Sociological program

The work of the Sociological Program in 2014 was focused on the following areas:

- **Integration of migrants and social inclusion of vulnerable groups.** Impact assessments of the integration policies, practices and measures on vulnerable categories of migrants (women, children and victims of trafficking) were carried out. Obstacles to integration for particular categories of migrants was analysed, conceptualising their influence over the increase of vulnerability to social exclusion, exploitation and trafficking.

  A central research topic was the radicalisation leading to terrorism in Bulgaria, Greece and the Czech Republic and the identification of exposures to vulnerability among different groups such as youth susceptible to right- or left-wing ideas, football gangs, immigrants and local minorities.

  Growing negative attitudes and "othering" of Roma in Bulgaria were also challenged by show-casing the possibilities, direct positive effects and benefits of social inclusion achieved at local level through transparent public funding.

  The role of civil society organisations in fostering equal rights of vulnerable groups (migrants, victims of trafficking, victims of domestic violence, prisoners) was explored.

- **Countering trafficking in human beings.** Three new forms of child trafficking for the purpose of begging, pick-pocketing and sexual exploitation of boys have been studied. The focus was on the Roma communities and research is carried out in seven EU Member States. New methods for participatory research were applied, involving Roma communities, organisations and activists in this process with the aim of building their capacity for participation in research and policy development.

  The use of Internet (including social networks) in the area of trafficking in human beings was studied. Knowledge sharing through workshops for law enforcement agencies and NGOs and dissemination activities was a main priority.

- **Evaluation of policies and programs.** A handbook *Social Impact Assessment*, authored by Sociological Programme team members, was published. The topic was interpreted in the wider framework of impact assessments. The handbook provides practical guidelines and examples in implementing social impact assessments at national and European level.

- **Prevention of the Internet bullying behaviour.** Together with the Bulgarian Safer Internet Center (SIC) and nine European universities and organisations, the Sociological Program successfully completed work on helping young people, school teachers, counsellors and parents in identifying dangers and risks associated with bullying behaviour online.

I. Integration of migrants and social inclusion of vulnerable groups

Assessing integration measures for vulnerable migrant groups

In 2014, the Sociological program continued working on this topic, coordinating activities in ten EU Member States – Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Malta, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovakia, and Spain. A review of the existing monitoring mechanisms at national level was conducted in the ten EU Member States participating in the initiative. The review identified that in the countries with low levels of immigration there are no developed monitoring mechanisms. The only two countries with more advanced mechanisms to monitor migrant integration appear to be Austria and Belgium. A methodology was developed for assessing integration of vulnerable migrant groups identifying qualitative indicators at the level of policy and statistical indicators at the level of migrants' social, economic and civic performance. Based on this methodology a comparative assessment was conducted in the ten EU states identifying the levels of integration of vulnerable migrant groups such as migrant women, migrant

Expert meeting: Monitoring the integration of vulnerable migrants. From left to right: Ms. Reyes Castillo and Ms. Teresa De Gasperis, from ACCEM, Spain, Myroslava Keryk from Lazarski University, Poland, Tímea Stránská and Romana Medvedova from People in Need, Slovakia and Dr. Margit Ammer from BIM, Austria

Expert meeting: Assessment of integration measures for vulnerable migrant groups in Bulgaria. From left to right: Slavyanka Ivanova, CSD, Dr. Mila Mancheva, CSD

children and victims of trafficking. In addition, good practices in the field of integration of vulnerable migrants and monitoring of migrant integration were collected to feed into a Compendium of Good Practices accessible for all 27 EU Member States.

Two workshops took place in 2014. The first one, on monitoring the integration of vulnerable migrants, discussed the methodology for the review of national monitoring mechanisms for the integration of migrants.

In September 2014, the Sociological Program hosted a national expert meeting *Assessment of Integration Measures for Vulnerable Migrant Groups in Bulgaria* aimed at generating a discussion on the mechanisms for monitoring of the migrant integration in Bulgaria. The results of a study on the integration measures for vulnerable migrant groups in the country were presented alongside the experience of other EU Member States. A discussion on the recent developments in the mechanisms for monitoring migrant integration in Bulgaria was carried out. Stakeholders from various governmental agencies and NGOs pointed that the lack of well-developed monitoring system is the outcome of a number of factors such as low immigration levels, insufficient synchronisation between existing administrative and statistical databases for third county nationals, lack of effective coordination regarding information exchange between the different institutions, etc. CSD experts stressed that Bulgaria is not an exception and similar tendencies are observed in other EU Member States such as Greece, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.

