

CASE STUDY:

DigiPAC introduced in schools all over Greece



Raised awareness of basic concepts of digital youth participation among teachers and schools





Executive summary

In the period from July 2022 to June 2023, Action Sinergy from Athens, Greece, implemented piloting activities within the ACTIon project. They decided to select and promote an online methodology from the DigiPAC training and had the opportunity to involve teachers and schools from all over Greece. This was particularly important in overcoming geographic obstacles.

In the piloting phase, the DigiPAC guide was introduced in 24 schools that cover almost all of the Greek regions. DigiPAC was piloted from one of the most northern cities in Greece (Soufli) to one of the most southern parts (island of Karpathos). Piloting was carried out in one of the most populous schools in Athens as well as villages (like Pialeia) with less than 800 permanent inhabitants.

The pilot in Greece has impacted more than 500 students. Through the activities, the students were able to cultivate skills of critical thinking, respect and acceptance of diversity, empathy and awareness. The students shared personal experiences, made connections between the examples and their personal experiences and expanded on issues of cyberbullying. In particular, they acquired skills of active citizenship to question, judge, reflect and choose.

The activities have led to the creation of individual and group projects and, more importantly, have given practitioners the tools to talk about an issue that really concerns the students, whereas the teachers usually do not have a method to approach.

This highlights the importance of the method and its ability to serve different contexts. Through DigiPAC, it was possible to reach learners that usually do not participate in any kind of training or project and promote important concepts such as digital youth participation.

Case study

Within its piloting activities, [Action Sinergy](#) implemented the DigiPAC training to introduce the methodology to teachers and schools in Greece. The training had the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of basic concepts related to digital youth participation among teachers and schools
- To increase awareness of the dangers and risks related to digital participation
- To build the capacity of the teachers to use the DigiPAC guide in order to talk about the issues related to digital youth participation

The DigiPAC training of teachers in Greece was organized online in a series of sessions totaling 9 hours. The program consisted of 3 main sessions, each lasting for 3 hours.

Trainers' experiences using DigiPAC

The selection of an online methodology of training has given us the ability to involve teachers and schools from all over Greece. This was particularly important because teachers outside Athens have much fewer professional development opportunities than teachers that live in the capital city. In this





way, geographic obstacles were overcome. The participation in the training was highly appreciated by the teachers.

Outcomes, impact and sustainability

Testimonials from teachers that participated show that their participation in the project helped them to acquire a framework of ethics regarding the use of the internet and to help their students to be critical of news and information of all kinds.

Through the follow up activities in the schools, the students were able to cultivate skills of critical thinking, respect and acceptance of diversity, empathy and awareness. The students shared personal experiences, made connections between the examples and expanded on issues of cyberbullying.

In particular, they acquired skills of active citizenship to question, judge, reflect and choose.

As a result of the piloting activities in Greece, a total of:

- **24 teachers became familiar with DigiPAC methodology and basic concepts related to digital youth participation**
- **More than 500 students were part of follow-up activities within DigiPAC.**

The DigiPAC methodology will be further used by the trained teachers and schools in future activities with students in all over Greece.

What do teachers think?

“Students made progress in understanding what is acceptable/allowable in communication through group chats online, agreeing on the boundaries of jokes and setting limits on behaviours that annoy them, learning how to react when they or other people feel uncomfortable. They worked on a real-life video posting event in a class group chat and used a misbehaviour in a positive way in online communication with their peers.”

Sofia Lamera, Professor at the High School of Axios, Greece.

“Having participated in ACTIon, young people are sure to have acquired skills in critical thinking, internet safety, communication with others, empathy, citizenship, and teamwork. Personally, I learned to find the source of an image in order to determine if it is fake news (search for an image saved with Google Lens). I also learned the characteristics of fake news, the rules of safety online, the code of ethical conduct online (netiquette), “digital self-regulation”, “active digital citizenship”, “digital competence”, “digital citizenship”, “digital citizenship”, “digital active citizenship”, and the basic concepts of media literacy. In addition, for both the teacher and the students, skills of open and critical thinking and empathy were developed. Finally, I hope that I contributed to the development of democracy in the digital world by imparting civic education and empowering young people to become active digital citizens.”

Eleni Georgolopoulou, Professor at the Music School of Lefkada, Greece





“I learned that young people are very much influenced by the internet and need to be properly informed. They also really liked the teaching about human rights based on the pictures and the discussion that followed. Through discussing fake news and narrating situations such as the first day of school, they engaged experientially with the right to education. Through role plays, the students were on the one hand made aware of the dangers of the internet, and on the other hand empowered as to how to protect themselves. They pledged to be distrustful of people they do not know who approach them online.”

Panagiota Karnava, Professor at the High School of Kerkyra, Greece

“The internet is a way of life for all young people who use it every day. However, I didn't know how to inform them about how to use it safely. After participating in the ACTIon project, students understood concepts such as democracy and human rights. They particularly liked the activity on human rights with the pictures, in which they were given the opportunity to express their opinions, exchange views and interact, respecting the opinions of others. They showed interest in fake news and the narration of everyday situations, such as the first day at school. Through role-playing and hands-on activities, they were made aware of the dangers of the internet and informed about safe ways to use it. Finally, they pledged to be more careful on social media and with strangers who approach them online”.

Zoitsa Petsi, Vocational Education Teacher, Athens, Greece

