as are those on conflict avoidance.

Looking at the specific aspect of cyberbullying, in most online interactions, kids report using their real identity and do not seem to recognise any particular social benefit to surfing the net, i.e. they do not seem to use it systematically to meet new people or for fun, although they are good users.

As far as the online environment is concerned, it is interesting to note that the participants recognise that they frequently fall into aggressive or humiliating behaviour towards others even unintentionally, for example by sharing offensive comments towards other people. Many participants also show negative beliefs about the possibility of stopping or controlling the aggressive or humiliating behaviour that occurs online: they think that it is much more difficult to stop gossiping or humiliating offences online and therefore feel more powerless against this.

The general picture that emerges seems to point to a relatively adequate and positive context with respect to problem behaviour, albeit in some contexts detected. Specific attention could also be devoted to the use of the net, both because it now seems to be widely used by the age group involved in the study and also because the answers to the questionnaire seem to reveal behaviour that is somewhat risky, especially due to the presence of social norms that on some occasions are oriented more towards avoidance than towards positively tackling problems. On the other hand, real perceptions of the risks present in the net are present, authorising one to think of a positive skill-building process capable of preventing problematic behaviour.