

Deliverable Report

D1.5 Open Report on Case Study Results [2/2]



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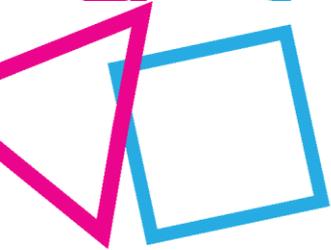


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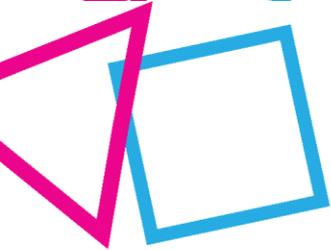
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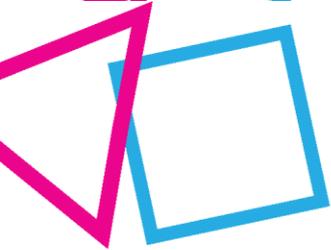
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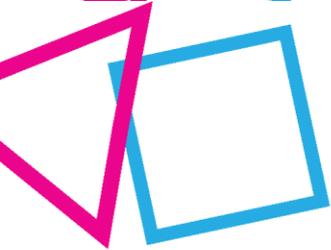




List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
CB	Cyberbullying
HT	Human Trafficking
GA	Grant Agreement
RAYUELA	empoweRing and educAting YoUng pEople for the internet by pLAYing
SAB	Security Advisory Board
OG	Online Grooming





Executive summary

The aim of this deliverable is to analyze the information presented in the sentences of different countries. For that purpose, a systematic search of sentences was made in the different databases. The analysis of the sentences aimed to obtain information about the characteristics of offenders and victims, as well as to get an idea about the *modus operandi* used in each cybercrime.

The structure of the sections differs due to the findings from the different cybercrimes. In the section of online grooming, a separate analysis has been carried out for each area, since there are unique elements both in the type of information present in the sentences and in some of the characteristics of the sample. After the analysis by area, a joint analysis was carried out based on the overall sample.

In the section on cyberbullying, it was decided to take the sample as a whole to carry out a more complex statistical analysis, as no differences were observed in the samples that justified a separate analysis.

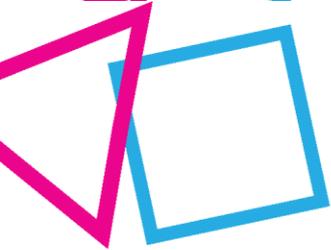
The section on human trafficking of minors for the purpose of sexual exploitation is limited to the East and West zones, since the partners from the North and South zones indicated that there were no sentences available on this subject in their respective geographical areas. Although in the Grant Agreement it was mentioned that just the East zone would be covered, the West zone was finally included as well, since sentences were obtained.

The number of pages per zone/crime was in most of the cases less than the number mentioned in the Grant Agreement, as the information content in the sentences in some regions was not too scarce to carry out a more in-depth analysis. The information presented in this deliverable has been reviewed by the SAB (Security Advisory Board).

Both qualitative and quantitative analysis were conducted extracting several interesting conclusions. When analyzing online grooming sentences there was no pattern regarding offender's profile, having a wide and changing *modus operandi* adapting to different victims. Differences were found when relating the gender of the victim and the *modus operandi*, in a strong trend that was found locally and globally. Differences were also found between the persuasive strategies and the possibilities of having a physical encounter. These results have important implications for prevention.

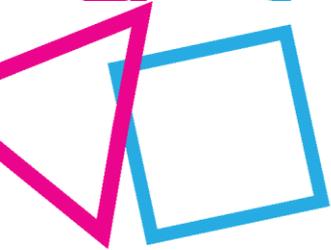
Regarding cyberbullying, it does not seem to exist specific offender and victim profiles concerning cyberbullying, with no significant differences between European countries and zones. The most frequent forms of cyber-bullying are described, resulting that in more than half of the cases sexual material was abused or shared. Although everybody can be subject to cyberbullying, disregarding race, ethnicity, or previous bad experiences, some elements regarding sexism, racism, and homophobia must be considered in terms of prevention.

