

Anti-bullying intervention mapping

Draft report
May 2017

Istituto degli Innocenti

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This text has been drafted for the Istituto degli Innocenti by Angela Mazzone and Benedetta Emanuela Palladino under the scientific supervision of Prof. Ersilia Menesini and with the coordination of Raffaella Pregliasco and Erika Bernacchi.

The intervention mapping has been carried out by Angela Mazzone and Benedetta Emanuela Palladino with the support of the Biblioteca Innocenti Library.

Istituto degli Innocenti - Piazza SS. Annunziata 12 - 50122 Firenze

tel. +39 055 2037343 - fax +39 055 2037344 - info@istitutodeglinnocenti.it -
www.istitutodeglinnocenti.it/

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Abstract

The present report offers a systematic review of anti-bullying interventions conducted in Italy from 2009 to 2016. The review includes several studies and reports retrieved from different bibliographic sources. In particular, we consulted both scientific literature (i.e., papers published on international peer-reviewed journals) and grey literature (i.e., unpublished reports about anti-bullying intervention).

Two scientific databases (Scopus, and Web of Science) were consulted between February and March 2017. The other bibliographic sources were: 1) A database including anti-bullying intervention carried out in Italy from 2008 to 2016 (Law 285 Database); 2) European databases including funded European programs (CORDIS, Daphne and Erasmus Plus). In order to keep trace of further anti-bullying intervention programs, not included in the abovementioned databases, we also contacted the Italian Ministry of Education University and Research, the Regional School Offices, the Italian Ministry of Interior and the main Italian No-profit Organizations. Overall, the research on scientific databases yielded 5 papers (specifically regarding 3 intervention programs); 14 anti-bullying programs were retrieved from the Law 285 Database. In relation to the European databases, 11 programs were retrieved from the Daphne database; 43 programs were retrieved from the Erasmus Plus databases and 1 program was retrieved from CORDIS database. Further, 7 programs were obtained from the main Non-Governmental organizations in Italy; 3 programs were obtained from the Regional School Offices; 1 program was obtained from the Italian Ministry of Interior and 1 program from the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research. Overall, 85 anti-bullying intervention programs were analyzed in this report.

Findings of the present report showed that several anti-bullying programs were carried out in Italy in the last eight years. However, for the majority of them a report was not available on the databases. Therefore, several information about the programs included in this work were missing.

In particular, findings showed that the majority of programs were conducted only for a few years and were not based on scientific evidence: the majority of them were not evaluated. Indeed, we found a report about it, or a scientific paper only for nine intervention programs.

In the present report, we provide information about the characteristics of the programs that represent the best practices in Italy. In particular, we describe the evidence-based programs and the programs that were implemented on a National scale. Further, we focus on the theoretical frameworks on which intervention programs were based, as well as on the mechanisms of change.

In conclusion, we suggest that more attention should be paid to evidence-based approach, that anti-bullying intervention should be based on a specific theoretical framework and should adopt a whole school approach.

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Premise

The present report situates itself within the second phase of the Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children, a four-year action-research project coordinated by the UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti and carried out with the Istituto degli Innocenti in Italy and UNICEF Country Offices in Peru, Vietnam and Zimbabwe in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh as the academic partner. The study seeks to increase understanding of what drives violence affecting children and how best to address it.

This report should be read in conjunction with the technical report entitled: “Multi-Country Study on the Drivers of Violence Affecting Children. Italian Report” which presents a revision of the research literature on the drivers of violence against children as well as a mapping of the prevention interventions. This initial report analysed all different forms of violence against children (physical, emotional and sexual) based on the places of occurring, the relationships between perpetrator and victim as well as according to gender/age matrix. The report was based on a socio-ecological perspective as the framework developed by Bronfenbrenner, thus analyzing the different levels that influence drivers of violence: individual, interpersonal, institutional & community and structural.

The report was presented and discussed at the National Observatory against sexual violence and exploitation and following the analysis made by a technical group of experts, it was decided to focus on the issue of bullying for the second phase of the Multi-country Study. The aim of this part of the project is that of testing potential interventions based on social norms and theories of change approach in order to improve the effectiveness of the interventions. The third phase of the projects will be devoted to implement the tested interventions.

Bullying was chosen as the subject to focus on in the second phase of the research for several reasons related to the significance of the issue as well as the relevance for the political agenda. As it will be illustrated in more details in the following pages, bullying is a phenomenon that affects over 1/3 of students (11, 13 and 15 years) who have participated in acts of violence (WHO, HBSC survey, 2010). The recent Istat survey (2015) that takes into consideration bullying in schools and outside schools, indicates that about 20% of adolescents (11-17years) have been victims of bullying several times a month, whereas over the time period of one year over 50% of adolescents have suffered from offensive, disrespectful and/or violent episodes. The relevant institutions, in particular the Ministry of Education University and Research, have dedicated a specific attention to the issue of bullying and cyber-bullying through the approval of a “National Plan of Action for the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying at school 2016-2017” and the definition of the New Guidelines for prevention and fight against bullying and cyberbullying in 2015. Also other recent national policies refer to the issue of bullying including the National Plan of Action against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation as well as the Extraordinary Plan of Action against Sexual and Gender Violence. In recent years there has been an increasing number of interventions and projects enacted by schools, national and local institutions

and associations that are analysed in this report. Finally there is a growing body of scientific literature on the issue that is helpful to reflect on the drivers of this typology of violence as well as on the possible theories of change, which represent the focus of the second phase of the Multi-country study.

1 INTRODUCTION

Bullying is unprovoked and repeated aggression (Coie, Dodge, Terry & Wright, 1991; Olweus, 1993). According to the definition by Olweus (1993; p. 9): *“A student is being bullied, or picked on, when another person or a group of people say nasty or unpleasant things to him or her. It is also bullying when a boy/girl is hit, kicked, threatened, locked inside a room, sent nasty notes, or when no-one ever talks to them and things like that. These facts can happen frequently, and it is difficult for the victim to defend herself. It is also bullying when a boy/girl is teased repeatedly in a nasty way. But it is not bullying when two children of about the same strength have the odd fight or quarrel”*

Empirical evidences show that a consistent part of children and youth experience bullying at least temporarily (Nansel et al., 2004). Bullying has some distinctive characteristics, such as: 1) Intention of harming (physically or psychologically) the victim; 2) Repetition of negative acts over time; 3) Imbalance of power between a physically, or psychologically stronger bully and a victim who is incapable to defend herself (Olweus, 1991). Bullying is a a group phenomenon in which children are involved with different roles (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Björkqvist, Österman, & Kaukiainen, 1996). While some children help the bully or laugh when bullying happens (i.e. bully’s reinforces and assistants), several other children witness it passively (i.e. bystanders) and only a few students help the victim (i.e. defenders).

Bullying takes several forms: Direct forms of bullying vary from physical attacks, to verbal victimization (e.g., name-calling), whereas indirect forms of bullying range from spreading malicious rumors, to social exclusion and isolation (Juvonen & Graham, 2014). Bullying could also take the feature of sexual offences, insults and mocking; it could target sexual orientation (i.e., homophobic bullying), or religious and ethnic background.

In recent years, electronic forms of bullying have also been documented among youth (i.e., cyberbullying) (Menesini et al. 2012; Sticca Ruggieri, Alsaker & Perren, 2013). Cyberbullying consists of using electronic tools to harm the victim (e.g., sending malicious gossip online to harm the victim’s reputation, spreading embarrassing pictures about someone etc.).

Bullying mechanisms: Behavioral and Contextual correlates

In the following, we will offer an overview of behavioral and contextual variables associated with bullying and victimization. The research findings presented are drawn from Italian and international literature. Bullying has been described as an immoral behavior oriented at achieving personal goals, such as exerting power over peers and obtaining high status in the group (Gini, Pozzoli, & Hauser, 2011). Perpetrators of bullying are oriented to cognitively reconstruct their own actions, considering them as right and acceptable (Menesini et al., 2003). For instance, they expect that aggressive

behavior will lead them towards positive outcomes, such as high peer status and dominance in the peer group. Furthermore, bullies are bistrategic controllers, who use both prosocial and coercive strategies to reach their own goals (Olthof & Goossens, 2008). Despite bullies could not be liked by many classmates, they might be perceived as popular, powerful and "cool" (Caravita, Di Blasio & Salmivalli, 2009). Another important aspect characterizing children who manifest bullying is the tendency to show high levels of moral disengagement (i.e., cognitive distortion oriented at justifying aggressive behavior) and low levels of shame and guilt for their misbehavior (Menesini et al., 2003). Indeed, they are prone to put the blame on others, instead of assuming their own responsibility for harming their peers.

Regarding victimization, it has been found associated with internalizing problems, such as anxiety and depression and low self-esteem (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). However, there seems to be a vicious circle between victimization and internalizing problems, as children with internalizing problems are more at risk of being victimized (Hodges & Perry, 1999). Children who are unassertive and insecure could also elicit aggression by bullies, who tend to choose victims who are weak and rejected by the peer group (Salmivalli & Isaacs, 2005). In relation to this, victims of bullying seem to manifest interpersonal problems, i.e., they are rejected by their peers, have no friends, or negative friendship quality (Hawker & Boulton, 2000). Victimization is also associated with low quality relationship with classmates and teacher (Bacchini, Esposito & Affuso, 2009). In particular bullying emerges as more common in schools where students feel that teachers treated them unfairly and the administration was seen as over strict (Campaert, Nocentini & Menesini, 2017; Vieno, Gini & Santinello, 2011). Also Gini (2008), found that in a school environment where students perceived a negative relationship with teachers, children were more likely to blame victims of bullying, while a stronger sense of community within the school predicted the likelihood of supporting the victim.

While the teacher-student relationship was an important predictor of bullying behaviour among younger students, the parent-child relationship became a more significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour as children aged into adolescence (Nation, Vieno, Perkins & Santinello, 2008). Children who did not participate in decision-making with their parents were more likely to engage in bullying behaviour. Still concerning the home environment, Baldry (2003) indicated that exposure to inter-parental violence was associated with bullying behaviours: bullies were almost two times more likely to have been exposed to domestic violence. This pattern is even more pronounced among girl bullies, who were over three times more likely to have been exposed to domestic violence, than girls who were not exposed to it (ibid).

Children belonging to minority groups are more at risk of being victimized. Research has documented that risk for bullying increases among children with disabilities, or suffering from obesity, or those belonging to sexual minorities (Farmer et al., 2012; Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017). In relation to this, homophobic bullying (e.g., teasing and name-calling related sexual orientation) is commonly reported among students who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (Espelage, Hong,

Rao & Thornberg, 2015). The research by Mauceri (2015) identified the following most important drivers for homophobic bullying: conservatism (political, religious and gender); parents' religious attitudes; education based on authoritarian values; need to affirm their masculinity for adolescent boys. Ethnic minority children are also more vulnerable to being bullied, especially in schools where there is an absence of multiple ethnic groups (Juvonen, Nishina & Graham, 2006).

Bullying and victimization are also related to contextual factors, such as classroom characteristics. The likelihood that victims of bullying become the target of aggression is exacerbated in classrooms characterized by high levels of pro-bullying behavior (i.e, reinforcement of bullying) and low levels of defending the victim (Kärnä, Voeten, Poskiparta & Salmivalli, 2010). Further, there seems to be more bullying in highly hierarchical classrooms, where peer status or power are centered upon a few individuals, rather than being equally distributed (Garandeau, Lee & Salmivalli, 2014).

Concerning gender, several studies identified important differences between boys and girls, both in relation to bullying and victimization. In a cross-sectional study conducted by Baldry (2013) boys reported bullying others significantly more often than girls for all types of bullying, especially in the case of physical bullying and namecalling. Gender differences emerged also with reference to indirect bullying, but only in the case of spreading rumors, with boys more involved than girls. A qualitative study by Gini (2008) mirrored these results, finding that 14 to 16 year old males were more likely to be overtly victimized, than their female peers. However, there was no difference between genders in relational victimization, which is predominantly considered to be a female experience (ibid). A mixed methods study sampling a younger population of 6 to 10 year old children found associations between typically masculine traits – such as independence, self-affirmation, risk-taking, social dominance and aggressiveness – and active bullying behaviour, regardless of sex (Gini & Pozzoli, 2006).