In the beginning of October 2014, the Sociological Program together with People for Change Foundation conducted a workshop in Malta with a pri-

mary focus on presenting and discussing the Methodology for Monitoring the Integration of Vulnerable Migrants and discussing progress results from national studies under the same methodology. Workshop participants agreed on the general conclusion that although some countries (i.e. Austria and Belgium) appear advanced in the area of migrant integration monitoring, in most countries the level of effort by governments to address monitoring and integration is low, and is even lower when addressing the integration of vulnerable migrant groups.

National reports on existing monitoring mechanisms for the integration of migrants were prepared for each of the ten countries participating in the initiative. The report for Bulgaria aims to trace the mechanisms for monitoring of migrant integration in Bulgaria. This task is pursued by investigation of the prevailing migration trends in the country, the leading migrant integration approaches at policy level and the available data collection systems. The report offers a discussion of the main factors that hamper the effective monitoring of migrant integration and puts forward some recommendations in this regard. Analysis is provided about the attention given to vulnerable migrant groups (women, children and victims of trafficking) in national integration policy and in national monitoring initiatives.

The report identifies a number of gaps in the migrant integration policy in the country as well as in the existing data collection mechanisms. In the context of moderate immigration inflows and relatively low interest on the part of institutions to the specific integration needs of third country nationals, Bulgarian policy makers have not yet developed elaborate mechanisms for monitoring migrant integration. The report highlights that Bulgaria is predominantly a country of emigration and has been the recipient of small immigration flows that form only a very minor share of the country's population (less than 1% in 2013). Significant aspects of the integration of migrants are not the subject of National Strategies or Action Plans. Although the *Common Basic Principles of Migrant Integration* are cited in full in the main national policy documents, they are not developed into concrete policy programs and measures to facilitate the integration of third country nationals in practice.

The fact that data on third country nationals (TCNs) in Bulgaria is not publicly available hinders the analysis of the effectiveness and the gaps in the data collection mechanisms in the country. It also hinders the development of effective monitoring mechanisms in the field of migrant integration in the country.

Recommendations:

- Public institutions with mandates in the field of migration should take steps to develop information systems for TCNs serviced under their auspices.
- Public institutions should consider consultations with regard to the harmonisation of the information categories, definitions and indicators with regard to TCN used by the different administrative registers.
- The main institutions producing data on migrants shall consider making this data publicly available.
- The National Statistical Institute should consider the conduct of studies of migrant integration based on samples composed of TCNs only.

On the basis of the ten national reports, a Comparative Report was prepared, providing a review of the existing systems for monitoring migrant integration in the EU. The report highlights the strengths and weaknesses in the application of the *Common Basic Principles on Migrant Integration* with regard to vulnerable migrant groups as well as the application by the ten Member States of the Zaragoza Indicators for migrant integration. One of the main findings of the report was that vulnerable migrant groups such as women, children and victims of human trafficking, are not explicitly identified in the mainstream monitoring and evaluation of integration, and in the integration policies of the ten Member States.

Although the importance of monitoring integration through indicators in Austria, Belgium and Italy has been acknowledged and efforts have been made, the monitoring of specific vulnerable groups is still very limited, and indicators tend to focus on migrants in general. The research has found a noticeable lack of infrastructure for monitoring integration processes in a reliable and regular way. The availability of data on migration, especially on the integration of migrants, is still limited and is usually inconsistent. It also varies from one institution to another. A lack of relevant data makes the creation of integration indicators problematic, while statistics on migrant integration are not always available in the form, quality and accuracy required. More information is available at http://www.assessmigrantintegration.eu/.

Inclusion revisited. Practical solutions for addressing "othering" of Roma in Bulgaria

In 2014, the Sociological Program challenged the growing negative attitudes and "othering" of Roma in Bulgaria

by show-casing the possibilities, direct positive effects and benefits of social inclusion achieved at local level through transparent public funding. Putting gains in the centre of the Roma inclusion debate, the partnership of CSD and the Roma NGO World Without Borders seeks to build a consensual understanding of integration by majority and minority alike. Criteria for good practice identification were drafted and information on good practices of Roma inclusion were collected. Existing compendiums and handbooks illustrating good practices were reviewed and local practices based upon transparent public funding were identified. The two local practices chosen for further assessment were the investments made in public infrastructure, education and employment measures in the municipality of Kavarna and the investments in pre-school education in a kindergarten in Stara Zagora.