Concerning human trafficking, the deliverable highlights the existence of mainly two forms of human trafficking in Europe. The first form is what is traditionally understood as human trafficking, in the sense that potential victims are forced into prostitution by offenders. This form of human trafficking was the predominant form in the Eastern part of Europe. However, a far more subtle form of human trafficking has



been identified in the Western part of Europe: the “loverboy” phenomenon. This is a particularly concerning phenomenon, as the coercion applied in these cases is based on an emotional relationship between the offender and the victim, and thus merits special attention in the RAYUELA project.





1. Analysis of sentences on online grooming

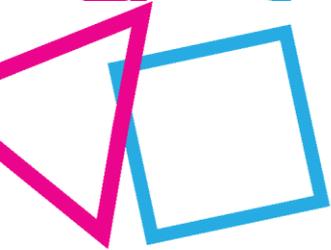
1.1. Introduction

The aim of this section is to analyze the information presented in the sentences about online grooming of different countries and to compare it with the information found in the literature review conducted in D1.1. For that purpose, a systematic search of sentences was made in the different databases, using several keywords: online grooming, cyber grooming, online sexual abuse, minor corruption, etc. Since there is no common crime definition among the countries' penal laws, we included the sentences that met the definition of the crime in each country (i.e., some international differences were related to the age of the victims or the actual presence of sexual material as can be seen in Annex 1) and also those sentences which, despite not meeting the criteria to be considered the crime in that country, described a modus operandi involving some telematic contact with sexual purposes between an adult and a minor.

The analysis of the sentences aimed to obtain information about the characteristics of offenders and victims, as well as to get an idea about the modus operandi used by offenders to contact minors. First, the results obtained from the four study areas, Spain (South), Belgium (West), Slovakia (East) and the UK and Estonia (North), are presented. Secondly, we describe the similarities and differences found between the different regions.

Statistical note: We analyzed a total of 51 sentences, including 20 from the Spanish region, 10 from Belgium, 10 from Slovakia and 11 from the UK (6) and Estonia (5). When analyzing the information regarding the victims, there are cases in which undercover police played the role of a potential victim: we did not include them in some of the analysis. Due to the difference in the number of sentences collected between zones, some of the analysis could not be conducted in every area, but only in Spain. Nevertheless, when conducting the same analysis in the global sample, similar conclusions were found in most of the cases, which shows a European solid trend. The amount of information collected in the sentences also varied from one region to another, so the depth of both quantitative and qualitative analysis varied.

For data collection, an Excel file was created with the different categories. A first codification was conducted for adding, removing and correct different categories. In each region, the sentences were coded at least by two researchers, to confirm that there were no mistakes. In the analyses of the sentences we report, first, the results obtained from the descriptive statistics of offenders, victims, and modus operandi. Second, we report the associations and differences we found between the variables. To do this, we used chi-square to determine the association between categorical variables. In cases where the aim was to determine differences between areas or between variables, we used the Kruskal Wallis H-test for more than two variables and the Man Whitney U-test was used to determine the difference between two variables. We used Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality tests to determine whether the sample was normally distributed. Since the assumption of normality was not met in any case, we used nonparametric statistics. Qualitative analysis was also conducted through narrative analysis and categorical content analysis.



1.2. Spain

The sample collected in Spain consisted of 20 sentences, quite wide information about 20 offenders and 65 victims, which was enough information to conduct quantitative analysis in this zone. In many cases, the information contained in the sentences is extensive, reproducing detailed conversations that allow for a qualitative analysis of risk/protective factors and the different offenders' modus operandi.

1.2.1 Victims

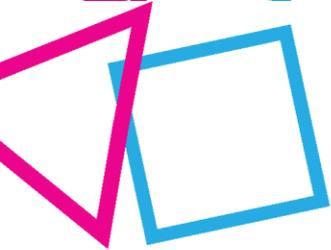
Due to the characteristics of the information collected in the sentences, it is not possible to go into depth on certain issues that could be related to risk factors. In the literature review presented in D1.1 we saw that there were several vulnerability factors, psychological characteristics, and protective factors, so no single profile could be detected (Shoon; 2006). The elements we could not analyze were sexual victimization, mental health, low self-esteem, and poor family communication (Jonsson et al., 2019), and parental educational level (although, importantly, the highest risk factor for victimization is parental low educational level (Villacampa & Gómez, 2016)).