The ISTAT report (2015) indicates that offensive, disrespectful and/or violent acts have been repeatedly suffered more by adolescents aged 11-13 years (22.5%) than by those aged 14-17 years (17.9%); more by females (20.9%) than by males (18.8%). Also in relation to cyberbullying, victims were more present among females (7.1% related to females aged 11-17 years vs. 4.6% related to males). Gender emerges as significant also concerning the typology of bullying. The ISTAT report (2015) states that among girls the difference between direct and indirect bullying was low (respectively 16.7% and 14%). On the contrary, among males, direct forms (17%) of bullying were more than double than the indirect ones (7.7%). The emerging field of study about masculinity has produced research on the links between the social construction of masculinity, peer pressure and bullying. (Kimmel, 2008) Especially during adolescence, there is a peer pressure by boys to constantly prove to one another their masculinity by adopting behaviours that are traditionally regarded as masculine including distancing themselves from any kind of real or perceived homosexual behavior/appearance. Thus, research findings suggest that traditional masculinity which values

dominance, assertiveness and lack of emotions is associated with bullying and homophobic bullying. (Rivers and Duncan, 2013).

An ecological perspective has been adopted in order to explain bullying and victimization and their associations with the wider social context. The assumption is that bullying stems from an interaction between children and the environment where they live. It was found that bullying and victimization are related with the way adolescents perceive their exposure to dangerous and violent situations in the neighborhood, as well as with their relationship with their classmates and teacher (Bacchini, et al., 2009). More specifically, in context where abuse is common, violent behavior and bullying become a common feature of school life. Therefore, recent anti-bullying programs highlighted the importance of tackling the school climate, as well as immoral cognitions related to bullying, by using a whole-school approach.

1.1 Incidence of bullying in Italy

When comparing figures of prevalence, several studies documented that the distinct forms of bullying are common among youth, although, the incidence of the phenomenon differs across countries (Inchley et al., 2016; Elgar et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2002; Smith, 2016). This may reflect contextual and cultural factors affecting the acceptability of bullying. The incidence may also vary depending on the definition of bullying, the frequency taken into consideration (e.g., once a month; once a week) and the time reference period considered in different studies (e.g., past months /weeks; last year), (Menesini & Salmivalli, 2017).

As in other countries, bullying is a cause of concern also in Italy. From the Italian report of the Health Behaviours in School-aged Children (HBSC) (Cavallo et al. 2016) 21,5% of 11 y.o. students declared to have experienced victimization at least once in the last two months, among 13 y.o. students the percentage is 16.3 %; and at 15 y.o the figure is 7.8%. In the volume comparing 43 Western countries, including all EU Members States (Inchley et al, 2016, <http://www.hbsc.org/>) the rate reported was much lower since the authors considered a cut-off of being victimized 2-3 times in the last months. The percentage of Italian 11 year-olds youth who were bullied by their peers 2-3 times in the last two months was 5% for girls and 9% for boys. Further, 6% of 13 year-old girls and 5% of boys declared that they were victimized. Among 15 year-olds youth, 2% of girls and 3% of boys were victimized.

Some other national studies documented a higher rate of bullying, (Eurispes, 2011, www.eurispes.eu; Istat, 2015). For instance, a survey by ISTAT (2015) took into consideration bullying in schools and outside schools, and indicates that about 20% of adolescents (aged 11-17) have been victims of bullying several times a month, whereas over the time period of one year, around 50% of adolescents have suffered from offensive, disrespectful and/or violent episodes.

On average, we can estimate that bullying prevalence in Italy varies from 5 to 25% in relation to different measures, population, cut-off considered and time reference.

1.2 Anti-bullying legislation in Italy

A national policy against bullying and cyberbullying has recently been object of discussion in Italy and several initiatives were undertaken in the past two decades. An important measure was the **285 Law**, approved in 1997 and labelled: **“Regulation for promoting rights and Opportunity in Childhood and Adolescence”**. The main points of the 285 Law were the creation of a National Funding for Childhood and Adolescence and a series of initiatives aimed at ameliorating the quality of life of children and adolescents, contrasting poverty and violence and supporting parenthood. The funding financed a series of interventions carried out in several regions in Italy oriented at promoting the rights of children and adolescents. Some of them targeted bullying and cyberbullying. A database was created, including all the intervention programs carried out with the financial support of the 285 Law National Funding. This database was consulted for the purposes of the present report.

Another important measure was the Ministerial Directive n. 16/2007 named **“General guidelines and national actions to prevent and contrast school-bullying”**, that provided a framework to prevent and contrast bullying. The General guidelines also give each school the task of applying disciplinary sanctions against students who bully their peers. Further, in each Region, an observatory composed by academics, school members, local authorities and civil society members was established with the aim of collecting data about bullying and spreading information regarding this phenomenon.

More recently, the **New Guidelines of the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR)**, approved in April 2015, invited schools to work for prevention and provided financial resources for teachers’ training and established a team of experts within a network of schools (Unit of support in the area).

The new guidelines provided a re-organization of the governance system with the transfer of the functions previously played by the regional Observatories against bullying to the Support Territorial Centers (Centri Territoriali di Supporto - CTS) that are due to become the reference point for all anti-bullying actions. The Guidelines refer also to the project Safer Internet Center set up by the European Parliament and the EU Council (Decision n. 1351/2008/CE) to which the MIUR adhered since 2012 through the project “Generazioni Connesse – Safer Internet Center ITALY” in cooperation with the most relevant organizations operating in this field.

In 2016 MIUR also approved the **“National Plan of Action for the prevention of bullying and cyber-bullying at school 2016-2017”**, which funds and promotes specific actions such as the National Day against Bullying at School; trainings for teachers within the National Training Plan for teachers; the information and awareness-raising project “Una vita da social” run by the Postal Police; specific help-lines run by the organization Telefono Azzurro; a TV show and a movie; an education project in

collaboration with Unicef aimed at preventing discrimination; a national completion against hate speech in collaboration with the Council of Europe.

Finally, other national policies dealing with children and gender violence also address the issue of bullying and cyber-bullying. The **National Plan of Action for the prevention and Fight against sexual abuse and exploitation of minors 2015-2017** includes prevention actions on the issue of bullying and especially cyber-bullying to be carried out in agreement with the new National Guidelines. The **Extraordinary Plan of Action against Sexual and Gender Violence** includes a focus on such phenomena within the promotion of an adequate training for teachers and the revision of school curricula aimed at preventing gender violence and gender stereotypes. In particular, the Plan promotes affective education as a measure to prevent discrimination, aggression and bullying. It also includes the setting up of an on-line platform dedicated to these themes where teachers will be able to train themselves and to include projects regarded as best practices.

2 Objective of the present Report

The present report aims at offering an overview of anti-bullying programs carried-out in Italy from 2009 to 2016.

The rationale for choosing this specific time-frame is that one important systematic review and meta-analysis about efficacy of bullying interventions was carried out in 2009 (Farrington & Ttofi, 2009; Ttofi & Farrington, 2009). Therefore, we aim at systematically review the most recent intervention programs not included in the seminal meta-analysis by Ttofi and Farrington.

In particular, in the present report, we will focus on two main program characteristics, considered by Ttofi and Farrington (2009): *Implementation Features* such as Intensity (i.e., length in hours) and Duration (i.e., total length of the program) for children, parents and teachers; *Program Components* such as actions towards children and adults (e.g. teacher training, parent meetings etc.)

The objective of this report is manifold:

- 1) mapping anti-bullying interventions in Italy, from school year 2009/2010 to 2015/2016;
- 2) focusing on the evaluation aspect of the most recent anti-bullying programs carried out in Italy;
- 3) highlighting the theories of change inspiring the most effective intervention programs.

In order to reach the third objective, we wanted to explore whether intervention programs were guided by a theoretical framework and whether they were evidence-based. Further, we also wanted to examine whether the programs had significant effects on the different subtypes of bullying tackled and whether they were carried out on a National scale.

3 METHOD

3.1 Sources and Database

The **scientific databases** Scopus and Web of Science were consulted in order to find recent scientific papers published in the field object of the present report. Both these databases are the largest abstract and citation databases of peer-reviewed literature: Scientific journals, books and conference proceedings. The two databases include scientific papers published worldwide in several fields (i.e., science; technology; medicine; social sciences).

We also consulted the **Law 285 database**. This database includes intervention programs carried out in Italy and financed by the National Funding established by the Law 285/97 itself. The 285 databases includes intervention programs aimed at promoting children and adolescents' wellbeing,

The **European Databases**, Daphne, Erasmus Plus and CORDIS, were also consulted. Daphne Program was launched for the first time in 1997 as a one year line funding for No-profit Organizations programs aimed at supporting victims of violence and contrast violence against women, children and young people. The program was lunched again in the following years (i.e., from 1998 to 2003). Thereafter, Daphne II (2004-2006) and Daphne III Programme (2007-2013) were launched. The Daphne Programme continues in years 2014-2020 as one part of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme. The Erasmus Plus Programme is the European program to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe. It provides opportunities to study, train, gain experience and volunteer abroad. The database includes intervention programs carried out with the support of Erasmus Plus Programme funding. CORDIS - Community Research and Development Information Service is the European Commission's primary public repository and portal to disseminate information on all EU-funded research programs and their results in the broadest sense. The website and repository include all public information held by the Commission (i.e., program factsheets, publishable reports and deliverables), editorial content to support communication (i.e, news, events, success stories, magazines) and comprehensive links to external sources such as open access publications and websites. All databases were consulted between February and March 2017.

Finally, Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), the Italian Ministry of Interior, the Regional School Offices and the main Italian No-profit Organizations were contacted by email in order to obtain information about anti-bullying intervention programs carried out in Italy in the years 2009-2016.

3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion criteria

The following inclusion criteria were defined:

- 1) scientific papers about intervention programs aimed at preventing and contrasting bullying and cyberbullying, carried out in Italy in the years 2009-2016;
- 2) published and unpublished reports about anti-bullying intervention conducted in Italy in the years 2009-2016.

We excluded intervention programs aimed at contrasting generic peer violence, conflict and aggression, rather than bullying (i.e., the three main characteristics of bullying were considered: intentionality; repetitiveness and unbalance of power). We excluded intervention programs not carried out in Italy and those that were not implemented between 2009 and 2016. We excluded intervention programs aimed at contrasting workplace bullying among adults, or behaviors other than bullying among children.

3.3 Search strategy

3.3.1 Scientific database

As shown above, two scientific databases most relevant to the field of Developmental Psychology were consulted: Scopus and Web of Science. The following keywords were used for our searching on all databases: *Bullying; Cyberbullying; Homophobic bullying; Sexual bullying; Racial bullying*. The following keywords were also included: *Intervention; Program; Peer-led model*. The keywords for each domain were combined using the word AND (e.g., bullying AND intervention; cyberbullying AND program). Search fields involved were: title/abstract/keywords for Scopus and Web of Science. We limited our search to Italian studies published from 2009 to 2016.

3.3.2 Law 285 database

In order to find intervention programs not documented in published scientific articles, we consulted the following database: Database law 285 for Childhood and Adolescence (http://www.bancadatiprogetti285.minori.it/Search_G03.htm). Search fields involved were: title/abstract/keywords. The procedure followed and keywords were the same as above.

3.3.3 European database

The search on the abovementioned European databases was carried out. The keywords were the same as above (see Scientific Database searching).

For the Erasmus Plus database, we used the Advanced search tool. We searched for programs carried out in Italy from 2009 to 2016. We searched for all completed programs (i.e., LLP Life-Long Learning Program; YiA – Youth in Action programme; Co-operation with industrialized countries; Erasmus Mundus; Tempus; Sports) , and all organization roles (i.e., coordinator; partner).

For the CORDIS database, we used the advanced Search tool. The Search term were the same as above; the content types were "Programme and Program"; the selected country was Italy.

3.3.4 Other sources

As pointed out above, we contacted by email the main Non-Governmental Organization in Italy, the Regional School Offices, the Italian Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) and the Ministry of Interior.

3.4 Eligible Interventions

In Table 1 are summarized the screened and eligible intervention programs retrieved from each source. A total number of 85 intervention programs were included in the present report. In the results section descriptive analyses are available.

