

WP2 Cyprus National Report

Country: Cyprus

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Academic base of countries

1 Number of universities in your country

[Note: What we really want is the number of academic research bodies, which could include Foundations, Institutes that are not called universities – and not all universities conduct research. However, it would be difficult to assemble such figures. Therefore, as a proxy of the academic base, how many bodies are classified as universities in each country]

At the moment there are six bodies that are classified as universities in Cyprus. Three of them were colleges and only last year they got recognition from the government to be upgraded and called universities. At least four of those conduct research. Additionally, in Cyprus there are two other academic institutions that are not called universities but still do conduct research.

2 Do media studies or communications studies exist as a discipline in you country? Any further observations about how large or small it is are welcome

Yes, media studies and communications studies exist in various universities in Cyprus. These disciplines attract a large amount of students every year.

3. Does IT and society and/or New media and/or informatics exist as a discipline in you country? Any further observations about how large or small it is are welcome

No, at the moment there are no such disciplines offered in Cyprus.

4. Does the Government or any related agency (e.g. the regulator) annually collect any national statistics (e.g. through a market research bureau or a department within Government) that include:

a) data on the Internet

The Statistical Service of Cyprus conducts surveys on Internet usage in businesses and households annually
(http://www.pio.gov.cy/mof/cystat/statistics.nsf/index_gr/index_gr?OpenDocument)

b) data on the Internet and children

No, the government does not collect any data on the Internet and children

If the statistics collected by the Government consists predominantly of data from adults but includes some children what is the lowest age of the sample.

The lowest age of the sample taken from the Cyprus Statistical Service is 16 years old.

5. *Does any non-Government body (e.g. Omnibus studies by companies, university department) annually (or regularly) collect any national statistics (e.g. through a market research bureau or a department within Government) that include:*

a) data on the Internet

No, there is no organization that collects national statistics on data on the Internet. In CNTI we are starting to conduct research on such issues but there are no available data yet. Research in progress includes knowledge and use of the internet in the population, assessment of knowledge of internet related risks and assessment of knowledge of coping with internet related risks.

b) data on the Internet and children

No, there is no organization that collects national statistics on data on the Internet and children. In CNTI we are starting to conduct research on such issues but there are no available data yet. Types of research in progress include level and frequency of internet use among children, type of Internet use among children, awareness of Internet risks among children and awareness of how to combat Internet risks among children.

If the statistics collected by this non-Government organisation consist predominantly of data from adults but includes some children what is the lowest age of the sample.

6. *Are there any repeated studies of children and the Internet (where the same questions have been asked at two points in time)?*

No there aren't any such studies yet.

Institutional process

7. *We would like you to answer the following questions based on your knowledge and that of your colleagues, including colleagues in other universities in your country:*

- a) *Are there any regulations about what you cannot research that apply nationally (e.g. Poland certain research on children is not possible). Elaborate*

Research is conducted following the ethical guidelines of either UK or US depending on the research conducted. Specific guidelines about what can and cannot be researched do not exist in any kind of regulation (governmental or institutional).

- b) *Is there some stage that all research proposals have to go through (e.g. do they need to be checked by a University ethics committee as in the UK)?*

Universities have all internal research proposals evaluated by at least two external independent reviewers and depending on the evaluation mark they receive, some are selected for funding. Universities also apply for funding through the European Union and through the Research Promotion Foundation. The external funding also goes through an evaluation and the best ones are selected for funding.

- c) *Do all proposals have to be checked by your institution/department before they can proceed?*

Yes, all proposals have to be checked for meeting the equivalent criteria of each call or journal before submitted for funding or publication.

- d) *Is there pressure on university employees to do research?(e.g. staff need to research, not just teach, in order to progress)*

There is no pressure on university employees to do research, but they are encouraged to do it, not only because it offers them the chance to advance their career but also because they get benefits such as time release, funding for attending to seminars etc.

- e) *Is there pressure to cooperate with industry?*

No there is no pressure for cooperation with industries but universities are encouraged to do so.

