

Cyprus

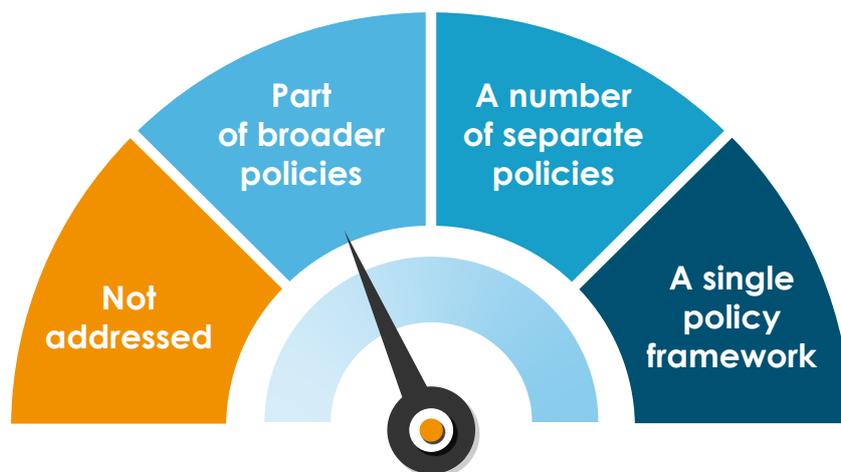
The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Map is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States on the themes and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (or BIK Strategy) first set out by the European Commission in May 2012. The third BIK Policy Map report (2020) examines the implementation of the BIK Strategy in 30 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

For each country in the BIK Policy Map study, we outline findings for Policy frameworks, Policy making and Policy implementation, and conclude by providing a selection of good practices.

Download the full [BIK Policy Map report](#) from the Better Internet for Kids website.

1. Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks refer to the organising principles and long-term goals for policies, guidelines, decisions and other statements made at the national level in the course of putting into practice the BIK Strategy.



In Cyprus, the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children has not specifically featured in national policy debates on the subject of children's use of the internet. This topic is covered as part of broader policies, which address the four different pillars of the BIK Strategy. Some examples are given below.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

- [National Strategy for a Better Internet for Kids](#) in Cyprus, Action 14 of the Cybersecurity Strategy of the Republic of Cyprus and the co-operation of the members of the Working Group which dealt with the [National Education/Information Programme](#), specifically for children, teachers and parents. The Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers on 19 December 2017 (Decision no. 83.979).

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

- [National Strategy for a Better Internet for Kids](#) in Cyprus, Action 14 of the Cybersecurity Strategy of the Republic of Cyprus and the co-operation of the members of the Working Group which dealt with the [National Education/Information Programme](#), specifically for children, teachers and parents. The Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers on 19 December 2017 (Decision no. 83.979).

Pillar 3: Creating a safer environment for children online

- [National Strategy for a Better Internet for Kids](#) in Cyprus, Action 14 of the Cybersecurity Strategy of the Republic of Cyprus and the co-operation of the members of the Working Group which dealt with the [National Education/Information Programme](#), specifically for children, teachers and parents. The Strategy was approved by the Council of Ministers on 19 December 2017 (Decision no. 83.979).

Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation

- [National Strategy and Action Plan to Combat Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children and Child Pornography](#) embraces the philosophy and guidance of the Council of Europe Convention for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2007), known as the Lanzarote Convention.

2. Policy making

Policy making refers to the general process by which policies are developed within each country, including how coordination and oversight is managed, the extent to which the policy agenda is informed by an evidence base, and whether there are arrangements for young people to be involved in the policy process.

2.1 How are policies coordinated?

In Cyprus more than one ministry, agency or body is responsible for coordinating policies addressing the BIK Strategy with one to three ministries involved in the process.

- For the promotion and monitoring of the [National Strategy for a Better Internet for Kids](#) in Cyprus, an inter-ministerial committee has been established, composed of the Minister of Education and Culture, the Minister of Justice and Public Order, the Minister of Energy, Commerce, Industry and Tourism, the Minister of Transport, Communications and Works, and the Commissioner of Electronic Communications and Postal Regulations. A consortium with important stakeholders (37 members) was established to serve as the Advisory Board in supporting and advising on the European project: [Cypriot Safer Internet Centre – CYberSafety](#) and on promoting and implementing the [National Strategy for a Better Internet for Kids](#) in Cyprus.

2.2 Who is primarily in charge of policy coordination?

Responsibility for coordination of BIK-related policies varies by each respective pillar of the BIK Strategy.