Table 1 Number of screened and eligible programs retrieved from each source

	Scientific Databases	and of	Italian Database	European Funding Databases			Other Sources			
	Scopus Web Science		Law 285 database	Daphne	Erasmus Plus	CORDIS	No-profit Organ.	Regional School Offices	Ministry of Interior	MIUR
Number of papers/programs found	267		30	15	65	3	7	3	5	2
Number of papers/programs screened by abstract	236		-	-	6	1	-	-	4	
Number of papers/programs screened by text	3		7	3	3	1	-	-	-	-
Number of duplicates	23		9	1	13	0	-	-	-	-
Number of papers/programs retained	5*		14	11	43	1	7	3	1	2
Total number of programs retained : 87-2=85 (Three scientific papers were about the “NoTrap!” program. Therefore, we included only one of them)										

3.4.1 Papers retrieved from Scientific databases

The search yielded 267 results, the titles and abstract of which were screened in order to ensure whether they fit the focus of the present report. We excluded 237 papers, given that their focus did not fit the goal of the present work (i.e., the papers were not about anti-bullying intervention in Italy, or they were basic research papers). Specifically, of the 237 papers, 150 were about basic research (i.e., no intervention); 84 were about other topics (i.e., the topic was unrelated with the focus of this report) and 3 papers were anti-bullying intervention not carried out in Italy, or were about intervention programs carried out before 2009.

On the remaining 30 papers, 22 were duplicates and 8 papers were read in full, in order to determine their relevance according the inclusion criteria (See Table 2). Altogether, 5 papers were included in the report.

Table 2 Full text paper evaluated

References	
1. Genta, Brighi & Guarini (2009)	Excluded because it is antecedent to 2009
2. Giannotta, Settanni, Kliewer & Ciairano (2009)	Included
3. Greco & Zanetti (2013)	Excluded because it is a summary about good practices
4. Menesini, Nocentini & Palladino (2012)*	Included
5. Palladino, Nocentini & Menesini (2012)*	Included
6. Palladino, Nocentini & Menesini (2016)*	Included
7. Nocentini & Menesini (2016)	Included
8. Terranova-Cecchini & Toffle (2014)	Excluded because it is a counselling method and not an anti-bullying program

Note: *Three papers were found about the “NoTrap!” program. However, for the present report, we included the findings regarding the most recent version of the program (Palladino et al., 2016)

3.4.2 LAW 285 DATABASE

The search on the Law 285 database yielded 30 results, of which 7 programs were excluded, given that they were carried out before 2009. Further, 9 entries were combined as they were duplicates (i.e., same program conducted for consecutive years). Therefore, 14 programs were included in the present report (See Table 3).

Table 3 Eligible Programs retrieved from the Law 285 database

1. Prevenzione del bullismo giovanile (Preventing bullying among youth)
2. PreDisco Giovani Fuori classe - Lecosecambiano@Roma (Outstanding youth - Things change in Rome)
3. Servizio gratuito di ascolto di mediazione dei conflitti e la cura del disagio del minore - sportello anti-bullismo (Free Service for counseling, conflict resolution and children care - anti-bullying service)
4. M.V.B. Mi voglio bene (I love myself)
5. Azioni di prevenzione della dispersione scolastica (Preventing school drop-out)
6. Centro di consulenza per la famiglia e la scuola (Counseling center for family and school)
7. Su la testa (IV P.I.), Milano (Raise your head)
8. Interventi innovativi volti alla gestione del conflitto e sostegno vittime di bullismo (Innovative intervention for managing conflict and supporting victims of bullying)
9. Socializzazione, integrazione, benessere. I giovani in relazione al mondo straniero (Socialization; social inclusion and wellbeing. The relationship between youth and foreigners)
10. Verso la scuola [Towards the school]
11. Bullismo e disagio sociale (Bullying and social distress)
12. Centro di quartiere finalizzato alla socializzazione e all'aggregazione giovanile (Neighborhood center for socialization of youth)
13. Silenzio in Aula (Keep silent in the classroom)
14. Servizio educativo assistenziale semiresidenziale (Educational semi-residential and support service)

3.4.3 EUROPEAN DATABASES

Overall, the search on **Daphne** database yielded 15 programs, of which one was a duplicate and three were excluded as they did not fit the focus of the present report (i.e., they were about conflict, rather than bullying) (See Table 4).

Overall, the search on the **Erasmus Plus** database yielded 65 programs, of which 13 were duplicates and 6 did not fit the focus of the present report (i.e, one was focused on positive use of ITC and the other were about prosocial behavior) (See Table 5).

The search on **CORDIS** database yielded 3 results; however, one program was excluded, as it was carried out before 2009 and another program was excluded as it was about workplace bullying. The

included program was: eCIRCUS - *Education through Characters with emotional-Intelligence and Role-playing Capabilities that Understand Social interaction.*

Table 4 Eligible programs retrieved from Daphne database

1. ABSAE -Addressing Sexual Bullying across Europe
2. T.A.B.B.Y. In internet (Threat Assessment of Bullying Behavior in Internet)
3. T.A.B.B.Y. Trip in Europe (Threat Assessment of Bullying Behavior in Internet)
4. Europe's Anti-bullying Campaign
5. ATTEMPT - Attractive Training Techniques to Empower parents and teachers
6. Prevention of Violence through Education to Legality (POVEL)
7. European Superkids Online - empowering children to safe behavior online
8. The B-Band - Building a bridge to go Beyond the Bullying
9. Cyberbullying in Adolescence: Investigation and Intervention in Six European Countries
10. Street Life Safety for Young People - Smontailbullo
11. MABE - Méthodes Actives et socio-constructivistes pour combattre la violence, les menaces et le harcèlement sexué, homophobe, et ethnique à l'Ecole

Table 5 Programs evaluated retrieved from Erasmus Plus database

1. SMILEY - Social Mindedness in Learning Community (Good Practice; Success Story)	Included
2. FREAKS! (Good Practice example)	Included
3. Welcoming Europe into the class (Good Practice)	Included
4. YW - Youth Peace Ambassadors - Combating hate online and offline (Good Practice)	Included
5. Break the Mould (Good Practice)	Included
6. Kingsriver Community (Good Practice)	Included
7. Social Roadmap to Employment (Good Practice)	Excluded because it was about the positive use of ITC to find a job and enrich oneself social skills
8. Take a stand. Imagine a future without bullying (Good Practice)	EDU-Living & EDU-Leaving
9. EDU-Living & EDU-Leaving	Included
10. ERASMUS MINUS Bullying. Practices in	Included

Prevention and Intervention in European Schools	
11. Social Media Threat or Opportunity	Included
12. ACCEPTO - Accepting yourself and Accepting the others	Included
13. Using Social Networking ICT Tools with peer learning and Crowdsourcing Techniques to Train School Communities on how to deal with student bullying	Included
14. What can I do? Stop bullying, take action!	Included
15. Vitamine Culture	Included
16. Clear Cyberbullying	Included
17. Youth Violence Behavior 2.0 Threat	Included
18. Take a stand - Lend a hand! Stop bullying now!	Included
19. Share the right story	Included
20. Change 4 life through sports	Included
21. In Ya Face(book)	Included
22. Volunteering for Visibility and Inclusion	Included
23. Let's make our school more international	Included
24. Dream without fear, love without limits	Included
25. Understand better to help better-dealing with pupil behavioral challenges in 2015-2016	Excluded because it was aimed at raising awareness about children behavioral problems among teachers
26. CTRL+ALT+DELETE Cyberbullying	Included
27. Socialines Atskirties Mazinimas per Profesin Tobulejima	Included
28. Social Media & Youth	Included
29. Include Me	Included
30. Action Through Art Against Bullying	Included
31. Stop the Bully	Included
32. Stop Bullying	Excluded because it was about peer violence in general, rather than bullying
33. I'm important because I am myself	Included
34. Movie Factory 2014	Included
35. Cyberbullying Let's Talk!	Included
36. Vision OTR-A-LTRA Visione	Included

37. A laboratory of creativity, collaboration and democratic culture (Greek title)	Included
38. Volunteers. Ideals. Perspectives	Included
39. School Safety Net	Included
40. CPDLab	Included
41. I am not Scared	Included
42. The Virtual anti-bullying village for kids	Included
43. Make a choice! - Using Theatre to Address Bullying	Included
44. Beat cyberbullying, embrace safer cyberspace	Included
45. Getting in touch with cyber-youth	Included
46. United: Connecting People for a better future - Italy 2015	Included

3.4.4 Other sources

As pointed out above, we contacted by email the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), the Regional School Offices and the Ministry of Interior. We obtained 3 programs from the Regional School Office of Marche Region, 2 programs from MIUR and 5 programs from the Ministry of Interior. However, of the 5 programs received by the Ministry of Interior, four were excluded, either as they were carried out before 2009, or they did not fit the topic of the present report (i.e, they were about intimate partner violence, or anti-crime programs). Finally, some of the main Italian No-profit Organizations (i.e, Telefono Azzurro; Terres des Homes and Save the Children) were contacted, or their websites were checked. Overall, we retrieved 7 programs from these sources (See Table 6).

Table 6 Programs evaluated (and included) retrieved from other sources

Program Title	Source
1. Bulli di Sapone, Un approccio Ironico al bullismo e Bulli di sapone - La pubblicità (Soap bully: An ironic approach to bullying, in continuity with Soap bullies: Advertisement)	Regional School Offices
2. "Io bullo? No, io ballo!" ("Me a bully? No, I dance!")	Regional School Offices
3. Sofia della 3B – (Sofia from the third grade)	Regional School Offices
4. Centro Giovani Online (Online Youth Center)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
5. Io proteggo i bambini (I protect Children)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
6. Internet: Be happy, be safe!	Main Italian No-profit organizations

7. Fermiamo il Bullismo (Let's stop bullying)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
8. Giovani ambasciatori contro il bullismo e il cyberbullismo per un web sicuro (Young ambassadors against bullying and cyberbullying for a safe web)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
9. Progetto Scuole: Stereotipi e Bullismo (Schools Program: Stereotypes and Bullying)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
10. Progetto Giovani Protagonisti (Young Protagonists Program)	Main Italian No-profit organizations
11. Abbandono scolastico e bullismo: Quali rischi tra i giovani? - Discobull (School drop-out and bullying: What are the risks among youth?)	Ministry of Interior
12. Generazioniconnesse - Safer Internet Center	Ministry of Education, University and Research
13. Una Vita da Social (Living social)	Ministry of interior and Ministry of Education, University and Research

3.5 Coding System

We coded each intervention program retrieved from each database along the categories reported in Table 7. As a second level coding system, the interventions program reporting an evaluation were coded according to the categories reported in Table 8.

Table 7 Categories and options considered for each intervention program

Name of the category	Possible Options
Name of the program	-
Contact person	-
Website Link	-
Reference	-
Presence of a report in the database	Yes/No
Source of bibliographic information	- Scopus - Web of Science - Law 285 database - Erasmus Plus database - Daphne database - CORDIS database

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main No-profit organizations in Italy - MIUR - Ministry of Interior
General aim	-
Intervention Components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Awareness raising meetings for students; – Awareness raising meetings for teachers; – Awareness raising meetings for parents; – Awareness meetings for stakeholders; – Psycho-educative intervention; – Peer-education; – Teacher training; – Parent training; – Stakeholder training; – Media Campaign
Sample Size - The number of children and adolescents addressed by the program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Less than 100 - 100 to 300 - 300 to 500 - 500 to 1000 - 1000 to 3000 - More than 3000
Sex of target sample	Male/Female
Number of schools taking part at the intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1 to 2 - 3 to 5 - 5 to 10 - 10 to 20 - More than 20
Age of the participants	<p>Children aged 6-10</p> <p>Preadolescents aged 11-13 Adolescents aged 14-18</p>
Involvement of Teachers	Yes/No
Involvement of Parents	Yes/No
Implementation area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal - Local (a few cities) - Provincial - Regional - National
The behaviors targeted by the intervention	<p>Bullying</p> <p>Cyberbullying</p> <p>Racial bullying</p>

	Sexual bullying Homophobic bullying Bullying towards disabled children
Other behaviors	Yes/No
Protocol - the intervention used a standardized protocol	Yes/No
Standardized materials - the intervention used standardized materials (booklet; manual)	Yes/No
Main Setting: School	Yes/No
Main setting other than school	-
Intervention Length	- Awareness meeting/s (1 to 3 days for each school year) - A few weeks - One month - 1 to 2 months - A few months - First month of school year - Last month of school year - Whole school year
School Years of Implementation	Less than a school year - 1 year - 2 years - 3 years - 4 years - More than 4 years
The source of financial support to the intervention	- Italian Public funding - Italian Private funding - Both public and private funding - 285 Law funding - European funding - Not funded program
Funding amount	-
Notes about funding	-
Presence of the Evaluation	Yes/No
Ongoing Program	Yes/No
Additional Information	-

Notes: In cases in which it was not possible to retrieve the information, the following option was included: "Information not available". The option "not applicable" was included when the information did not match all other categories.

