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EU Children's Participation Platform

THIRD CONSULTATION

# CHILDREN'S VOICES ON CYBERBULLYING

SUMMARY OF WHAT CHILDREN SAID

SEPTEMBER 2025

## WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

The European Union is working on an Action Plan against Cyberbullying to help prevent cyberbullying, and better support those children and teens affected by it.

Children from all over the European Union responded to an online survey in all EU languages through the [EU Children's Participation Platform](#).

They shared their experiences and thoughts, and gave suggestions on what would help them to report cyberbullying, and what schools, adults, and social media platforms should do against it.



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## WHO PARTICIPATED?

**6,343** children and teenagers aged 12 – 17 from all 27 EU countries.

**57% GIRLS,  
40% BOYS,  
3% OTHER.**



Children are very concerned about cyberbullying and want more action from adults. To prevent it, educate more about it, and help all those affected.

## THE ACTIONS CHILDREN WANT!

- Make social media platforms take responsibility and act against cyberbullying
- Make reporting easier and show that action is taken
- Involve parents and encourage open conversations about cyberbullying
- Raise awareness and education about cyberbullying
- Create a culture of kindness, and safe environments
- Provide support and counselling for those affected by cyberbullying
- Strengthen laws and consequences for cyberbullying
- Limit access to social media for younger children



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## WHAT CHILDREN THINK ABOUT CYBERBULLYING

- Most children said that cyberbullying means saying mean or hurtful things in messages or comments
- Many also said that cyberbullying is sharing embarrassing or private stuff without asking or pretending to be someone else online to upset or hurt someone
- Most said that people cyberbully others for fun and attention or to feel powerful
- Most said that cyberbullying makes people feel sad, hurt and lonely or left out



## WHO HAS SEEN OR EXPERIENCED CYBERBULLYING?

- One in four children said that cyberbullying has happened to them
- Many children, especially older teens, have seen people being mean online
- More girls said they have experienced and seen cyberbullying than boys
- Half of the children thought that it happens mostly to those who are 'different' because of who they are, how they look, or where they come from

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## GETTING HELP AND SUPPORT



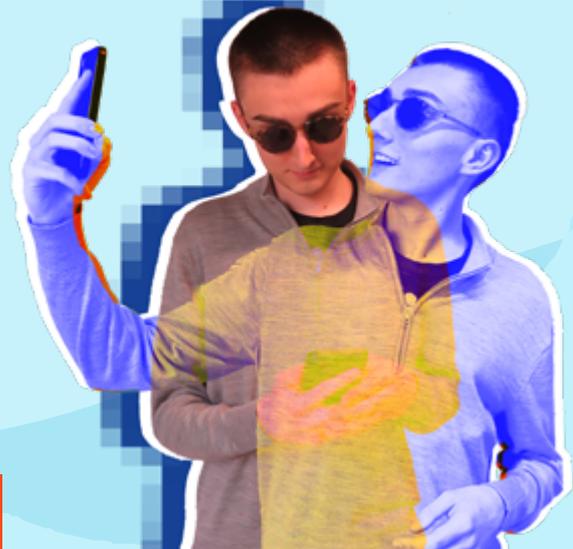
- **Most children would go to a parent** or carer for help if they were cyberbullied
- Older children would also often **go to a friend**
- **Girls** would more often go to their parents and friends than boys
- **Only 14% of children** said they would use a helpline or support website to get help
- **11% of children would not tell anyone** if they were cyberbullied

*"More counselling to help both victims and bullies understand what's happening"*

(Girl, 17, Romania)

*"If only I knew I wasn't alone in this"*

(Respondent, 16, Czechia)



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## REPORTING CYBERBULLYING



- Children want reporting to be **simple, easy and reliable** – make sure it works
- **Follow-up** should be ensured – children want to know and see that action is taken
- Ensure **privacy and protection** – most older children want reports to stay private
- **Girls want** guidance on how to report cyberbullying **more often than boys**
- Younger children want guidance on what to do **in simple language**



*“A response that someone has actually received this message and is taking care of it”*

(Girl, 16, Germany)

*“Clearer social media systems, more visible reporting buttons, detection of bad practices...”*

(Boy, 13, Spain)

## WHAT CHILDREN WANT ADULTS TO DO

### SCHOOLS AND ADULTS SHOULD:

- Have clear rules and consequences to help stop cyberbullying
- Provide emotional support, including psychological, for victims with trusted adults or peers for them to talk to
- Provide support to those who are bullying others together with their parents
- Teach about empathy and how to behave kindly online, as well as digital skills and online safety
- Raise awareness and empower kids to help them to better cope and deal with cyberbullying
- Increase practical protection in everyday settings, both on- and off-line

### SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS SHOULD:

- Take responsibility and act against cyberbullying
- Take the reporting seriously and report about follow up
- Design simpler reporting systems
- Provide support for victims and give information on good behaviours in simple language

*“Apply penalties and guidelines effectively (sometimes they are only on paper)”* (Girl, 17, Poland)

*“Prioritise teaching about helping and respecting others, especially those who are different, and show the beauty in these differences”* (Boy, 16, Portugal)

*“Stricter laws with a team of people capable of enforcing the laws”* (Boy, 16, Romania)

*“If you receive a report that a certain person is bullying, you should take real action, e.g. freeze the account for a few days or weeks, or investigating into the whole situation”*  
(Girl, 14, Lithuania)

**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PLATFORM  
AND OUR WORK**



**SEE THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S  
ACTION PLAN ON CYBERBULLYING**



**#EUChildParticipation**