- f) *Does industry ever approach universities to collaborate or ask academics to conduct research?*

Industries do collaborate with universities in conducting research and sometimes universities are asked to conduct research on their behalf. This trend has been increasing in the last few years.

- g) *Do Government Ministries ask for certain types of research to be conducted and invite researchers/universities to bid to do that research?*

- h) *Does the research council ask for certain types of research to be conducted and invite researchers/universities to bid to do that research? (As the ESRC did in the UK, when they were several year programmes on ICTs, and people were invited to bid for this money))*

The Research Promotion Foundation opens calls for research once or twice a year, and universities and/or researchers are invited to submit proposals on the called themes in order to receive funding and carry out the research.

- i) *Do universities ever approach industry with suggestions for research?(For example, the Digital World Research Centre in the UK makes such proposals regularly)*

Yes, some Universities have already established collaborations with some industries to which they provide suggestions for research relevant to their domain.

If any of the above happen sometimes, but rarely, please comment ...

- 8. *Is there a well established tradition of quantitative research within the social sciences, education, and the humanities in your country? (Explain if appropriate).*

Research in Cyprus is at very low levels even though there is a greater emphasis and interest devoted in the last few years. Social sciences, education and the humanities have only recently attracted the interest of researchers, especially on technology issues such as e-learning and internet. Therefore, it is not possible to say if the research conducted in Cyprus is of more quantitative or qualitative character

- 9. *Is there a well established tradition of qualitative research within the social sciences, education, and the humanities in your country? (Explain if appropriate)*

Qualitative research is still present at very low levels in Cyprus, but has also been increasing in the past few years.

10. *Since what period have there been studies of the mass media (TV, radio) in your country?*

11. *Since what period have there been studies of the interpersonal communication (telephone, mobile phone) in your country?*

The first study conducted in Cyprus in interpersonal communication was in 2004.

12. *Since what period have there been studies of the Internet in your country? (Not just the Internet and children, but the Internet generally)*

Studies on the Internet started to be conducted in 2004. Use of the Internet is a fairly new technology adapted in Cyprus that is rising dramatically every year. Thus, ever since 2004 studies on the subject attracted much more attention than in the past.

Funding

13. *Thinking about the funding of research within the social sciences and education generally (not just children and the Internet) is the majority of money for research from the Government and/or Research Councils?'*

The majority of the money comes from EU projects, the Government and lately from the Research Promotion Foundation.

14. *Thinking about the funding of research generally within the social sciences and education, is there a tradition of commercial companies funding research on ICTs (including the Internet), either employing academics or not, where the results are made publicly available*

As far as we are aware, scientific research results are made publicly available but are mainly seen by other researchers in the field and not by the general public. Commercial companies most often hire research companies to conduct surveys on their behalf, but these are only used for improvement purposes on behalf of the company and are not made publically available.

15. *Can you look at the sheets we will send showing the pattern of funding of research on children and the Internet (based on what is in the repository). Why do you think this funding for children and the Internet projects is at it is – why this pattern?*

Up until 2003 most households in Cyprus didn't even own a computer, let alone use the Internet. As you can see, local studies on the Internet have started in 2004, where Internet usage began rising in Cyprus. Since then, there has been a dramatic increase both in the ownership of computers in households with children, and in the use of online technologies. This pattern shows the low level of internet usage in Cyprus, which is still one of the lowest across Europe. Up until now EU has been the main funder in this type of research, but we are expecting things to change now as access and internet usage are increasing.

Political initiatives

16. Can you think of any of the following that created part of the 'climate' in which particular research projects took place, and which may have led to the research:

- a) Government political initiatives, recommendations, white papers, discussion documents, ministerial reports (e.g. Information superhighways), etc*
- b) Changes in general media regulations, the boundaries of censorship, etc*
- c) Legal changes relative to the Internet e.g. what you put online*
- d) Government initiatives to try to encourage the Internet in schools*

There have been changes from the Ministry of Education to include and encourage the Internet in schools. Nearly all schools have now internet access.