Table 8 Categories and options considered for each evaluated intervention program

Name of the category	Options
Name of the program	-
Presence of an evaluation report	Yes/No
Program components	- Universal actions - Indicated actions - Both
Evaluation type	- Quantitative - Qualitative - No systematic evaluation
Evaluation design	- No-systematic evaluation - Post-test evaluation (experimental group only) - Pre and post-test evaluation (experimental group only) - Post-test comparison (experimental and control group) - Pre and post-test evaluation (experimental and control group) - Randomized control trial
Number of schools in the experimental group	- 1 to 2 - 3 to 5 - 5 to 10 - 10 to 20 - More than 20
Number of schools in the control group	- 1 to 2 - 3 to 5 - 5 to 10 - 10 to 20 - More than 20
Evaluation Institution	- Independent - Internal
Sample Size of the experimental group	- Less than 100

	- 100 to 300
	- 300 to 500
	- 500 to 1000
	- 1000 to 3000
	- More than 3000
Sample size of the control group	- No control group
	- Less than 100
	- 100 to 300
	- 300 to 500
	- 500 to 1000
	- 1000 to 3000
	- More than 3000
Definition of bullying	Yes/No
Brief definition of bullying if present	-
Definition of cyberbullying	Yes/No
Brief definition of cyberbullying if present	-
Efficacy: Significant Positive effects on bullying	Yes/No
Efficacy: Significant Positive effects on victimization	Yes/No
Efficacy: Significant Positive effects on cyberbullying	Yes/No
Efficacy: Significant Positive effects on cybervictimization	Yes/No
Efficacy: Significant Positive effects on other behaviors	Yes/No
Efficacy on other behaviors	-
Presence of a iatrogenic effect	Yes/No
Iatrogenic effect on specific variables	-
Resistance	Yes/No
Ethical Aspects	- Code of conduct of the Italian Association of Psychology - APA code of conduct
Participant satisfaction	Yes/No
Mechanisms of change	-
Additional Information	-

Notes: In cases in which it was not possible to retrieve the information, the following option was included: "Information not available". The option "not applicable" was included when the information did not match all other categories

4 RESULTS

In the following section, we will first describe the main characteristics of the programs included in this report (See Appendix 1 for intervention program listed and coded variables); afterwards, the findings about the evaluated programs will be presented (See Appendix 2 for evaluated intervention program listed and coded variables). As a final step, we will describe interventions that can be considered as “Good practices” and those that used an evidence-based approach. In particular, the main characteristics and components of the programs that can be considered as good practices will be presented. In addition, we will present the evaluation findings for the programs that have been systematically evaluated.

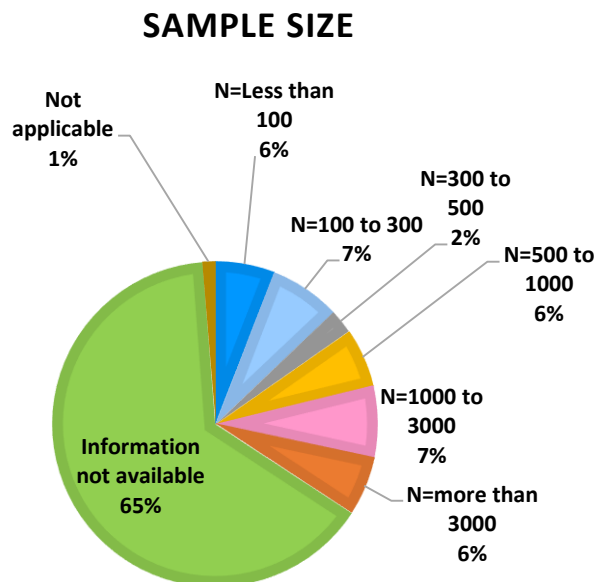
Unfortunately, complete reports were found only for a small proportion of programs (16 programs in total). Therefore, the data we are going to present are affected by several missing information.

4.1 MAPPING ANTI-BULLYING INTERVENTIONS: CHARACTERISTICS AND COMPONENTS

4.1.1 Target sample and number of schools included in the intervention programs

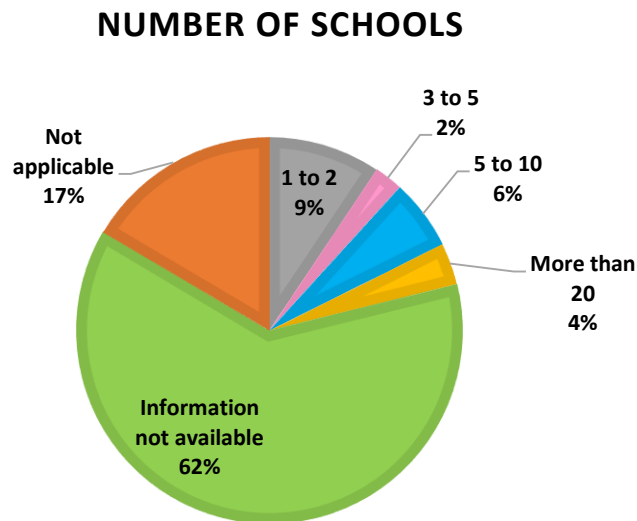
As it can be seen from Figure 1, the information about the sample size were not reported for the majority of programs included in this report. This is mainly due to the fact that an in depth report was missing for the majority of interventions. The information was not applicable for 1% of programs, as they targeted only adults (i.e, teachers, or stakeholders). Only a few programs were conducted on a large scale (i.e., 7% and 6% respectively addressed between 1000 and 3000 and more than 3000 children and adolescents). All programs targeted boys and girls

Figure 1 Sample size of students involved



Regarding the number of schools involved, a consistent rate of information were missing (62%), mainly due to absence of a report. For the intervention conducted in contexts other than school, the information was not applicable (36.5% of intervention were conducted in a setting other than school; e.g., recreational center; youth association). Programs targeted only 1 to 2 schools in 9% of cases, whereas 6% of programs targeted 5 to 10 schools and 2% 3 to 5 schools.

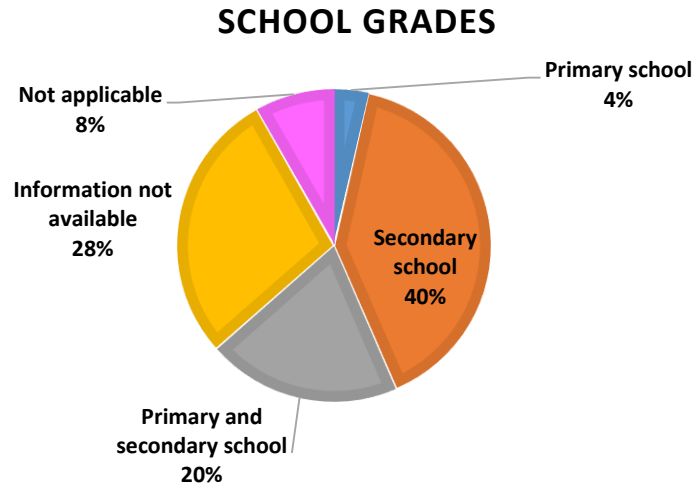
Figure 2 Number of schools involved



4.1.2 Targeted Children and Behaviors

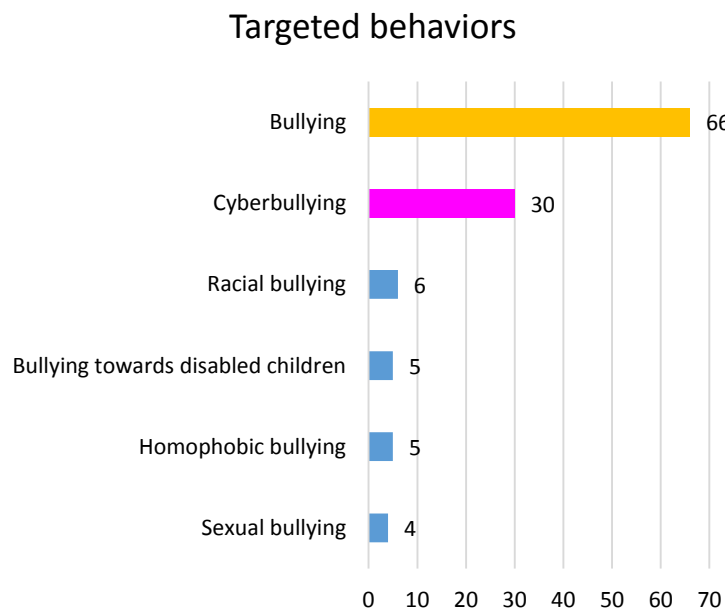
The 40% of children targeted by the interventions included in this report were aged between 11 and 18 years old, i.e., they attended middle and high school (secondary school). 20% of interventions targeted children and adolescents in all school grades; i.e., children aged 6-10, together with preadolescents and adolescents (14-18). Finally, a small part targeted only children aged 6-10 (4%).

Figure 3 School Grades



In relation to targeted behaviors, 66 interventions targeted bullying and 30 targeted cyberbullying. Regarding the other bullying subtypes, 6 intervention programs targeted racial bullying; 5 targeted bullying towards disabled children; 5 targeted homophobic bullying (i.e., bullying targeting sexual orientation); and 4 targeted sexual bullying (i.e., sexual insults, offences and mocking).

Figure 4 Targeted behaviors

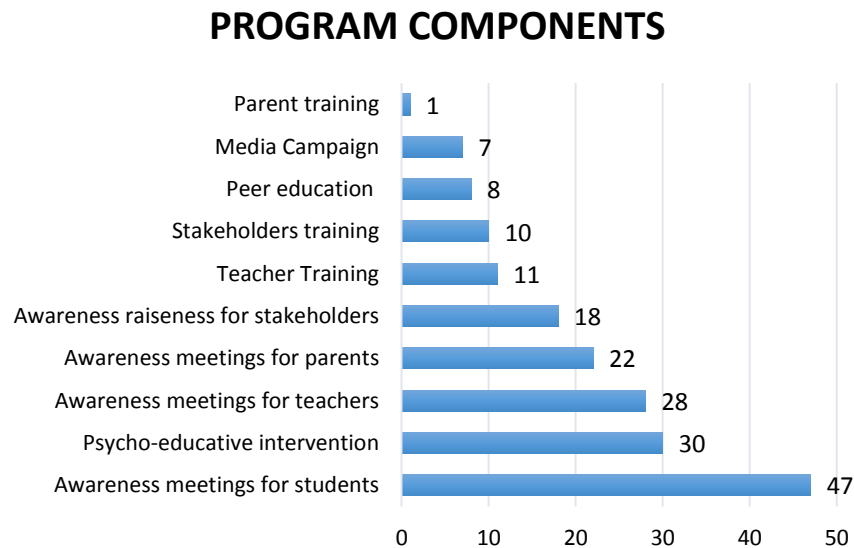


4.1.3 Intervention components

In relation to the intervention components, 47 intervention programs adopted awareness meetings with students; 30 psycho-educative intervention for children; 28 awareness meetings for teachers; 22 awareness meetings for parents; 18 awareness raising for stakeholders; 10 stakeholder trainings; 8 peer-education; 7 media-campaign and one program adopted parent training.