The sample collected in the sentences consisted of 65 victims. The mean age of the sample was 13.97 (SD=1.84) with a minimum of 9 years and a maximum of 17 years, in agreement with researchers who have concluded that the age range with the highest risk would be 11-15 years old (Baumgartner et al., 2010; Mitchell et al., 2001). It is also similar with those who place it at ages closer to adolescence, such as De Santisteban and Gámez-Guadix (2017a), Mitchell et al. (2014), Montiel et al. (2015) and Wolak and Finkelhor (2013), who found that the highest risk is found within the 14-17 years-old range. For the latest ages, it would be important to notice the consent age in every country, being 16 in Spain and in Estonia, the limit of self-determination is 14 years, although there is an open debate how to raise the age limit from 14 to 15 or 16 years of age.

Regarding the sex of the victim, although the literature points to a clearly higher prevalence of online grooming in girls -in degrees or percentages that vary according to the study, from 82% (Mitchell et al., 2001) to 66% (Wolak et al., 2010) of young women, in our sample there is a slightly higher number of male victims (53.8%) than female victims (46.2%). This could be due to how the data was analyzed: there were multiple male victims in several of the offenders; however, if we analyze the data by offenders, there is a higher number of offenders who choose female victims (65% versus 35%).

The fragments summarized in the sentences are usually those that prove the sexual nature of the relationship, so it was not possible to infer much information about the victim or the modus operandi, such as whether the victim's problems were tackled during the conversation, as reported in the literature (Quayle et al., 2011) or some risk factors, such as the time spent on the Internet, or the educational level of the parents.





Typology of victims

The type of victims found corresponds to the three-type classification developed by Webster and collaborators (2012), who distinguish between resilient, vulnerable, and risky victims. From the sentences studied, we found the three types, however it is difficult to determine the frequency of each one as they did not constitute pure categories. The resilient victims would be those able to recognize some potential danger, as well as able to block and ignore situations they consider suspicious or rare, having enough self-confidence to reject sexual behaviors and to inform others about what happened.

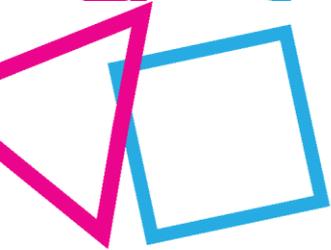
In the sample analyzed, the resilient profile is scarce, although it might be that not all the potential victims ended up at court, precisely because of their ability to block and ignore the offender. For instance, out of the 16 victims that a multiple offender contacted, only one girl blocked him when he asked her for sexual pictures (after having sent him a non-sexual one). However, it is not possible to know if the investigation reached all the girls that the offender contacted or just the ones that he had their telephone numbers. In this case, at least 10 victims sent photographs of an explicit erotic nature while the remaining six maintained conversations with a clearly sexual tone. In another sentence, a group of resilient minors "warned him of the possible consequences of his actions ... and even called him a "pedophile", pointing out that he could get into trouble and end up in jail. However, the offender replied that he did not care about the consequences.

Therefore, the strategy of blocking the offenders or asking him to desist in sexual requests seems insufficient. In at least three cases, after the blocking, the contact was retaken. In one, "when time passes and the minor blocks him, he contacts her again through an unknown profile". In the second one we read: "Finally, he called her directly by phone threatening her by saying that he would not leave her alone if she continued blocking him, so X agreed to contact him and did not block his calls and messages, telling him that from that moment on she would do everything he asked her to do". In the last one it is said that "the minor begins to feel uncomfortable with the jealous and controlling nature of the offender, so in August she decides to leave the relationship, but he says he wants to continue, so they meet in August around the building where the minor's mother worked. They started walking and the offender guided her to an area she did not know, forced her into a house under construction, threatened her with a knife, sexually abused her and started stabbing her, to eventually left her".

While there was insufficient information, these three cases could also match the second type of victims, vulnerable victims, who Webster et al. (2012) define as minors with affective deficiencies that are shaped as some need for attention, feelings of loneliness, and low self-esteem. These usually are young girls who are more likely to maintain online relationships despite these relations became abusive, as a strategy to fight against their feelings of loneliness.

Lastly, we found risky victims, who are characterized by online disinhibition plus a perception of safety and sense of control. This group includes the many victims who seem to enjoy interpersonal experimentation, lower risk perception, and victims who take the initiative to contact the offender first, request him photos or meeting.