A methodology for impact assessment on the Roma community of the public funding measures for Roma integration was developed. In addition, the methodology provided instruments to test the responses of members of the majority population to the research findings on the effects and benefits of inclusion, and to assess whether the findings contribute to overcoming the attitudes of "othering" of Roma. It defined the main hypotheses and specific research questions for both localities and indicators for measuring results in the fields of educational integration, health status, housing and living conditions, employment and victimisation, as well as indicators on transparency, good governance and sustainability.

Countering radicalisation in Southeast and Central Europe through development of monitoring tools

Together with the Security Program, the Sociological Program started a new

initiative on countering radicalisation in Southeast and Central Europe. It aims to assess and transfer de-radicalisation experience from the Netherlands, UK and other EU Member States in order to design, establish and promote radicalisation monitoring tools in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Greece. Those tools will be used to monitor radicalisation and recruitment that might potentially lead to acts of extremism and terrorism. Through this action the capacity of law-enforcement, local level authorities and civil society will be increased to prevent and counter radicalisation that may lead to violence amongst risk groups in Bulgaria, the Czech Republic and Greece. These monitoring tools will also serve as an analytic prerequisite for the design and establishment of adequate radicalisation prevention policies and programmes in the three countries. A reader on radicalisation was prepared, providing a critical summary of the discussion on concepts and definitions of radicalisation and terrorism, pathways to radicalisation and main recruitment mechanisms. In addition, the reader includes analysis of different types of radicalisation such as right and left wing radicalisation, Islamist radicalisation and football hooliganism. The reader presents an analytical framework for researchers of radicalisation in Eastern Europe and provides law enforcement officials in the region with a collection of counter-radicalisation tools developed in other EU countries and the USA.

Civic organisations: a guarantee for equal rights of vulnerable groups before the state

Together with the Law Program, the Sociological Program started an initiative on promoting equal rights of vulnerable groups (migrants, victims of trafficking, victims of domestic violence, prisoners) before the state with the help of civic organisations. The main aims of the initiative are to:

- increase the contribution of NGOs in the policy and decision-making process at the local, regional and national level;
- step up NGOs' activity in relation to the accountability and transparency of public institutions;
- improve the dialogue between NGOs and local, regional and national authorities.

The Sociological Program is responsible for the data collection and analysis of two of the chosen vulnerable groups – migrants and victims of trafficking. As part of the initiative, a socio-demographic profile of the vulnerable groups has been elaborated. For this purpose, data from various institutions and organisations was collected and semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted.

II. Trafficking in human beings

Countering new forms of Roma children trafficking

A study on countering new forms of Roma children trafficking aims to address two deficiencies in the current counter-trafficking response: lack of in-depth knowledge of the new forms of trafficking of children and lack of active involvement of the Roma community – a group at high risk of child trafficking. It is focused on three new forms of trafficking: child begging, labour exploitation for pick-pocketing and sexual exploitation of boys. Activities take place in four EU Member States, which are typical countries of origin for victims of trafficking (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia) and three Member States, which are traditional destination countries for Roma victims (Austria, Greece and Italy).
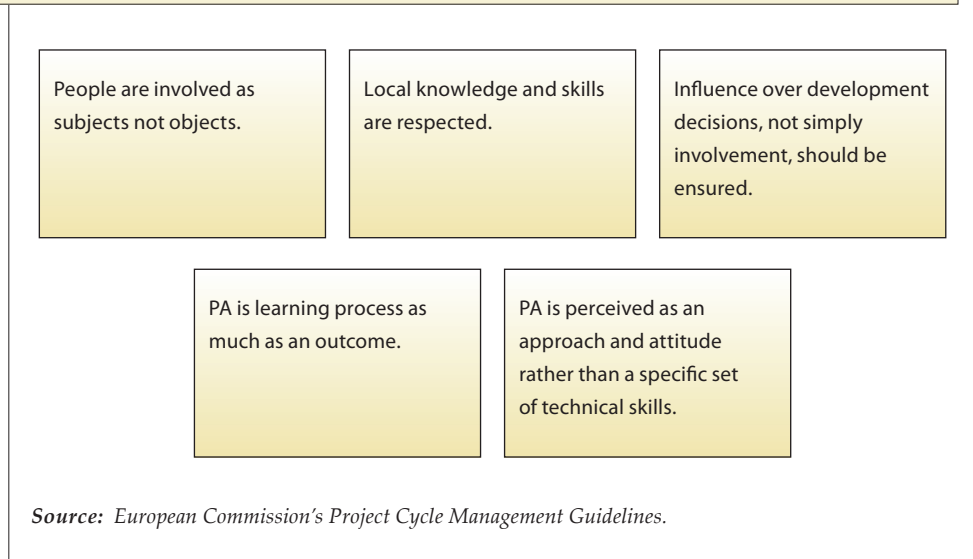
Workshop on Methodology for Participatory Research for Roma Communities. From left to right: Ms. Tímea Stránská, People in Need, Slovakia, Ms. Romana Medvedova, People in Need, Slovakia, Ms. Ammer Margit, BIM, Austria, Mr. Iulian Stoian, Soros Foundation, Romania, Ms. Daniela Tarnovschi, Soros Foundation, Romania