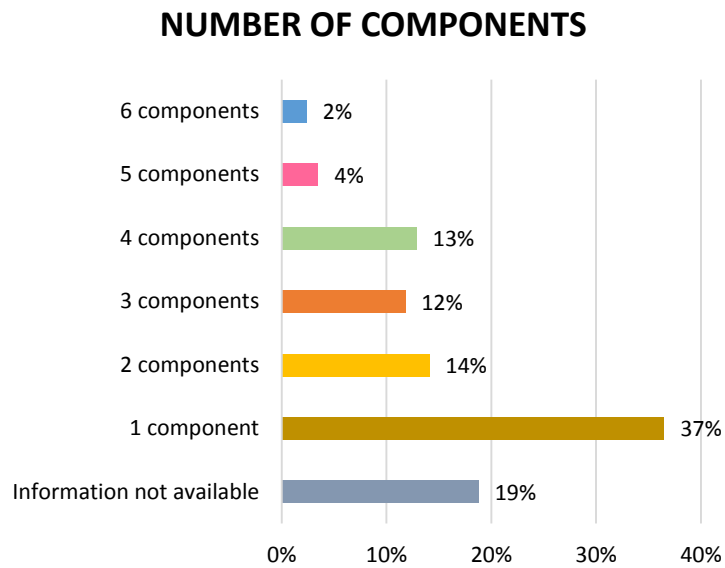
Awareness meetings for parents were included in 25.9% of cases, whereas parent training was included in 1.2 % of cases. 32.9% of intervention programs included awareness meetings for teachers, whereas teacher training was included in 12.9% of cases. Finally, awareness raising for stakeholders was arranged in 21.2% of programs, whereas 11.8% of intervention programs included stakeholder training.

Figure 5 Intervention Components



As it can be seen from the figure below, 36.5% of interventions included in this report included only one component; 14.1% of them adopted at least 2 components, whereas 11.8% adopted three components. Further, it was found that 12.9% of intervention programs adopted 4 components; 3.5% adopted 5 components and 2.4% adopted 6 components ($M=2.14$; $ds=1.48$).

Figure 6 Number of components included at the same time



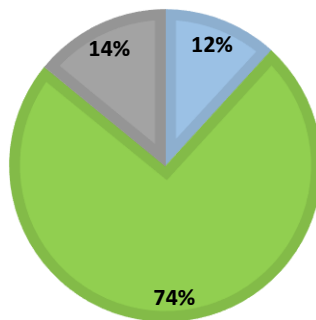
4.1.4 Protocol and Standardized materials

A standardized protocol was adopted by 11.8% of programs included in this report, whereas a consistent 74.1% of programs were not based on a protocol. Unfortunately, for 14.1% of programs this information was not available.

Figure 7 Rate of programs with a standardized protocol

STANDARDIZED PROTOCOL

■ Yes ■ No ■ Information not available

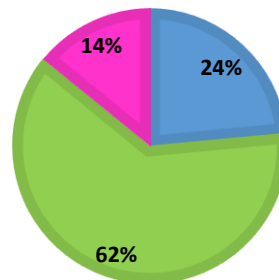


In relation to the materials used by the programs, only 23.5% of programs used standardized materials, such as booklets for children and adults, or manual for teachers and parents' guide. In 62.4% of cases, the programs did not adopt standardized materials. We did not have any information about this aspect in respect to the remaining programs.

Figure 8 Rate of programs with standardized materials

STANDARDIZED MATERIALS

■ Yes ■ No ■ Information not available

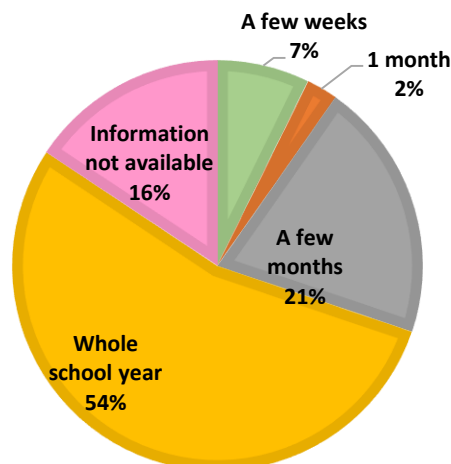


4.1.5 Intervention Length

We looked at both the length that could be considered as the Intensity of each program (Ttofi & Farrington, 2009), in terms of their duration in weeks and months for each school year, as well as the total duration of each program (i.e., consecutive school years in which the programs were carried out). A consistent majority of programs (54%) were carried out for the whole school year. However, it is important to note that a consistent part of programs was carried out for a short time, i.e., from a few weeks to a few months.

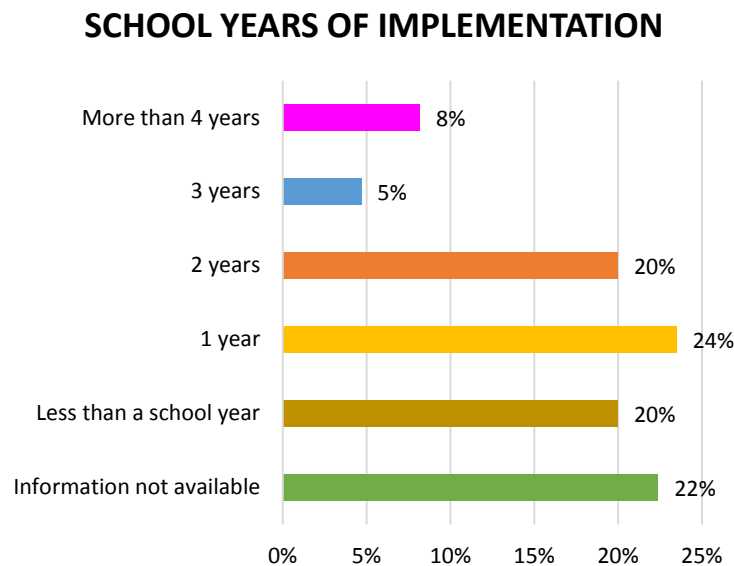
Figure 9 Intervention Length

INTERVENTION LENGTH



In relation to the school years of implementation, although 20% of interventions were carried out only for a short time (i.e., less than a school year), the majority of them (24%) were carried out for at least one year. However, only a small part (8%) was carried out for more than 4 years.

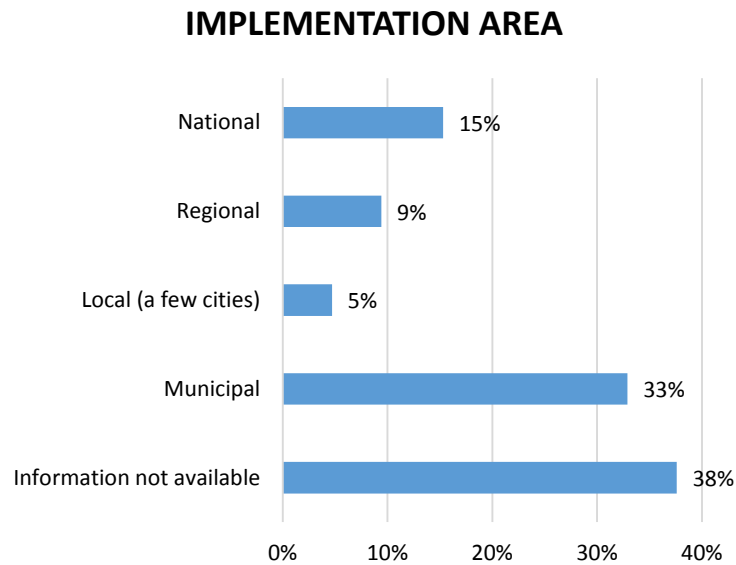
Figure 10 School years of implementation



4.1.6 Implementation area

As it can be seen from the figure 12, the major part of intervention programs included in this report were conducted in a municipal area (i.e, either a city, or a town), whereas, 15.3% were conducted on a national scale. Further, 9.4% were carried out in different Italian Regions and 4.7% in a few towns or cities. Unfortunately, we do not have any information about the implementation area of several programs (37.6%)⁷

Figure 11 Geographic area where the programs were implemented



4.1.7 Funding

In total, 81.2% of programs received some source of financial support. In most cases (65%), the programs were financed by European actions (i.e., Daphne; Erasmus Plus and CORDIS). 16.5% of the programs were financed by Public Italian Funding. Two interventions, Notrap and “Kiva” were financed by Italian Foundations and Savings Bank, while the remaining projects were financed by the National Funding for Childhood and Adolescence established by the 285 Law. The information about financial support was not available in 19% of cases.

Average funding for 16 projects receiving Italian funding was 69417 euros (Min: 4286 - Max: 295584; *ds*: 76579.79).

The average European funding for the 37 projects reporting this information was 53249 euros (Min: 4190 - Max: 299058 ; *ds*: 74768.69). However, the major part of European databases included information about the total funding, received by all partners. Therefore, the average European funding is referred to the cost of the whole project (i.e., for all partners together, rather than only for Italy). We had information about the total European funding received by Italy, for one program only. The program was retrieved from CORDIS and it is named: *eCIRCUS - Education through Characters with emotional-Intelligence and Role-playing Capabilities that Understand Social interaction* and received in total 61267 euros (this sum was not included in the average presented before).

4.2 Evaluated Anti- Bullying interventions

We found that only 13.1% of programs included in this report showed an evaluation (see Appendix 2 for further details). Despite it was found that some of the programs included in this report went through some kind of evaluation, only 9 programs presented more detailed information about it. In particular, 8 of them presented either a report or a scientific article, whereas for one program (Tabby Trip in Europe – Threat Assessment of Bullying Behavior in Internet) information about the evaluation process were retrieved on the program website. Unfortunately, the reports were not detailed. Therefore, several information were missing.

Table 9 Evaluated intervention programs

Name of the program	Short description
Notrap!	The program uses a peer-led model to tackle bullying and cyberbullying among students aged 14-18
"Kiva"	The program aims at tackling bullying by motivating bystanders to stand up for their victimized peers and consider bullying as unacceptable behavior
GenerazioniConnesse (Safer Internet Center)	The general objective is to ensure that the Internet becomes a trusted environment for children, including improving their digital competences while increasing security and safety through the implementation of safeguard measures. Target Group of the initiative are children and adolescents between the ages of 6 – 18 years besides parents, teachers, educators and youth professionals. The Consortium envisages a number of wider-ranging activities focused to raise awareness among young people and professionals to make the most of the potential offered by internet while providing the needed safety. It'll also make available renewed and strengthen functions of existing services such as Helpline and Hotline aiming at supporting parents and children to tackle with harmful content/conduct while using online technologies and to gather information from the public face to illegal content detection, respectively.
Tabby Trip in Europe – Threat Assessment of Bullying Behavior in Internet	The goal of this program was raising awareness about cyberbullying, sexting and cyber threats in general. A toolkit and a manual were given respectively to children and teachers.
ABSAE - Addressing Sexual Bullying across Europe	The goal of the program was to investigate and raise awareness about direct and vicarious impact of sexual bullying among youth aged 13-18. Students were empowered in recognizing and

	addressing sexual bullying.
School-based expressive writing intervention	The goal was using expressive writing in order to reduce internalizing and post-traumatic stress symptoms associated with peer victimization in a sample of early adolescents.
1)Bulli di Sapone, Un approccio Ironico al bullismo. 2)Bulli di sapone - La pubblicità- (1)Soap bullies: An ironic approach to bullying; 2)Soap bullies: Advertisement)	The program aimed at raising awareness about bullying and cyberbullying among students in middle and high school. The main goal was letting students reflect upon the best strategy to contrast bullying. In the first edition, high school students created a cartoon bubble about bullying and raised awareness among middle school students. In the next edition, they raised awareness about bullying among middle school students and created a booklet about bullying.
M.V.B. Mi voglio bene (I love myself)	The program aimed at contrasting bullying; racism; substance abuse and eating disorders among children and youth.
Su la testa (Raise your head)	The program aimed at promoting psychosocial well-being and social inclusion of immigrant youth. Further goals were contrasting bullying and school-dropout, and improving the school climate.

4.2.1 Characteristics of Evaluated programs

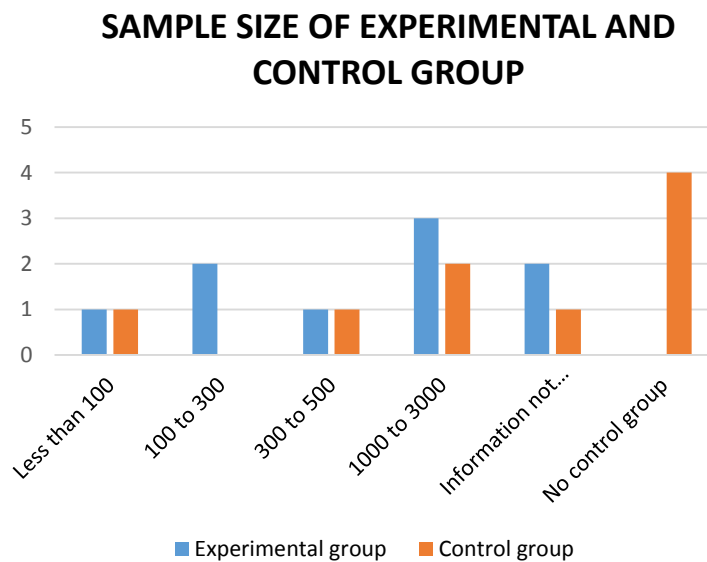
Findings about evaluation design indicated that 2 records included only post-test evaluation for the experimental group, whereas 3 interventions tested the efficacy by a pre and post-test evaluation with experimental group only. Three programs tested the efficacy by pre and post-test also involving a control group. Randomized control trial was used only by one program.