Vulnerabilities

As it was pointed above, it is difficult to estimate certain vulnerabilities of the victims based on the information gathered in the sentences, although it is notably that at least three victims had different degrees of disability. One victim had 34% degree of disability (at the time of the events, his chronological age -13 years- did not match her cognitive age, estimated around 6 to 8 years). Another victim had 35% degree of disability associated to learning difficulties, both at verbal and socializing areas. The third victim had mild intellectual deficit with a degree of maturity below her biological age.

Regarding mental health history, only one sentence mentions that the girl had previously attended therapy, and in another that she had changed school due to problems with her classmates (because it was discovered that she had had some sexual intercourse).

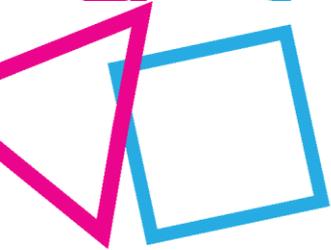
In two instances it is pointed out that the minor already had sexual experience with older men, or it was the minor who requested sexual contact with an adult. In the latter case, the minor posted at a dating website that he wanted to have sex with men no older than 25 years: "Hello I know I'm very young, but I have a good cock. I like fat cocks and I like to suck and get it in me. I'm from X and I would like to meet up tomorrow afternoon. I'm 13 years old".

One source of potential future victimization is engaging in an affective relation with an adult. Like Whittle's (2014) findings, there are several minors in the sample who perceive to be in a romantic relationship with the offender and try to protect him even when the offender did not lie about his age or sexual intentions. One of the victims, for example, used two different profiles to talk to the offender, so that she could not be discovered, and another, deletes all conversations before giving the cell phone to the police so that they cannot convict the offender. These minors do not usually lie about their age to the offender (they may lie to access the application), and they post a real photo in their profiles.

It is complex to analyze the motivation of the victims from the sentences because they are not usually included as they are not punishable nor required to determine the offender's guilt. However, it seems very likely that some of the main motivations include venting feelings to someone, looking for companionship, or the feeling of needing something more in life (Quayle et al., 2011).

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Victims:

- The average age is 14. Some characteristics of the adolescence are at the same time online grooming risk factors: sexual curiosity, meeting new people, searching for autonomy and freedom, emotional insecurities, etc. When designing the videogame scenarios, it will be important to include the different types of victims: vulnerable (who succumbs to insistence or threats for fear of abandonment), risky (in search of experimentation,) and resilient.
- Contrary to previous research, there are more male victims, which is related with the easier access to boys by the (fewer) offenders looking for males.



1.2.2 Offenders

The sample consisted of 20 males with a mean age of 35 years (SD = 10.37), with a minimum age of 18 years and a maximum of 54 years. This result differs from Seto, Hanson and Babchishin's study (2010), where online child molesters were described as young men, most of them under 25 years old. In those cases, in which the nationality appeared, it was found that most of the offenders were Spanish (95%, N = 12) and only one case had Romanian nationality. In relation to the criminal history of the offenders, 17.7% (N=3) had some criminal record, two of them for the same crime (i.e., online grooming) with no specification in the third case. The recidivist offenders had multiple victims (19 and 9 victims, respectively). It is not possible to extract relevant sociodemographic data, such as their level of education or employment status, because this information did not appear in the sentences.

In two cases (10% of the sample), the offenders had some degree of disability. One of them lived with his parents and had linguistic, cognitive, and intellectual limitations, with an IQ of 65, associated with a very low level of intelligence, with a low degree of maturity in relation to his chronological age. "The mother, coherently with her son's personality, stated that he likes to be surrounded by minors because he feels more comfortable and finds easier to interact with them; given his low self-conscious character, he feels more affinity with them". In another sentence, the offender also had some borderline level diagnosed plus some adaptive disorder, yielding a recognized disability of 33%.

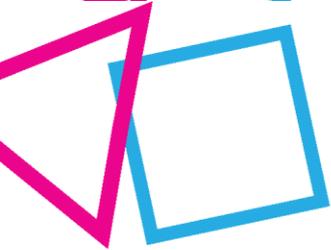
Cohabitation seems relevant for future victimization. In two instances where cohabitation is with his wife and daughter, the aggression is against the daughter's friend(s). In some instance where cohabitation is with parents and siblings, the aggression is against his sister's friend. Plus, two of the offenders in the sample had easy access to minors: a judo instructor and a child photographer. Although in some sentences it is mentioned that the convicted person had child pornography or sadomasochistic material, in most cases there is no mention of this aspect, so it is not possible to draw conclusions. However, access to minors seems a relevant factor for future victimization.