A methodology for participatory research with active participation of the Roma communities has been elaborated. This is achieved through working with partner community organisations and community activists, carrying out a range of activities, such as community mapping, ranking exercises, drawing of community figure, participation in focus groups, collecting life stories. These new forms of data collection add new knowledge of the community and of the three specific forms of trafficking. They also help identify gaps and good practices in child victims' assistance, and develop effective mechanisms for community involvement in prevention and assistance measures. Furthermore, throughout the research process, Roma representatives participated in all stages of the data collection, gained new knowledge on child trafficking and built skills in participating and conducting community-based research. This enabled them to more effectively take part in the counter-trafficking policy debate, and policy formulation and implementation.

In February 2014, the Sociological Program organised a workshop with partners from seven countries to discuss the methodology for participatory research among Roma communities. The methodology has the purpose to guide the fieldwork, which seeks to explore new forms of child trafficking affecting Roma communities, to build the capacities of the communities to prevent trafficking and to improve assistance mechanisms for child victims. The workshop participants shared common challenges in their preliminary research

Figure 2. Main principles of participatory approach

People are involved as subjects not objects.	Local knowledge and skills are respected.	Influence over development decisions, not simply involvement, should be ensured.
PA is learning process as much as an outcome.	PA is perceived as an approach and attitude rather than a specific set of technical skills.	

Source: *European Commission's Project Cycle Management Guidelines.*

phase, such as lack of ethnically disaggregated data on trafficking and reluctance from authorities on data sharing. The participants discussed practical and theoretical aspects of conducting participatory research among Roma communities. Discussions on how to frame the issue of child begging and how to ensure a culturally sensitive approach to exploring childhood and child rearing in the Roma communities helped achieve a better understanding on how to approach the pending field research. Another important discussion helped identify strategies to contribute to the empowerment of the communities through the fieldwork. The research is regarded as a two-way knowledge sharing process: communities share information about their ways of life, while project partners share information about the rights of children/victims and the available assistance for families and children at risk. The knowledge generated through the fieldwork will serve to improve the capacities of local child

protection authorities and child assistance service providers to prevent child trafficking and to offer more sustainable assistance to victims.

The developed methodology aims to explain the main principles of participatory research (PR), to offer some guidelines on conducting such research and to outline five commonly used PR methods, which could be useful for conducting the research among Roma communities. Various methods adequate to the PR have been explained in the methodology: focus groups, qualitative face-to-face interviews, life stories, community mapping, Venn diagrams. PR evolved as an alternative system of knowledge production by challenging the premise of conventional social science research that researchers can conduct their work in a neutral, objective, and value-free manner. Instead, participatory research recognises the 'subjects' of research as researchers themselves, in pursuit of answers concerning their

daily activities and challenges. The PR process enables co-researchers to abandon traditional routines, forms of interaction, and power relationships in order to challenge established interpretations of situations and strategies.

Participatory research was conducted in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia, identified as origin countries of child victims of trafficking with large traditional Roma minorities. The research was conducted in two stages: a preliminary stage and a fieldwork phase. The objectives of the preliminary phase of the research were threefold: i) to gain a general understanding on the extent of child trafficking in the country and the CT institutional frameworks; ii) to identify localities with vulnerable Roma communities; iii) to assess the available child support infrastructure in each locality and to identify potential partner Roma NGOs to be involved in further project activities. The methods used at the preliminary stage were literature reviews, semi-structured interviews with national stakeholders and electronic data collection questionnaires on national statistics.