Table 10 Evaluated programs

Evaluation Type	Name of the program
Post-test evaluation experimental group only	- 1) Tabby Trip in Europe 2) Bulli di sapone: Un approccio ironico al bullismo. Soap Bullies: An Ironic Approach to Bullying
Pre-test and post-test evaluation -experimental group only	3) ABSAE - Addressing Sexual Bullying Across Europe 4) Mi voglio bene - I love Myself 5) Safer Internet Center - GenerazioniConnesse 6) Su la testa – Raise your head
Pre-test and post-test experimental and control group	7) Notrap! 8) School-based expressive writing intervention
Randomized control trial	9) “Kiva”

It was found that one program included an experimental group of less than 100 students; two programs included an experimental group of 100 to 300 students in two cases; one program included an experimental group of 300 to 500 students; three programs included an experimental group of 1000 to 3000 students. The information was not available for two programs. Regarding the control group, one program included a control group of less than 100 students; one program included a control group of 300 to 500 students and two programs included a control group of 1000 to 3000 students. Information was not available for one project, whereas four projects had no control group (figure 13).

Figure 12 Sample size of the control and experimental group

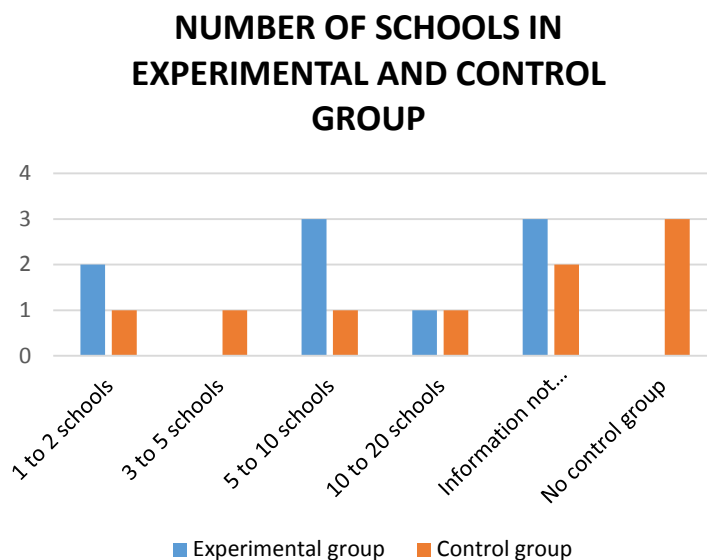


We found that the experimental group included 1 to 2 schools in 2 programs (School-based expressive writing intervention; Su la testa); in 2 programs the experimental group included 5 to 10 schools (KiVa; M.V.B. Mi voglio bene) and one program included an experimental group with 10 to 20 schools (Generazioni Connesse) Information about the remaining programs were not available (Tabby Trip in Europe; ABSAE – Addressing Sexual Bullying Across Europe; Bulli di Sapone – Un approccio ironico al bullismo).

The control group included 1 to 2 schools for one program (School-based expressive writing intervention) and 3 to 5 schools for the Notrap! program. The program KiVa included a control group involving 5 to 10 schools and the program Generazioni Connesse included a control group and involved 10 to 20 schools. Information about the presence of a control group was not available for 2 programs. , whereas Finally, 3 programs did not have a control group (Su la testa; M.V.B. Mi voglio

bene; Bulli di sapone - Un approccio ironico al bullismo), while information was not available for 2 programs (ABSAE – Addressing Sexual Bullying Across Europe; Tabby Trip in Europe).

Figure 13 Number of schools in the experimental and control group



4.2.2 Efficacy of Evaluated programs

Only a few of the evaluated interventions reported significant positive effects on the target variables: three found a decrease in bullying (i.e., KiVa; Notrap! and) two in victimization (i.e., KiVa; Notrap!); only one on cyberbullying and cybervictimization (i.e., Notrap!). 6 out of 9 underlined positive effects on other related variables such as: awareness of online risks; internalized symptoms; racism and social exclusion (i.e., KiVa; Notrap! Generazioni Connesse; M-V-B. – Mi voglio bene; School-based expressive writing intervention; ABSAE – Addressing Bullying across Europe)

Specifically, only “Kiva” and “NoTrap!” programs reported significant positive effects both on bullying and victimization. Additionally, only “NoTrap!” found a significant decrease in cyberbullying and cybervictimization for the experimental group.

Table 11 Significant positive effects on the listed variables underlined by the evaluation of the interventions

	Bullying	Victimization	Cyberbullying	Cybervictimization	Other Behaviours
Information not available	1	1	1	1	1
Not evaluated	1	1	0	0	0
No effect found	4	5	7	7	3
Significant positive effect	3	2	1	1	5

We also found that only 2 of the evaluated programs (“Kiva” and Notrap!) included both Universal (i.e, oriented at all children) and Indicated Actions (i.e., specifically oriented at children involved in bullying) .

Findings of the present report showed that the “Kiva” program had positive significant effect on bullying and victimization, which were found to decrease in the sample of children included in the experimental group. The same findings were found for the “NoTrap!”program, which decreased bullying and victimization, as well as cyberbullying and cybervictimization. The program M.V.B.- I love Myself also found a reduction in bullying; however detailed information about the evaluation process were not available. The other evaluated programs did not find a significant reduction in bullying and victimization, most likely because bullying and victimization were not the main focus of the intervention. For instance, the expressive writing program had the goal of investigating the effects of an expressive writing intervention on internalizing symptoms and post-traumatic stress disorder. This program found that effective coping strategies improved in the experimental group. However, changes in bullying and victimization were not measured.

In relation to this, it is important to note that several evaluated programs found a positive effect on behaviors other than bullying and cyberbullying. For instance, the “NoTrap!”program found a reduction in internalizing symptoms and an increase of effective coping strategies; while “Kiva” found that pro-bullying attitudes decreased, while pro-victim attitudes increased. Further, GenerazioniConnesse – Safer Internet Center (SIC) found that awareness about online risks increased among youth. Further, the program ABSAE -Addressing Sexual Bullying across Europe increased awareness about sexual bullying among youth and professionals. Finally, the program M.V. B. – I love myself, decreased racism and social exclusion, as well as alcohol and drug consumption.

Table 12 Components included in each intervention program

<i>Name of the program</i>	Components
<i>KiVa</i>	Universal and Indicated actions
<i>Notrap!</i>	Universal and Indicated actions
<i>Generazioni Connesse</i>	Universal actions
<i>Tabby Trip in Europe</i>	Universal actions
<i>ABSAE – Addressing bullying across Europe</i>	Universal actions
<i>School-based expressive writing intervention</i>	Universal actions
<i>Bulli di Sapone – Un approccio ironico al bullismo (Soap bullies, An ironic approach to bullying)</i>	Universal actions
<i>M.V.B. – Mi voglio bene (I love myself)</i>	Universal actions
<i>Su la testa (Raise your head)</i>	Universal actions

All programs were evaluated by Internal rather than Independent Institutions (i.e., those that also carried out the program).

4.3 Good practices: Main findings from evidence-based programs and national scale programs

In the next paragraph, we will present more detailed information about the evaluated programs. In particular, we will offer an overview of good practices and effective components, together with the mechanisms that contribute to decrease bullying.

4.3.1 Evidence-based intervention programs

In the following section, we will present in details the two evidence-based programs rigorously evaluated in Italy (“NoTrap!” and “KiVa”). The articles found presented the efficacy of each program. Three studies were about the “NoTrap!” program and one study was about the effectiveness of “KiVa” in Italy. In relation to the “NoTrap!” program, the paper included in this report showed the effectiveness of the first and second edition of the program. However, for the goal of the present report, we will focus upon the updated third edition of the program. We will briefly present the characteristics of each intervention program and afterwards, the main findings about efficacy reported in each study.

4.3.1.1 The “NoTrap!” program

The “NoTrap!” program is an evidence-based anti-bullying program with a strong theoretical basis and based on a peer-education model. Peer education, namely, education of young people by their peers is based on the assumption that during adolescence, the peer group becomes a remarkable source of influence, providing independence, recognition and identity. Therefore, peer educators are trained in order to assume a role of responsibility and provide support to their peers and act as positive models for them. Potential strengths of this model are multiple, especially with teenagers and adolescents: 1) It is easier for adolescents to identify themselves with their peers, rather than with adults (e.g., teachers); 2) Peers are considered as a plausible source of influence. Therefore, peer educators could be able to positively affect their peers' behavior; 3) Peer education also empowers peer educators and increases their self-efficacy and sense of responsibility. Peer-led intervention models have been successfully adopted in many areas, of prevention from health intervention, to bullying prevention. The program encourages children to stand up for their victimized peers, by taking into account recent findings on traditional and cyberbullying. The activities led by peer educators in their own classes are based upon cooperative work with the other classmates and specifically focused on empathy and problem solving, thus targeting the point of view of the victim and the bystander in order to address the processes that can lead to a change in the role of these figures.

4.3.1.1.1. How does the “NoTrap!” work? The “NoTrap!” actions

“NoTrap!” (Acronym for "Not fall into the trap") program aims at contrasting bullying and cyberbullying among adolescents aged 14-18 through the involvement of different actors of school community: teachers through an initial training, the group-class, the peer educators and the whole community (Palladino, Nocentini & Menesini, 2015).

The program is carried out in two main phases: (1) the first one is experts-led: in all classes involved psychologists stimulate all students to reflect upon bullying and cyberbullying (this is the so-called “awareness meeting” launch phase of the program). At the end of this meeting, four or five students in each class voluntarily decide to become peer educators, assuming a more involved role in the program. These self-selected students participate in a specific training. A training for teachers is also included at this stage of the program; 2) the second phase is peer-led: the trained peer educators lead two cooperative activities in their group-class focusing on the point of view of the victim and of the bystander, deepening empathic feelings and problem solving strategies. Besides, peer educators give their support online, anonymously to all adolescents who may request help on the webpage of the program.

4.3.1.1.2. Efficacy of the “NoTrap!” Program

The “NoTrap!” program has been evaluated across three studies (Menesini, Nocentini & Palladino, 2012; Palladino, Nocentini & Menesini, 2012; Palladino, Nocentini & Menesini, 2016). In the most recent evaluation (Palladino et al., 2016) based on the updated version of the program, two quasi-experimental trials were conducted. In trial 1, the control group included 171 students ($M_{age} = 15.28$; $ds: .15$), while the experimental group included 451 students ($M_{age} = 14.79$; $ds: 1.12$). In trial 2, the control group included 227 students ($M_{age} = 15.57$; $ds: .88$), while the experimental group included 234 adolescents ($M_{age} = 15.60$; $ds: .92$).

The following self-report questionnaires were administered:

- *Florence Bullying and Victimization Scale* (Palladino et al., 2016): This questionnaire was administered in order to assess how often students bullied their peers (i.e, bullying subscale) and were victimized themselves (i.e, victimization subscale). An abbreviated version of including 10 items regarding physical, verbal and indirect bullying and victimization was administered. Sample items were as follows: "I threatened someone" for bullying; "I was threatened by someone" for victimization. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale (1=never; 5=several times per week).
- *Florence Cyberbullying/Cybervictimization Scales*: This self-report instrument consists of two scales, one assessing how often students have acted as perpetrator of cyberbullying (i.e., cyberbullying scale) and one assessing how often students have been victimized online (i.e., cybervictimization scale). Each scale consists of 14 items. Students rated on a five-point Likert scale how often in the past couple of months they experienced each behavior (0=never; 4=several times). Sample items for cyberbullying and cybervictimization respectively, were as follows: "I sent emails with threats and insults"; "I received emails with threats and insults").