Typology of the offender

Quayle and colleagues (2014) differentiated between two profiles of online sexual abusers depending on whether their main motivation is contact (having a sexual encounter) or whether they are driven more by fantasy, establishing an online relationship. It is difficult to identify both profiles in the sample since the abusers with multiple victims proposed to meet only with some of the kids but not with others. It might be that offenders only propose the meeting when they find it more likely to be accepted. However, it is important to note that they seem to purely enjoy the online relationship with minors, as deduced from the conversations and the time spent in the relationships. In other words, it seems likely that there are mixed offenders, those who would engage in both behaviors.

The likelihood to being proposed an offline meeting seems high. In our sample, a total of 17 offenders out of 20 proposed an offline meeting (plus one else offender that entered to his daughter's room when her friend was alone), namely, 90% of the sample invited the minor to meet. We found that a total of 20 encounters





happened, the mean number of offline encounters is .74 (SD = .653), with a minimum of zero encounter and a maximum of five. Of these encounters, 50% entailed sexual contact, with a mean of 1.00 (SD = 1.37), within a range of minimum of 0 sexual contact and maximum 5.

Another classification proposed by Tener and collaborators (2015) differentiates between affection-focused abusers, who use strategies aimed at gaining the trust of victims through displays of care and affection, and sex-focused abusers, whose main objective is to have sexual contact quickly and immediately. Although sometimes a mixed profile can again be seen in the sample (especially in abusers who have several victims) there are some who seem to employ the romantic strategy, while conversations in other cases are more focused on sex. Thirty-five percent use the romantic strategy, although sometimes mixed with other strategies that will be described in more detail in the following section.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Offenders:

- The average age is 35, slightly higher than that in previous research.
- Most of the offenders propose an offline encounter.

1.2.3 Modus Operandi

Initial contact

In our sample, the group of victims who initiated contact included 11% of the total sample. However, meeting for sexual or romantic purposes was only proposed by three of the minors. The rest of them contacted the adult for a photo book.

The way of selecting the victims varied from one offender to another, however, it was found that the majority (65%, n=13) selected the victim on purpose, while 10% (n=2) met the victim more casually, in 15% (n=3) of cases the victim initiated the contact and finally in 5% (n=1) the contact with the victims combined more than one option.

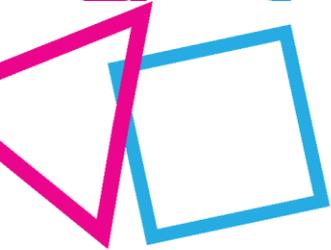
Before the first contact, the type of relationship that the offender had with the victim was analyzed. Most of the offenders 75% (n=15) were unknown to their victims. However, 5% (n=1) of the offenders were found to be friends of the victim, 10% (n=2) were a professional related to the victim and 10% (n=2) were people close to the victim.

A) Close or known victims

One of the issues that should be emphasized in the prevention of online grooming is that it is a process that does not only occur between strangers. That is to say, the offender can know the victim beforehand and carry out the approach through social networks, with strategies like those that an offender would carry out with an unknown person.

In this sense, in our sample, 17% of the victims were known to the offender. If instead of analyzing it by victims, we analyze it by offenders, 7 of the 20 perpetrators studied (35%) looked for known victims, although only 25% looked exclusively for known victims. These figures are relevant in that we often tend to think of the offender as someone totally unknown, and especially if we consider that almost half (41.6%) of the





victims who were acquaintances came to have physical sexual contact with their offender, a percentage that drops to 19.2% when the offender is a stranger.

The relationship that appears in our sample ranges from the closest environment (friends of daughters, sisters, or friends), to sharing a sports club, being the monitor of a summer camp, or discovering the victims in youth fashion shows. This is how one of these cases is described in the court sentence: "He previously established a relationship of trust, being a friend of his daughter, so he managed to communicate by WhatsApp, sending her heart-shaped emoticons".