For Bulgaria, the three regions chosen for the fieldwork phase were the towns of Stara Zagora, Pazardzhik/ Peshtera and Shumen/ Novi Pazar. In the fieldwork phase, the research team conducted three study visits in each chosen locality. In the first round of visits, the research team met with the partnering Roma NGOs, discussed research topic and objectives. In the first visit, relevant local stakeholders were interviewed. During the second study visit, the research teams applied PR techniques, such as community mapping, Venn diagrams, ranking exercise, drawing community figure, on-site observations to determine factors of vulnerability, to identify families with children at risk of trafficking and to explore local resources

for prevention and victims' assistance. Trainings were conducted to acquaint local activists with the trafficking phenomenon. Local counterparts were also trained in data collection methods. In the third round of visits, research teams, composed of the lead researchers, the local partner and research assistants conducted semi-structured interviews and collection of life stories with different representatives of the community.

Throughout the research, the team conducted 25 semi-structured interviews, 4 focus group discussions and 18 life story interviews. The respondents included young men providing sex services, caregivers of children abandoned by mothers trafficked for prostitution, families relying for subsistence on begging and trash collection, and many persons living in daunting poverty.

The study identified several significant gaps in the child victim identification process, which prevent children in situation of trafficking and exploitation from gaining access to assistance. The research established that Roma boys providing sex services are especially vulnerable to being trafficked abroad for sexual exploitation. Among the destination points for this type of trafficking are Germany, France and Spain, in particular cities such as Frankfurt, Bordeaux, Salamanca, Benidor, etc. While transgender and male prostitutes working abroad may have reached adulthood (i.e. 18 years), abuse and sexual exploitation is likely to have started earlier in childhood in their home country. Therefore, law enforcement and service providers should pay particular attention to indicators of trafficking as far as these groups are concerned. Interviews conducted for this study clearly revealed the involvement of pimps and other intermediaries in the provision of services, and indicated to some signs of exploitation abroad. Currently, institutional homophobia

and intolerance exemplified in opinions such as "they are 'voluntary' victims of sexual abuse" or "they are to blame for their situation" prevent the effective identification of boys and men, mostly of Roma origin, victims of exploitation, who need to have equal access to protection and assistance provided for victims of trafficking.

In addition, increased attention is needed to improve identification rates of children victims of trafficking for begging and pickpocketing. Expert assessments reveal that with some rare exceptions when physical abuse and violence are used, in most cases the children are attached to their families or caregivers and do not feel that they are victims of exploitation. On the one hand, this factor challenges identification. On the other, it should be taken into account when determining the child's "best interest". A child's best interest, however, can only be accurately assessed if all circumstances related to her situation, be it negligence, exploitation or trafficking, are taken into account. In all cases, children should be provided with adequate care, safe environment, access to education. It is families or caregivers who should be responsible for providing such upbringing.

While comparative studies reveal that Bulgaria is one of the most advanced countries in the EU in terms of inter-institutional counter-trafficking response, a closer look at the implementation of return, protection and assistance measures for child victims of trafficking reveals some serious deficiencies. They are especially grave with regard to the protection and assistance of victims of Roma origin. The most acute deficiencies can be observed in the last two stages of protection – finding a long-term, durable solution and monitoring of the re-integration assistance. These challenges, however, are much the result of gaps in inter-institutional cooperation that occur in earlier phases.

Finally, if any efforts in child victim's assistance are to be taken seriously, then urgent steps need to be made in developing the final stage of support – i.e. monitoring of the re-integration of the child victim of trafficking for one year. Currently, this phase of assistance exists only on paper, while its actual implementation is challenged by several difficulties. For one, case overload and/or lack of experience prevent social workers from pursuing an active relationship with the families of re-integrated children victims of trafficking. Other

The Coordination Mechanism indicates that in cases of return of the child, such social and family assessments need to take place once the victim is returned and accommodated in a safe place. However, it seems that hasty return is the rule, rather than the exception in the case of Bulgarian children victims of trafficking repatriated from abroad. In such cases of pre-emptive return the minors are placed in the crisis centre with little or no accompanying information or documentation.