In both trials a significant reduction in bullying, victimization, cyberbullying and cybervictimization was found in the experimental group while in the control group there is a substantial stability over the year. The decrease was similar for boys and girls. The positive effects are still present at the follow-up assessment: in the experimental group, six months after the end of the intervention, there are still lower rates of bullying and cyberbullying. Findings indicated that the “NoTrap!” program is effective in reducing around 20% of bullying and cyberbullying incidents.

4.3.1.2 “Kiva” anti-bullying program

The “Kiva” anti-bullying intervention program (Kärnä et al., 2011) aims at enhancing anti-bullying attitudes among students aged 6-13 and older. “Kiva” was originally developed in Finland by Salmivalli and colleagues. Recently, it has been implemented in other European countries, such as Italy. Similarly to the “NoTrap!” program, “Kiva” has a strong theoretical basis. In particular, bullying is

operationalized as a group phenomenon, in which students are involved with different roles (Salmivalli, et al., 1996). Beyond the bully and the victim, there are other students involved directly or indirectly in bullying. Indeed, the bully can count on the support of other children who directly help him/her (i.e., assistant of the bully), and on those who laugh and cheers when bullying happens (i.e., follower of the bully). However, the vast majority witnesses bullying passively, while a few children help the victim. “Kiva” adopts a whole school approach, meaning that the intervention is targeted at all students and classrooms in the school. Hence, the program targets all children and adolescents, rather than only the bully and the victim. The goal is changing the school-climate, encouraging children to consider bullying as unacceptable behavior. Therefore, when bullying occurs, all students should feel responsible and help their victimized peers. Overall, “Kiva” is based on the idea that the way peer bystanders (i.e., children who witness bullying) react to bullying is crucial for perpetuating, or stopping bullying.

4.3.1.2.1. How does “Kiva” work? The “Kiva” actions

“Kiva” (an acronym for the Finnish words *Kiusaamista Vastaan*, "against bullying". The Finnish adjective “Kiva” means "nice") is based on teacher education and requires the commitment of all school personnel. “Kiva” has two general goals: to prevent bullying through universal actions (e.g., targeted at the whole school) and to intervene through indicated actions to handle acute cases of bullying. Teachers have a crucial role in the program, and are trained for preventing and contrasting bullying. Specifically, “Kiva” includes a series of students' lessons delivered by teachers. The main aim of the student lessons are to raise awareness of the role played by bystanders during bullying situations, to increase empathy towards the victim and provide students with safe strategies to defend their victimized peers.

All materials are highly structured, including lessons for children and parents' guide. “Kiva” also includes classroom discussions; short videos about bullying; role-playing exercise and group work.

“Kiva” also includes specific actions (i.e., Indicated actions) aimed at tackling the single cases of bullying. The “Kiva” team, consisting of three teachers, or other school personnel in each participating school, carries out indicated actions. The main task of the “Kiva” team is tackling the cases of bullying, together with the classroom teachers. Specifically, the program aims at encouraging bystanders to consider bullying as an unacceptable behavior and at standing up for their victimized peers (Kärnä, Voeten, Poskiparta & Salmivalli, 2010). In addition, challenging the bullies to think how they should help the victims has also being demonstrated to be effective in the reduction of bullying (Garandeau, Poskiparta & Salmivalli, 2014). Since the implementation of “Kiva” in 2009, bullying in Finnish primary schools has been reduced of 40-50% (Salmivalli et al., 2012).

4.3.1.2.2 Efficacy of “Kiva” in Italy

A recent publication by Nocentini and Menesini (2016) showed the evidence of efficacy of the “Kiva” anti-bullying program in Italy. The deep structure of “Kiva” remained unchanged in the Italian version of “Kiva”. Modifications involved only the surface structure (i.e, structure of the “Kiva” materials) and

the implementation model (e.g., schedule of implementation; online component was excluded due to laptop unavailability in most schools).

The effects of “Kiva” were evaluated in a randomized control trial (RCT) including 2042 students from primary and middle school. The experimental group was composed by 1039 students, while 1003 students were included in the control group (M_{age} of students in grade 4: 8.8; ds : 0.43; M_{age} of students in grade 6: 10.93; ds : 0.48).

The following self-report measures were administered to children:

- *Florence Bullying and Victimization Scale* (Palladino et al., 2016): This questionnaire was administered in order to assess how often children bullied their peers (i.e, bullying subscale) and were victimized themselves (i.e, victimization subscale). The instrument included 14 items for each subscale, regarding physical (four items), verbal (seven items) and indirect (three items) bullying and victimization. Sample items were as follows: "I threatened someone" for bullying; "I was threatened by someone" for victimization. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale (1=never; 5=several times per week).
- *The questionnaire on Attitudes towards Bullying* (Menesini et al., 2003) was administered to assess pro-bullying and pro-victim attitudes. Students were asked to express their degree of agreement with 6 items regarding pro-bullying (e.g., "It's ok to call some kids nasty names") attitudes and six items regarding pro-victim attitudes (e.g., "One should try to help the victimized children"). Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale (0=completely disagree; 4=completely agree).
- *Empathy toward the victim*: In order to measure empathy toward the victim, a seven-item scale was administered (Pöyhönen, Kärnä & Salmivalli, 2008). A sample item was: "When a bullied child is sad, I feel sad as well". Students rated on a five-point Likert scale, how often the statements of each item were true for them (0=never; 4=always).

Results showed that “Kiva” is particularly effective among fourth graders, while findings were weaker among sixth graders. In particular, bullying (i.e., aggressive behavior towards other children), victimization (i.e., being victimized by other children), and pro-bullying attitudes (i.e., supporting and being in favor of bullying) decreased, while empathy and pro-victim attitudes (i.e, being supportive to the victim) increased among students in the fourth grade. Bullying, victimization and pro-bullying attitudes decreased also among students in grade 6, though the effects were smaller. Overall, in grade 4, from pre-test to post-test there was a reduction of 51% in bullying and victimization, while in grade 6, victimization decreased of 13%, while bullying decreased of 42%.

4.3.2 Intervention programs carried out on a national scale

The present review showed that a few anti-bullying intervention programs were carried out at a national level. They were mostly media campaign aimed at preventing online risks and cyberbullying. In the following section, we will present the National programs¹.

Una vita da Social (“Living Social”) is a program coordinated by MIUR (Ministry of Education) and Polizia di Stato (Italian Police). This program has the goal of raising awareness about online risks and cyberbullying among children and youth aged 8-19 and adults (parents and teachers). In particular, the program includes three main actions: 1) A 60 minutes meeting for raising awareness among students; 2) A 60 minutes meeting for raising awareness among teachers; 3) A 60 minutes meeting for raising awareness among parents. Each meeting is focused on online risks; cyberbullying and social network use. In the meetings with parents, the focus is also on the importance of talking with children about online risks. In the meetings with teachers, the focus is also on talking with students and carrying out activities related to prevention of online risks.

The program is advertised through a Facebook page and a branded van that reaches the schools with the aim of raising students' interest for the program itself. Further, booklets, posters, flyers and videos have been created. Up to date, the program involved more than 500,000 students per each school year (since 2013) in primary and secondary Italian schools.

During the Safer Internet Day (i.e., a celebration that takes place every year in February to raise awareness about online risks and make the Internet a safer and better place for children and young people), meetings and debates with adults and children are organized.

Another national media campaign was carried out by the No-profit organization ECPAT Italia (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism). The media campaign was called **“Be happy, be safe!”** It aimed at preventing online risks among youth. A booklet about online risks and cyberbullying was provided to parents.

Similarly, the program **“Io proteggo i bambini”** (*I protect children*) carried out by the no-profit organization Terres des Hommes aimed at raising awareness about online risks among children and adults. In particular, Terres des Homme and the European Institute of Design of Turin produced a booklet for children *Alice nel paese di Internet* (“Alice in Internet land”) aimed at raising awareness about online risks.

An Italian no-profit Organization, Telefono Azzurro, carried out an important media campaign called **“Europe's Anti-bullying Campaign”** that was financed by the Daphne program. In particular, it aimed at raising awareness about bullying among youth in secondary school. An online survey was carried

¹ The program Generazioni Connesse – Safer Internet Center (SIC) will be presented in the next paragraph, as it is the only National program that was evaluated.

out in order to collect information about bullying. Further, an educational tool for professionals was developed, based on the findings of the surveys conducted in each partner country. In particular, based on these findings, three tools were created: 1) A website including information about bullying, for children, parents and teachers; 2) Videos with various scenarios and outcomes that were used as a teaching tool in schools and encouraged discussions about bullying with children; 3) An awareness campaign that involved television, radio and printed advertisements was carried out to raise public awareness about bullying.

Another important program carried out by Telefono Azzurro was ***Fermiamo il bullismo*** (“Let's stop bullying”), which established a dedicated helpline and chatline for help requests regarding bullying situations. In particular, children can use the helpline and the chatline and ask for experts' help and advice about their involvement in bullying.

Despite only one of the programs presented above is systematically evaluated (i.e, Safer Internet Center), overall these programs have the merit of reaching children, adolescents and adults at a national level.

4.3.2.1 GenerazioniConnesse – Safer Internet Center Italy

The intervention program ***GenerazioniConnesse – Safer Internet Center (SIC)*** is coordinated by MIUR with the partnership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Postal Police, National Ombudsperson for Childhood and Adolescence, University of Florence, University of Rome La Sapienza, Save the Children Italia Onlus, SOS – Il Telefono Azzurro Onlus, Social Cooperative E.D.I., Movimento Difesa del Cittadino, Agenzia Dire and Skuola.net. The program is addressed primarily to children and adolescents aged 6 – 18 years old; however parents, educators, teachers and youth professionals are involved too. The general goal of the project is promoting the right condition for making the Internet safer for children and adolescents.

SIC delivers several actions: awareness and information for schools; developing a communication campaign; actions to contrast illegal material online, with the support of two hotline services; an innovative helpline for youth using an integrative platform that can be accessed via telephone, chat, etc. A National Advisory Board has been established, including several members (e.g., Facebook; Fastweb; Google; MTV, etc.) that collaborate with the aim of preventing online risks.

As shown above, SIC includes several components, which constitute a strength of this program. More specifically, the program includes an online platform containing information about online risks and face-to-face workshops. Further, the program includes awareness raising meetings for parents and students, as well as online teacher training, aimed at promoting a positive use of ITCs. Schools are actively involved in the definition of the E-policy (i.e., a protocol to handle cases of online abuse).

Informative materials, such as booklets and flyers for children and adolescents are also created. Further, the program also uses peer-education in order to prevent online risks among youth. The hotline services have the goal of reporting online inappropriate contents, racist or xenophobic abuse. Further, they cooperate with the Postal Police in order to identify and remove illegal online contents. The helpline uses an integrative platform and this comprehensive system respond to any children's request of advice or help. Finally, SIC disseminated its action through a communication campaign driven by traditional media, such as TV, radio, and printed materials, as well as through online channels, such as social networks.

4.3.2.2 Efficacy of GenerazioniConnesse – Safer Internet Center

The information about effectiveness of the SIC program have been drawn from the Final Monitoring and Evaluation Report (unpublished) of the second edition of the program (SIC II), carried out in the school year 2015/2016.

A wide sample of schools (N=828) in Italy filled out a self- evaluation questionnaire (QAV). The QAV included several items regarding four main aspects: 1) Knowledge, ability, use of ICT in education and positive use of ICT; 2) Values and Attitudes of the school (e.g., respect; cooperation between adults and students); 3) Risks related to not-informed ICT use and prevention of online risks; 4) Accidents and abuse related to risky online behaviors and school ability to detect, manage and monitor online abuse. Schools were classified according to the score obtained to the QAV. Thereafter, they were included in the intervention and participated in different activities, depending on the score obtained to the QAV (i.e. different dosage of intervention). In particular, the following activities were delivered to schools with low scores: 1) Awareness raising meeting for students and parents; 2) teachers training; 3) Access to the online platform for support in developing an E-policy for positive and safe use of ICTs at school. Beyond the abovementioned activities, some schools with the lowest score (6) were selected to participate in a i.e., peer-education training. Schools with low score on the QAV filled in an E-Policy, namely a protocol to handle cases of online abuse. Schools with highest score could access to online resources in order to define their own E-policy.