- e) Initiatives to train teachers in the use of the Internet*
- f) Government organised awareness raising campaigns*
- g) Changes in self-regulation agreements among ISPs*
- h) EC consultation document.*
- i) Other*

Media coverage, events, lobbies

17. Is there any evidence that any studies were influenced by:

- a) Some particular media coverage*
- b) The lobbying of NGOs*
- c) Particular events*

Broader context

18. In your country, is there a Government/media/academic debate/concern about the commercialisation of childhood/children? (i.e. that children are being targeted too much by companies?)

19. In your country, is there a Government/media/academic debate/concern about the rights of children and/or promotion of their participation in civil life?

20. In your country, is there a Government/media/academic debate/concern about public spaces being dangerous for children?

Case Studies

21. We would like to have some case studies in the report, as appendices, which could then be referred to in the main text as appendices

Option 1: If you as a member of the EU Kids Online Team participated in some research on children and the Internet (or your department did) (e.g. the Netherlands, Slovenia, Spain) can you answer the following questions about one project)

- a) What led to this research? Why was it decided to focus on this topic?
Start research on CY citizens'/teens' Internet and SNSs behavior patterns
Contribute to and enlarge the SNSs, facebook, and privacy research with a different methodology*

b) *What led to the choice of methodology?*

Goal: objective data collection via observation in contrast to subjective data collection via interviews and surveys as in almost all other SNS studies

c) *What led to the choice of the ages of children?*

Pre-teens are not yet frequent SNSs users in CY, therefore focus on teens

d) *What led the particular questions being asked (as opposed to other potential questions)*

To receive a general overview of the status quo of teens using SNSs and disclosing private information

e) *Where did the funding come from? Why there?*

No funding for this research project

OR

Option 2: If you as a member of the EU Kids Online team did not participate in some research on children and the Internet can you take one case study from the repository and provide a short description of how it came about, either from looking at the documentation or by asking the researchers.

Response to what others have written

Can you consider the 3 examples below and answer whether this leads you to make any comments about your own country's research tradition

22. The French D1.1 national report said:

For a long time, sociologists paid very little attention to children and teenagers. This question was left to psychologists. Most of the empirical studies of youngsters actually focused on young adults. A shift is presently happening: sociologists' interest in pre-teens is rising. Over the course of the last few years (especially the two last years), some studies have investigated subjects such as children's cultural practices or socialisation processes. These studies in turn led to a few more specific studies, often involving both academic researchers and the laboratories of commercial companies, dealing with children's use of mobile phones, chat, instant messaging or blogs. These studies are not aimed at providing an overview of children's access and uses, but are rooted in a more theoretical point of view. They aim at understanding to what extent ICT may or may not change the way children keep in touch with relatives and friends.

What is the situation in your country?

Research on access and usage for the time being.

No research with a theoretical point of view

23. The Portuguese D1.1 national report said:

We should stress the absence of studies from Social Psychology, and Communication and Media Studies in our first data collection. In particular, academic research within Communication and Media Studies in Portugal has been strongly influenced by the essay model, sometimes without an empirical dimension. This has to do with the French influence in the main Communication Departments.

Empirical research in Communication and Media Studies has not paid enough attention to audiences, compared with that paid to content analysis or even the production context. Media Departments that pay special attention to ICT have explained the absence of research on children's uses as being because they put an emphasis on professional practices. Until recently Media and Communication research involving children was almost non-existent. Researchers interested in studying children's practices and cultures, or in media representations of children and young people or other associated issues, have difficulty in the implementation of programmes of study and modules regarding the subject in their faculties and departments.

What is the situation in your country?

24. The Belgian D1.1 national report said:

Media and communication scholars show a special interest in access (and non-access), uses (and non-uses), appropriation, skills and consequentiality of ICT in the life of young people. Sociologists are more interested in social inequality, stratification and social pressure in relation to ICT. Pedagogues are particularly interested in the unsafe aspects of Internet and computer use, and how teachers (should) cope with these risks.

What is the situation in your country?

25. *Are there any other points you would like to add that you think are relevant for this report?*