The lack of complete information on the children's trafficking circumstances, their relations with the family and risks assessment of re-trafficking leaves them vulnerable to further capture and exploitation by traffickers during their placement in the crisis centres. Another factor contributing to this vulnerability is the lack of coordination and communication between the Child Protection Division (CPD) at the place of residency of the victim, the CPD covering.

reasons include lack of confidence of social workers in working with Roma communities, lack of motivation due to high levels of stress and low levels of pay and ensuing reluctance to engage in difficult fieldwork among marginalised groups. Reluctance to work with a social worker can also be detected in Roma families themselves. The assessment of the workload and qualifications of social workers is among the objectives of the current social assistance reform, the implementation of which has been delayed for various reasons beyond the focus of this research.

Surfandsound

Together with the Security Program, the Sociological Program started a new initiative Surfandsound (www.surfansound.eu). It addresses some key EU needs related to the use of the Internet in the process of trafficking in human beings (THB):

- Accumulating knowledge on the use of the Internet in the THB process, e.g. how it facilitates recruitment and communications, guarantees anonymity, and accelerates victims' exchange, how demand and supply for the services are matched, etc.
- Developing tools and methods to investigate/prosecute the abuse of the the Internet in the THB process
- Spreading knowledge with law enforcement agencies (LEAs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other key actors in the fight against THB (e.g. citizens, employers), in order to develop more effective preventative/contrast strategies for reducing the demand/supply of services.

To address these needs, the initiative aims to improve the knowledge on the use of Internet (including social networks) in the THB process in four key

EU Member States and spread such knowledge through workshops for LEAs and NGOs, and through dissemination activities.

The following specific objectives have been identified:

- to explore visible/dark Web to draft a research protocol about the use of Internet in the THB process in two origin/transit countries (Bulgaria and Romania) and two destination countries (Italy and UK;
- to use the research protocol to collect and organise a significant volume of information from the Web;
- to understand the use of Internet in the THB process by analysing collected data, in order to:
  – draft guidelines for identifying potential at risk Web contents and other abuses of the Internet (e.g. chats, VOIP) in the THB process and develop awareness raising campaigns in order to reduce THB victimisation via Internet and to alert Internet users;
  – spread the knowledge and guidelines via workshops for LEAs/ NGOs involved in the prevention and fight against THB and dissemination activities.

III. Evaluation of policies and programs

In 2014, a handbook developed by team members of the Sociological Program, *Social Impact Assessment* was published. It focuses on social impact assessment, which is viewed in the wider framework of impact assessments, and indicates the links and differences between them by using various types of assessments (economic impact assessment, risk of poverty impact assessment, environmental impact assessment, etc.). The emergence and development of the practice of so-

cial evaluation is traced back and the basic principles, objectives and rules of social impact assessment are described. Different types of social impact assessment and various methods for their evaluation are presented. The analytical steps and the rules of the procedures applied by the European Commission's integrated approach for impact assessment are closely reviewed. Special attention is paid to the innovative approach developed by the authors for 'mirror assessment' of the possibility to transfer good practices in different national contexts. The handbook also presents some outcomes of the international research project *Integrating Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children in the Educational Systems of EU Member States: Evaluation and Promotion of Current Best Practices – INTEGRACE*, funded by the European Refugee Fund and coordinated by the Sociological Program.

Social Impact Assessment handbook

The handbook was mainly intended for use by students in social sciences, but could be helpful to at least two more categories of readers. First, it could benefit politicians, officials in central and local authorities, experts and consultants interested in issues related to social assessment of policies and programs. Second, it could serve experts and representatives of civil society groups and organisations working in the field of public sector efficiency and good public governance.

IV. Prevention of Internet bullying behaviour

The Sociological program, together with Bulgaria's Safer Internet Centre (SIC), successfully completed the work on the project *Threat Assessment of Bullying Behaviour in Youngsters: Transferring Internet Preventive Procedures in Europe*. The initiative's activities were implemented in Italy, Bulgaria, Hungary, Greece, Cyprus France, Spain and Poland.