In terms of efficacy of interventions at the school level, during the school year the schools were able to improve their weaknesses. In particular, it was found an improvement in students' perception of teachers' ICTs use (during the school activities) and a decrease of risks derived from unsafe ICTs use. For the ability of schools to prevent and handle problematic situations, an improvement was found for the schools that reported low scores in the QAV and that filled out the E-Policy. Schools highly committed with the project - participating at the trainings and producing the E-policy- had the higher improvement compared to the others. Further, an increase in relation to the awareness of Telefono Azzurro Helpline, was found for the schools more committed to the project. Overall, these results underlined the efficacy of the project in enhancing awareness and supporting schools weaknesses.

An improvement in relation to ICTs safer use was found, as well as an improvement in their positive use of ICTs. Further, an improvement in coping strategies with online risk was also found. After the

trainings teachers and parents perceived to have a good knowledge mainly on aspects related to ICTs opportunities, risks and how to prevent and deal with them.

Further, an improved awareness about ICTs safe use was found after the Safer Internet Day, the most important event which catalysed students' attention. Data confirmed that the event was effective in spreading information and raising awareness about the program. In terms of impact, adolescents, more aware about the project components and media campaigns, reported higher level of confidence in their own perception of the online risks and in their ability to prevent and to deal with them.

5 DISCUSSION

Before discussing the findings of this report, it is important to note that the databases consulted for this work did not include a report about the different programs. Further, the vast majority of intervention programs were not evaluated.

The findings of this report showed that several anti-bullying programs were carried out in Italy in the last ten years. We found that only a few of them included a large sample of students and were carried out on a national scale. Further, only two of them were based on scientific evidence (efficacy).¹

Importantly, a very limited rate (12%) of intervention programs included a standardized protocol, whereas 24% of them included standardized materials, such as booklets for students, parents and teachers. We suggest that future intervention programs should adopt a standardized protocol and materials, as they provide participants to the program with clear guidelines to carry out the activities included in the program.

In relation to the length of the programs, in terms of intensity of their duration per each school year, we found that the majority (54%) of them were carried out for the whole school year. We believe that this is a positive finding and that future intervention programs should be implemented for the whole school year, rather than for a short time. As documented in the literature, in order to be effective, interventions should be carried out intensively (Ttofi & Farrington, 2009). Indeed, intensive intervention programs might be able to consistently change children's attitudes and behavior.

Regarding the number of components, we found that the majority of programs in this report (37%) included only one component, whereas only 2% included six components. However, we also found that 13% of programs included four components; 12% included three components and 14% included two components. Therefore, a consistent part of them included from two to four components. However, we highlight the need of including different components in combination, the most effective intervention programs (e.g., "Kiva" and Notrap!) included several components at the same time (e.g., raising awareness among students and adults; psycho-educative activities; peer education; teacher training).

Findings of this report showed that a small number of intervention programs included indicated action (i.e., measures oriented towards children involved in bullying). In particular, we found that evidence-based programs such as “Kiva” and “Notrap!” included indicated actions, such as individual and group discussion between KiVa teams (i.e., three teachers, or other school personnel), classroom teachers and students involved in bullying. Furthermore, also national programs such as *Fermiamo il bullismo* – Let's stop bullying, included indicated actions, such as a chatline and a helpline for children involved in bullying. However, none of the indicated actions were evaluated.

The Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR), recently underlined the need to undertake a standardized protocol to address bullying in schools (Menesini & Nocentini, 2016). In this respect, Menesini and Nocentini (2016) suggested a series of actions that should be taken in order to implement a standardized protocol for tackling bullying situations at school. The protocol is expected to involve schools, local institutions (i.e., schools; police; no-profit organizations) and a team of teachers trained to tackle bullying. In emergency situations, the team of trained teachers would handle the bullying case. Depending on the severity, the bullying cases could be handled by a team of experts, established within the school or sent by local services.

5.1. General Indications about mechanisms of change

Although our results can be affected by the several missing information, we can draw some conclusions from our review. The programs included in this report adopted different methodologies and components (e.g. awareness raising; psycho-educative activities) and were mostly carried out in school. However, only a few programs presented a variety of different components in combination among them (e.g., awareness raising for students, parents and teachers; psycho-educational activities, etc.). The majority of programs lasted for a short time (i.e, one year or less), while only a minority had many editions. Unfortunately, a small minority of them went through a systematic evaluation (9 out of 85).

Despite these limitations, it is important to highlight the possible mechanisms and drivers of change that can be responsible of the proven effectiveness of some of the interventions included in this report:

- 1) *The theoretical framework*: effective programs are theory driven, i.e., based on a theoretical framework that is scientifically sound. For instance, the “Kiva” program is based upon the assumption that bystanders have a key role in stopping bullying. Therefore, they are encouraged to stop bullying and feel responsible for their peers in distress. “NoTrap!” is based on similar assumptions and promote the role of peers educators as possible agents of change in terms of standing by the victims and helping her/his in case of need. *From a theoretical point of view*, each phase has to be conceived in order to address a specific aim, and to change specific mechanisms responsible for bullying and cyberbullying. In relation to this, many authors have

underlined the social and group aspects of bullying; therefore, an ecological approach, targeting the multiple contexts that affect school-bullying, might prove most effective in order to counteract these phenomena. Specifically, an anti-bullying intervention should address the whole school community, the peer group and the individuals involved. Following this evidence, “Kiva”, “NoTrap!” and “GenerazioniConnesse” (SIC) involve the whole school and the community at different levels, teachers and class-group and those students who have been involved in the incidents.

- 2) *The whole school approach and the changing of school climate.* Programs such as “Kiva” and “NoTrap!” are meant to be part of the school's ongoing anti-bullying efforts, rather than lasting for a short time-span. Through “Kiva” lessons, teachers have the central role of supporting children's ability to contrast bullying. In order to do so, teachers are trained through a two days face-to-face training and receive support by experts during the whole school year. “NoTrap!” and “GenerazioniConnesse” also involve teachers, head-teachers, families and other members of the school community. Even if the project is focused on students and peer educators, the school community should be committed and support the project. Altogether, these actions can improve the school climate (i.e., improve the relationships among students and among students and teachers and help students to understand that bullying is not accepted).
- 3) *The ability to change attitudes towards bullying and foster empathic concern towards the victim.* Empathy is a key element both for “Kiva” and “NoTrap!” programs. Indeed, peer educators, as well as the other students in the classroom are trained to pay attention to others' feelings and to take care of their victimized peers. Further, peer educators are seen as positive models who have a high status within the peer group. We know that in both bullying and cyberbullying processes, bystanders have an important role, as they can reinforce the bully and increase the negative impact on the victim, or, conversely, they can stop the bullying and defend the victim. However, the majority of bystanders usually do not do anything when they see a bullying or cyberbullying episode. Many studies tried to explain this passive behaviour on the basis of the so-called “bystander effect” a model developed by Latané and Darley in 1970. According to these studies, failure to help the victim in school or online depends on the failure in one of the five phases of the model: (1) Noticing that something is going on; (2) Interpreting the situation as an emergency; (3) Feeling a certain degree of responsibility; (4) Knowing how to cope with the situation ; (5) Implementing the action choice. Both “Kiva” and “NoTrap!” encourage bystanders' activation in each of the phases. In particular, in order to help students to notice the episode, these programs aim to increase students' awareness of what is bullying and cyberbullying, helping youth to recognize the problem and to understand the differences between bullying and positive group behavior. In this way, they will be able to identify the phenomenon, and to distinguish it from other similar patterns of interaction between peers. In order to help them to interpret the situation as an emergency, in each phase, victim's emotions and the possible long-term effects of

bullying are stressed. This allows the intervention to enhance the level of empathy toward the victim, and to recognise an emergency in a bullying or a cyberbullying episode. In order to increase the sense of responsibility, from the first awareness meeting, the two programs stimulate reflection on the consequences of the bystanders' passive behaviour. Students understand that if they do not do anything, they reinforce the bullies and increase the victim's suffering. Besides, thanks to different strategies - the peer education model, and students' role as agents of change in the class – and to teachers indication of what can be accepted or not – both programs promote adolescents' sense of responsibility. Bystanders often do not intervene because they do not know what they can do. In order to decrease the feeling of powerlessness, and increase perceived competence, in both programs, but more clearly in “NoTrap!” the intervention deals extensively with adaptive coping strategies in the case of bullying and cyberbullying phenomena. These strategies are focused on the victims' and bystanders' points of view and on the best strategy to intervene.

- 4) *The standardized materials and protocols*: effective interventions adopt standardized materials, such as booklets for students; manual for teachers; containing instructions about the activities to carry out with children; parents' guide including information about bullying and cyberbullying.
- 5) *The inclusion of several components*: effective programs include universal and indicated actions at the same time. The first are directed towards all students in the classroom. The assumption is that bullying is a group phenomenon, therefore, it should be tackled by targeting all children (i.e., bystanders are encouraged to stand up for the victim). Indicated actions are specific for children directly involved in bullying. The goal is solving the conflicts by discussing with experts and a team of teachers in the school. This is consistent with Fox and colleagues (Fox, Ttofi & Farrington, 2012), who found that the most effective anti-bullying programs presented several components, including parent training or meetings and teacher training.
- 6) *The intensity, duration and the staff commitment are highly relevant*: the most effective interventions are intended to be part of the school policy. Therefore, they last for several years, rather than being limited in time. This is consistent with a meta-analysis by Ttofi and Farrington (2011), who highlighted that two aspects of program implementation, such as duration and intensity were highly significant in decreasing both bullying and victimization.

Given to their strength points, we suggest that future programs should include the abovementioned aspects.

5.1 Future directions for the implementation of intervention programs

Overall, we found only two evidence-based programs (i.e., “Kiva” and “Notrap!”). Therefore, intervention programs included in the present report are far from being based on scientific evidence. We suggest that future intervention programs should pay more attention to evaluation aspects and scientific literature about bullying. In addition, future programs should be inspired by theoretical framework that may explain the mechanisms of behavioral changes.

The majority of programs included in this report were not systematically evaluated. We suggest that future intervention programs should include an evaluation process. This would offer the possibility to highlight the most effective components and implementation features.

However, this limitation might be due to the fact that in most cases evaluation is not required by the institutions giving financial support. In addition, in many cases financial support does not cover the evaluation costs. We suggest that more attention should be paid to evaluation, giving the important implications related to the effectiveness of anti-bullying programs.

It was also found that a few programs targeted also children living in disadvantaged suburbs. Further, only a limited number of programs targeted parents. We believe that future intervention programs should pay attention to the micro-system (i.e., family) as well as to the macro-system (i.e., social context where children live).

Unfortunately, some of the evaluated programs did not include a report documenting the evaluation process, while in other cases, the reports did not include detailed information about the evaluation process. For instance, for one program (i.e., Tabby trip in Europe) it was not possible to obtain a report; therefore information about evaluation were retrieved on the program website.

It is worthy to note that in 100% of cases, the same institutions that implemented the programs were also responsible for the evaluation process. We suggest that future intervention programs should be evaluated by external and independent institutions. This would allow to establish whether interventions are still effective and sustainable when the developer is not involved (Flay et al., 2005; Gootfredson et al., 2015).

Despite the abovementioned limitations, it is important to note that a growing attention has been paid to the problem of bullying in Italy, in the last years. Although the vast majority of programs were not evaluated, it is likely that at least some of them (e.g., National Media Campaign) contributed to raise public awareness about bullying and that some others conducted in smaller context, were effective in contrasting bullying.

Despite much has been done about bullying prevention, we believe that much can be done. In relation to this, it is important to raise awareness of the institutions about the problem of bullying and its related social costs (i.e., psychological problems related to bullying and victimization).

5.2 Strengths and limitations of the present report

As pointed out above, it was not possible to retrieve a report for several programs included in this work. This weak point inevitably affects the findings presented in this report. Unfortunately, an all-inclusive database including all anti-bullying programs carried out in Italy is missing.

Nevertheless, this work offers an overview of scientific and grey literature about anti-bullying interventions carried out in Italy in recent years. This work contributes to scientific literature and it might give important knowledge to stakeholders and policy makers. Specifically, it offers an overview about the state of the art about anti-bullying interventions in Italy. Further, it gives insight about the most effective anti-bullying programs and shed lights on the most important mechanisms of change that might inspire future intervention programs.

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