- Pillar 1 is primarily overseen by the [Cypriot Safer Internet Centre – CYberSafety](#).
- The [Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth](#) has the main responsibility for Pillars 2, 3 and 4.

The [Cyprus Pedagogical Institute \(Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth\)](#) facilitate interdepartmental communication and inter-agency cooperation regarding children's Internet use.

2.3 Data collection in the last three years

Data collection to support policy making related to the BIK Strategy includes national and regional surveys with quantitative data specifically focused on children's use of the internet, quantitative data on some topics of children's use of the internet collected as part of a broader survey, and qualitative research specifically focused on children's use of the internet. Examples include:

- [Evaluation Report to Capture Needs, Opinions and Experiences for Developing a National Strategic Internet Policy](#) – This report was prepared in the context of developing a national strategy for the Republic of Cyprus for Internet Security and Utilization by students, teachers and parents. The strategy also includes exploring the needs of different population groups (teachers, parents and children). A working group was set up under the Coordination of the Pedagogical Institute of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the General Coordination of the Office of the Electronics Regulatory Commissioner Communications and Posts (GERIET).

2.4 Involvement of young people in policy making

The involvement of young people in policy making is described as one whereby young people are systematically and directly consulted and informed (for example, through hearings, consultations and specific surveys). Relevant organisations involved in supporting youth participation in policy making include:

- The [CYberSafety Youth Panel of Cyprus](#) (which operates as part of the project CYberSafety – Better Internet for Kids), aims to enable participants to share knowledge and experiences, and to formulate suggestions and actions regarding the creative and safe use of digital technologies and the internet.
- The [CYberSafety Youth Panel Cyprus team](#) for 2019-2020 was composed of 30 members of the Cyprus Children's Parliament, members of the Teenage Advisers' Group of the Commissioner for Children's Rights and students from the Young Coaches for the Internet programme. Children are consulted on BIK policy issues and activities through the Children's Parliament. However, there are no specific arrangements for children to participate in the design of BIK policies.

3. Policy implementation

Policy implementation refers to the involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the delivery of initiatives and the spread of activities as envisaged under each of the four pillars of the BIK Strategy.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

Activities under Pillar 1 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

Summary of Pillar 1 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Initiatives to stimulate the production and visibility of quality content for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiatives to encourage children's creativity and to promote positive use of the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiatives to implement standards for quality online content for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other relevant activity (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

Activities under Pillar 2 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

Summary of Pillar 2 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Teaching online safety in schools"			
Strategies to include teaching online safety in schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to reinforce informal education about online safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to provide for online safety policies in schools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to ensure adequate teacher training in online safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Activities to support public-private partnerships in online safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Digital and media literacy activities”			
Activities to support young people’s technical skills required to use online media content and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to encourage critical thinking around media industries and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities that encourage interaction, engagement and participation in the economic, social, creative, cultural aspects of society through online media	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activities that promote democratic participation and fundamental rights on the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activities that challenge radicalisation and hate speech online	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Scaling up awareness activities and youth participation”			
National support for public awareness-raising campaigns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of children when developing national campaigns	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Involvement of children when developing legislation with an impact on their online activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Activities or initiatives to match the Commission’s support for the national Youth Panels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industry funding and technical support for NGOs and education providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Industry dissemination of awareness material either online or at the point of sale	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
“Simple and robust reporting tools for users”			
Mechanisms for reporting content and contacts that may be harmful for children such as cyberbullying or grooming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiatives to facilitate cooperation between helplines and law enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Initiatives to monitor the effective functioning of reporting mechanisms at a national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pillar 3: Creating a safe environment for children online

Activities under Pillar 3 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

Summary of Pillar 3 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Age-appropriate privacy settings"			
Activities to ensure the implementation of EU legislation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Self-regulatory measures by industry about age-appropriate privacy settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Awareness-raising activities regarding age-appropriate privacy settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Wider availability and use of parental controls"			
Activities to promote the availability of parental control tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tests and certification for parental control tools	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Efforts to support industry implementation of parental control tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
"Wider use of age rating and content classification"			
Activities to promote the adoption of age rating and content classification among relevant stakeholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A complaints process for the effective functioning of such systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
"Online advertising and overspending"			
Activities at the national level to ensure that legislation regarding online profiling and behavioural advertising is observed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Support industry in developing codes of conduct regarding inappropriate advertising	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Monitor implementation of codes of conduct at the national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Pillar 4: Fighting against child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation

