

Interim report Project Bystanders

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Introduction

The Project Bystanders aims to develop awareness and intervention against sexual harassment (SH) among young people through pedagogical activities with a whole school approach philosophy. The team is composed by researchers and practitioners from four countries — Portugal, Malta, United Kingdom and Slovenia — joining co-beneficiaries from universities and non-governmental organizations.

For the first year of the Project, it was foreseen to develop and audit research on of current approaches on SH in order to draft a pilot Programme to be implemented in high schools. Targeting young people as bystanders, inviting them to notice and intervene in SH situations, constitutes an innovative approach and promising of the possibility of changing cultural tolerance towards SH.

This interim report presents the achievements of the Project as well as some of the difficulties encountered in our pathway.



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Developed activities

In this first year, the Bystanders project has achieved all its objectives and activities with success. Our first achievement was the completion of the literature review¹ with joint efforts from Portugal and UK and its discussion with the rest of the project teams. The second main achievement was the development of the background research papers² which were discussed in a work meeting. From these papers we found that these 4 countries have significant differences in terms of policies and politics and therefore the intervention has to be designed having in consideration the differences. Insights from each country background research paper were also debated regarding its implications for the focus group with youngsters and for the implementation of the Bystanders programme in schools.

In schools

Each team contacted a school for the focus groups with young men and young women to understand their perceptions on SH, the way they frame the problem and what they imagine that could be their role, as well as the teachers' and staff's, as bystanders in school. The teams also had informal conversations with teachers and staff about the school needs regarding the prevention of sexual harassment. These focus groups and conversations were transcribed and each team wrote a paper on the focus groups analysis. The main conclusions were reported and shared in the skype meetings. In the second international meeting in Porto, these focus group findings were discussed and the teams created a draft for the Pilot Programme. UK team had then the task to rewrite the ideas from this meeting, the activities planned and the learning lessons with teachers and staff.

At this moment, and after a year of project, we have the Pilot Program ready to be used, and all the teams have made their contacts with schools for its piloting with youngsters and school staff until the end of December.

¹ <http://www.bystanders.eu/literature-review/>

² <http://www.bystanders.eu/country-research/>

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The Programme will be called Speak out/Speak up, a title and respective activities that will be used by all teams.

The main activities were those as follows:

- Kick Off Meeting - 1st meeting December to discuss the project and confirm the overall project working plan. This meeting was on the 8th and 9th of December in Porto, Portugal³. All partners from the project were present. The timeline was reviewed and established among all the teams.
- Meetings at national level (with associate partners) - partners maintain regular communication with associate partners and they are being involved in the process of drafting the bystanders project.
- Allocation of staff for the Project - this activity took more time than it was expected but after a year of implementation almost all the staff for the project was allocated.
- Financial meeting and financial management reviews: Financial management reviews were sent to Portugal on a regular basis and information was updated with the project management.
- Regular partner communication (monthly meetings) - The Coordinator made an effort to schedule meetings between partners every month and generally this was accomplished. Before meetings the group discussed by email the main subjects and issues to be discussed and the agendas were drafted by email. In every meeting there was a person responsible for the debate and another person responsible for the meeting minutes. After the draft of the Pilot Programme the meetings have been scheduled according to the need to discuss implementation and this is not always

³ More about this meeting at: <http://www.bystanders.eu/news-and-dissemination/>

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needed on a monthly basis. However, all the teams share information and update each other on the work done by email on a regular basis.

- Second International Meeting - 4th and 5th July 2017 to discuss the different findings of Background research, the main results of Focus group analysis⁴ and to prepare the pilot programme

- Literature Review - literature review was developed by the Portuguese and UK team⁵

- Background Research- background research on the current legal and state policies from each country was written and shared with the team for further discussion about its significance for implementation. Background papers are between 12 and 14 pages each. A page of common general feedback was written by the UK team to compare these documents and to enhance the main conclusions that we needed for the development of the focus group and of the pilot draft.

- Development of Focus Group Methodology - After a discussion with all the partners and co-beneficiaries of the project, who all contributed with suggestions and ideas, the UK team developed a common methodology for the focus group with students and staff. Portuguese team suggested some methodologies for the stimulus and warming up, and these activities were used in those cases where facilitators felt the group could benefit from it.

- Development of Focus Group with teachers and school staff - With youth two focus group were undertaken in each country (one with young women other with young boys) to explore how they understand sexual harassment, if they know situations happening in schools, who are the victims and who are the harassers, what bystanders do when they see/know SH situations and what bystanders should do. A focus group with school staff was conducted to understand if they know some situations of sexual

⁴ <http://www.bystanders.eu/focus-groups-analysis/>

⁵ <http://www.bystanders.eu/literature-review/>

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harassment inside the school and if they need some professional training to know how to intervene.

- Focus Group Analysis and Internal Report - each country produced an internal paper on the focus group analysis and these papers were debated in the July 2017 international meeting to reflect upon the implications for the design of the pilot.

- Draft of the Pilot programme and construction of materials needed - UK team had then the task to rewrite some ideas from this meeting and planning activities and learning lessons with teachers and staff.

- Production of an animated video for student sessions - During the international meeting in Porto, and while planning the Pilot Programme, all the teams agreed on the need of a didactic video resource to use in the intervention with students. Having a short video on bystanders' intervention can help students to reflect and discuss the theme. Furthermore, the script of the video was made having in consideration the youngsters' perceptions on SH. The UK team wrote the script and the Portuguese team was responsible for the production of the animated video in 4 languages version (English, Portuguese, Maltese and Slovenian).

Ethical procedures

The ethical procedures were followed by all the teams - informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, safety of the participants. As the Portuguese and Malta team already knew, they had to submit to their own Ethical Commission the procedures of the research/intervention and it was approved.

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Conclusion

The Project Bystanders is on its middle term. Everything is going very well concerning activities with young people and school staff.

There is one difficulty that we can foresee: the development of local school policies to prevent SH will not be easy to implement. Nevertheless, our work has been towards this goal in order to help schools to develop educational policies to prevent SH.



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