![ISD logo] ISD | Powering solutions to extremism and polarisation

YOUNG DIGITAL LEADERS 2019: FROM SAFETY TO CITIZENSHIP

ANNEX: GREECE IMPACT RESULTS

Context

Although digital citizenship education (DCE) is not specifically included in the Greek national curriculum, the focus on citizenship education has gradually increased in Greece over the past decade. In addition to a rise in the recommended teaching time, the 2015 curriculum reform made the subject compulsory for more age groups across three levels of general education: primary, lower secondary and upper secondary. Aside from being taught as a separate subject, citizenship education in Greece is also approached through cross-curricular learning, which helps to implement thematic objectives relevant to digital citizenship. These include 'participating in school and out-of-school activities', 'using the media', 'gender equality' and 'intercultural communication and interaction'.[i]

This increased attention shows a promising commitment to building emotional empathy and resilience in Greek students; combined with recent reforms at the local level that grant more autonomy to schools, the landscape for future DCE provision looks hopeful. While there are currently few programmes specific to DCE in Greece, our interviews revealed that school-led initiatives have garnered the attention of local media outlets, demonstrating that interest in, and support for, digital citizenship exists beyond the education sector. It is important to note, however, that Greece has no official regulations or recommendations to develop teachers' competences in this area through initial teacher training: introducing DCE training for teachers at this stage in their career offers a clear opportunity for improvement in the coming years.

Key Results

Data was collected from students, teachers and parents by the local partner, Action Synergy. The sample sizes were as follows:

- 385 school workshop students
- 168 teachers
- 100 train-the-teacher (TTT) students
- 104 parents and carers.

Thematic Analysis 1: School Workshop Students

Infographics

- 83% increase in confidence in understanding of filter bubbles

- 75% increase in confidence in understanding of echo chambers
- 85% increase in tested knowledge on consent
- 93% increase in tested knowledge on flagging hate speech

Key Findings

- **Significant positive increases were observed across every measure, with the most positive longitudinal results found in the tested knowledge measures.** The school workshops in Greece led to the best results for this model out of all three countries. These included stronger results for the tested knowledge questions on how to identify 'fake news' and how to give and receive consent online. Indeed, for the latter result, almost 65% of respondents answered correctly, far higher than in any other participating group. Moreover, significant increases were observed across all tested knowledge measures when students were surveyed one month after the workshops, demonstrating the lasting impression these events made on participants:

    The workshop will change our way to use the internet and our online behaviour, such as speaking in a kind way to others… [I will now] pay more attention to the language I use online. – **YDL Student, Greece**

- **There were significant sustained increases across all three behavioural change measures.** Greece was the only country in which this was the case for the school workshop students. Especially positive was the measure demonstrating students' belief that they had used the internet to share something positive a month after the workshop. Increases in this measure were low across all participating student groups except within Greece, where students clearly recognised the value in the practical application of their digital citizenship skills. This could be attributed to the experience and seniority of facilitators who taught the curriculum to their students, which included one head teacher. This is likely to have motivated students to have actively demonstrated their newly developed skills and behaviours online. It may also reflect the greater time and emphasis that the Greek education system puts into teaching citizenship. This could mean that participating students already had some understanding and experience of how to contribute to their offline communities, which they were able to use online.

    I will now organise myself and my friends to be more positive online. – **YDL Student, Greece**

Thematic Analysis 2: TTT Students

Infographic

- 88% enjoyed being taught the curriculum
- 48% increase in belief that they had used the internet to share something positive
- 116% increase in knowing how and when to flag hate speech
- 67% increase in understanding how to give and receive consent online

Key Findings

- **As with the school workshop groups, there was a large increase in students' belief they had used the internet to share something positive.** This finding complements the increases in teachers' confidence in supporting their students as empowered digital users. Clearly, teachers who attended the training encouraged their students to share positive messages and constructive information online:

   I know for a fact that [a classmate] is attacked frequently because he is a Muslim. Even if we, as his friends, try to protect him, it is very important to know collectively what we can do online in order to protect him efficiently. This is why me and my friends have designed a campaign on peace on earth in order to promote all the people to coexist peacefully… [the curriculum] showed us how we can act in a systematic way in order to bring positive change through the internet. I know that none or very few of my classmates considered their power to use the internet for this reason before. – YDL Student, Greece

- **There were no changes in knowledge across two key measures.** One of these measures presented a strange finding: 100% of the students correctly defined the term filter bubble in both the pre- and post-survey, despite there being a somewhat low baseline of knowledge-confidence of this concept in the same group of participants. This suggests that the question is currently too easy, and if it remains as a multiple choice question it should be changed so it poses more of a challenge to students. In the question asking how to identify 'fake news', there was again no change in the number of correct responses. As mentioned in the main report, this is likely to be due to the question's demand for an open-text response, so many students ignored it or gave an overly vague answer.

Thematic Analysis 3: Trained Teachers

Infographic

- 99% found the Young Digital Leaders programme helpful for teaching digital citizenship

- 91% would go on to teach the curriculum to their students
- 40% increase in confidence supporting students deal with online challenges
- 61% increase in confidence in knowing how to teach digital skills to their students

Key Findings

- **9 in 10 teachers said they would go on to teach the curriculum to their students.** This not only reflects the importance afforded DCE by teachers, but aligns with the fact that Greece's provision of citizenship education is some of the most comprehensive in Europe, with 31 hours allocated annually. This commitment offers a vehicle through which DCE can be taught without a substantial added burden on teachers or school timetables.

- **Teachers' confidence and knowledge-confidence increased across every single measure.** In particular, large increases were observed in teachers' confidence in understanding what filter bubbles and echo chambers are and how they operate online. Similarly, teachers' confidence in their ability to support their students deal with online challenges and use the internet in a positive way increased by almost 40%.

Thematic Analysis 4: Parents and Carers

Infographic

- 98% more able to help their child deal with online safety challenges
- 96% more likely to have a conversation with their child about online safety
- 90% would behave differently online as a result of attending the session
- 98% would recommend a digital citizenship session to other parents and carers, reflecting their recognition of the importance of this type of education for adults

Key Findings

- **Results were positive across the board, with significant positive increases in all measures except one.** As with the Bulgarian results, there was substantial evidence that the educational sessions had been greatly beneficial to participants. One parent commented that before attending the workshop,

  We had not heard of the term digital citizenship and at the beginning the concept seemed difficult. However, after the end of the session we understood that this is a concept that is very connected with everything we are doing online and it is very important [that] in the same way that our children receive

*citizenship education, we also receive digital citizenship education. – **YDL Parent, Greece***

For one measure, however, there was barely any change from pre- to post-survey: participants' willingness to listen to worldviews different from theirs only increased by 2%. While these results still demonstrated a high level of willingness overall, the near-negligible increase suggests that sessions could have more impact in promoting diverse news consumption and engagement with alternative ideas.

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[i] European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2017. *Citizenship Education at School in Europe – 2017*. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, p.33. https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/citizenship-education-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017_en.