A video game was developed as another method of self-assessment of bullying behaviour in the Internet. An online questionnaire was filled-in three times at regular intervals to follow up the changes in pupils' attitudes as a result of their training in cyberbullying prevention, and to help them self-assess their behaviour.
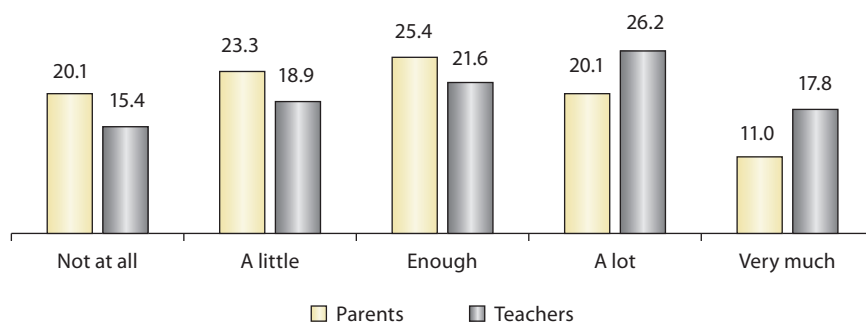
In Bulgaria, about 20 teachers and school counsellors from 16 schools in 7 towns have voluntarily taken part in the project and over 1,000 students have taken part in the online survey.

The results from the online survey revealed that in Bulgaria teachers are more likely to talk to teenagers about online safety than parents.
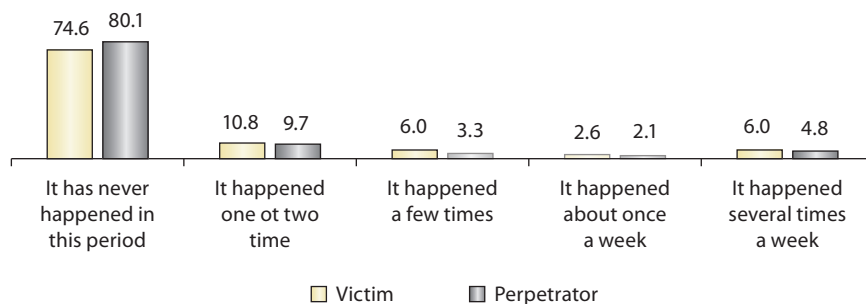
There is no significant difference between the rate of children who are victims of bullying in school and those who are perpetrators.

Figure 3. Do your parents/teachers talk with you about Internet safety?

Source: *Online survey, Threat Assessment of Bullying Behaviour in Youngsters: Transferring Internet Preventive Procedures in Europe, 2014.*

Figure 4. In the last four months have you been victim of bullying acts/ involved in bullying as a perpetrator at school?

Source: *Online survey, Threat Assessment of Bullying Behaviour in Youngsters: Transferring Internet Preventive Procedures in Europe, 2014.*

Traditional bullying in school seems to be more popular than online bullying:

- 11.3 % of the students have suffered cyberbullying;
- 4.1 % have bullied others online;
- 19.6 % have suffered bullying at school;
- 5.1 % have bullied others at school.

V. International development and poverty reduction

As a recipient of development funding since the 1990s, the Sociological Program has built the capacity and expertise to become an implementer of development projects in other countries. CSD's competitive advantages in this field have been created by successfully attracting support from a multitude of donors (UNDP, World Bank, USAID, European Commission), delivering high quality evidence-based analysis, and managing multi-stakeholder consortia.

The Center for the Study of Democracy has acquired its core competencies along the following lines:

- topical expertise in key policy areas such as governance, corruption, multi-dimensional poverty, socio-economic vulnerability;
- regional expertise and partner networks in the Western Balkans, the Caucasus and the Middle East.

An inventory was put together documenting the track record in development-related projects implemented by the CSD group and highlighting the competitive advantages and expertise across all departments.

The Sociological Program participated in the Regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which took place on 8-9 July 2014 in Geneva and focused on Southeastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. A presentation was delivered examining the transformation patterns from violence to corruption in Southeastern Europe, and the linkages between these patterns and the socio-economic development trends across the region.

* * *

The Sociological Program has been providing sociological expertise (mainly of a methodological and analytical nature) in the development of research methods and instruments, the collection and analysis of data, the application of advance research techniques and tools, as well as policy evaluations and impact assessments.

Experts from the Sociological Program took part in a number of governmental, civic and academic initiatives and forums, among them:

- The Director of the Sociological Program was appointed as governmental expert at the Horizon 2020 informal configuration for *Societal Challenge 6: Europe in a Changing World – Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies.*
- Sociological Program team members participated in the Expert Working Group at the National Commission for Combating Trafficking in Persons.