Activities under Pillar 4 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

Summary of Pillar 4 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Increased resources for law enforcement bodies that fight against child abuse material online	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effective safeguards in place to ensure democratic accountability in the use of investigative tools to combat child sexual abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to support the functioning and visibility of hotlines at the national level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Activities to support the improvement of cooperation between hotlines and industry for taking down child abuse material	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Good practices

The following are three selected examples of good practices in supporting children's use of the internet in Cyprus:

Cyprus Pedagogical Institute

The [Cyprus Pedagogical Institute \(CPI\)](#) runs activities along with other organisations as partners of the [Cypriot Safer Internet Centre – CYberSafety](#). This programme aims to engage students in training others on creative exploitation and safe use of the internet. With the guidance of their schoolteachers and the support of specialists on the subject, young coaches are invited to develop an action plan to design and implement activities to raise awareness about the safe and responsible use of the internet in their school and community. Students are invited to think creatively and implement at least three activities, report on those activities in a reflective journal, participate in Safer Internet Day activities, and organise an event at their school in order to receive a Young Coaches certificate.

Since 2013, when the programme first started, students have exceeded expectations and amazed everyone with their creativity. Among other activities, they have created and shared printed materials such as posters, leaflets, bookmarks and cartoons; digital material such as videos, blogs and animations; they have written and acted in theatrical activities and written and performed songs; provided peer and parent training presentations; organised events and talent shows; created board and online games; completed questionnaires; and run research on internet-related topics. [More information is available on the website of the programme.](#)

Short digital video production competition

The [Cyprus Pedagogical Institute \(CPI\)](#) organises an annual competition for the production of short digital video by students within the thematic area of the safe and creative use of the internet. At the beginning of the school year, a circular is sent to all the schools in Cyprus (both public and private) announcing the competition, in which small groups of students of all ages (from primary to high school) are eligible to participate (under the guidance of their teacher). The overarching theme of the competition is aligned with the annual Safer Internet Day campaign motto. Students' digital video production on the creative and safe use of the internet aims at developing children's skills in relation to media literacy as well as at constructing knowledge and shaping their attitudes regarding this crucial and important thematic area.

Through this creative and learning process, students engage in activities related to the production of digital video, such as researching about internet safety issues, writing the story and script related to the key messages and narrative they want to pass to the audience, rehearsing, directing the camera, sometimes performing, editing and other post-production tasks. This process contributes, quite effectively, to a better and deeper understanding of all of the interconnected issues of adopting a safe, creative and responsible use of the internet. Moreover, students going through the process of authoring and communicating their messages and digital online content, contribute towards a better internet for children, in accordance with the educational objectives of creating a safe internet culture and empowering creative, innovative use of the internet.

The competition is open to all students in Cyprus, for all levels of education. There are three different categories based on the age of the students involved in video production, namely, (1) primary education, (2) lower secondary education, and (3) upper secondary education. In each category, the top five videos are selected by an evaluation committee comprised of representatives from CPI and the other directorates of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth. The evaluation of each video is based on four types of criteria: a) Content and embedded messages, b) Original idea and script, c) Direction, and d) Overall quality of the video. The selected groups of students are then invited to the second phase of the evaluation procedure in order to present their video and production process before the evaluation committee at a public event organised at the end of January. Based on the groups' presentations (and the aforementioned criteria), the evaluation committee selects the top two videos in each of the three categories, and, at the end of the day, the students (along with their guiding teachers), are presented with their awards. The six awarded videos are also presented during the main Safer Internet Day national conference, while a TV-spot version (30'') of each of the 15 videos that were selected for the second phase of the competition is broadcast by all national TV stations in Cyprus during the month of February.

[More information and details about the contest, the procedures and rules followed, and the submitted and awarded videos can be found here](#) (in Greek). [The students' videos are also hosted on the CPI Educational Department's YouTube channel](#) (in Greek).

Workshops on the creative and safe use of the internet at summer camps

Since 2017, the [Cyprus Pedagogical Institute \(CPI\)](#) has hosted a [series of workshops at children's summer camps on the creative and safe use of the internet](#). Through the learning

process, children are invited to learn, explore, interact, form opinions, and educate others about the possibilities and dangers of the internet. At the same time, through knowledge, opinion and experience sharing, children are encouraged to create their own material and serve as ambassadors of good internet practices and disseminate these to their peers, their parents, and other affected groups. During the workshops, children from all over Cyprus have the opportunity to address, in a critical and creative way, issues on the themes of cyberbullying, excessive use of digital technologies and the internet, managing personal data on the internet, and overcoming internet challenges by making good choices. At the end of the group practice, participants have the opportunity to create banners and digital presentations, presenting their own messages and advice about the internet.