In sentences in which there are multiple victims, the offender gets new contacts by asking the minors to introduce him to their friends. This occurs in at least three cases, all involving boys, although with a different modus operandi. In the first case, the offender asks for sexual material in exchange for the children's ranking in the video game he manages. In the second case, the offender used to offer money in exchange for a sexual encounter:

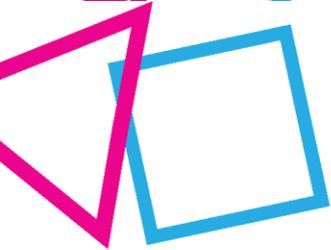
"Their contacts were facilitated by other minors in their environment, who, aware or unaware of the danger, provided the details of their friends or acquaintances, even without their knowledge. The accused in turn asked them for contacts of other minors who were homosexuals in the area, explicitly referring that he had had sexual relations (i.e., fellatio, penetration, etc.) of one kind or another with 14-year-old boys, telling them that they had loved doing it and that nothing went wrong, in order to trick them and encourage them to put into practice everything that he told them in the conversations that he was going to do to them".

In the last example, the offender advertised himself as an event photographer and offered to do free photo books for minors to launch their modeling careers. Many contacted him directly after hearing about him from their high school classmates.

B) Strangers

Although it is not the most frequent, there are three cases in the sample in which contact was made through a dating website. In one of them, which was mentioned above, the minor himself posted an ad seeking contact with an adult. In another case, it was a girl who responded to the offender's advertisement, and in a third it is not clear who initiated the contact, as both had a profile on the Grindr application. The two boys had sexual relations. The girl, although she agreed to send material, did not accept to have a physical encounter.

The most frequent contact is through strangers (75%, n=15). In relation to the different platforms through which the first contact took place, it was found that the most used were social networks in 50% (n=10) of the cases, followed by WhatsApp (25%, n=5) especially when the victims were acquaintances. Less commonly, other platforms used by the offenders were dating websites (15%, n=3) and video games (10%, n=2). It can be seen how the type of network changes over the years, following usage fads. Thus, for example, in 2014 Tuenti was used to a greater extent, in 2016 Facebook and in recent years Instagram seems to be used more. After a first contact through these networks, communication is usually changed to WhatsApp, and to a lesser



extent also by phone and Skype, and only in some cases do they maintain conversations by Instagram and Facebook. It does not appear in any sentence that the Dark Web has been used.

Although in most cases it is not specified how that contact begins, in some cases pleasant comments about the child appearance or the proposal of a photo shoot, etc. are used. In one of the cases, the minor responded to a "Hello" that appeared in a pop-up window of an online game page.

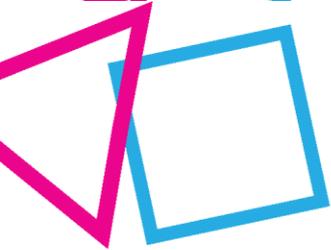
Persuasive Strategies

The manipulation strategies employed by the offenders in the sample are multiple and change even within the same offender among different victims. Fifty-five percent of the subjects used deception to gain the trust of the minors. In addition, 50% used coercion with at least one of their victimized victims and 35% even used blackmail. Likewise, 50% developed at least one false identity to contact the child.

Following the classification proposed by Santiesteban and Gámez-Guadix, (2017b) we can group the most used persuasion strategies into four, which we will describe below: Deception, corruption, implication, and aggression. Awakening or taking advantage of sexual curiosity could be treated as a fifth strategy, but as it is present in almost all cases, it will be analyzed as a cross-cutting element. Although most perpetrators employed more than one strategy, the most frequently used strategy was deception (55%, n=11), followed by aggression (50%, n=10), corruption (40%, n=8), and finally implication (35%, n=7), which consists of achieving the affective attachment of the child in the abusive relationship. We will describe each of them in detail below.

A) Deception

This is one of the most used persuasion strategies and includes, but is not limited to, maintaining, and developing one or more false identities. The creation of this identity is usually aimed at simulating a younger age to gain easier access to the young person (O'Connell 2003). In our sample, along with these cases, there are some even more sophisticated ones, such as the case of an 18-year-old boy who contacted a friend of his 10-year-old sister pretending to be a mutual friend who had been kidnapped by a gang that wanted photographs and videos of sexual content of the minor in exchange for keeping them safe, a request to which the minor agreed. To keep up the ruse, he even sent photos of an injured hand and a bloody mouth stitched shut. The offender with 16 female victims managed several identities that he used for different purposes. In most cases, he contacted them posing as a young teenager (with a photo of a dark-haired boy, wearing sunglasses and about 15 or 16 years old), although sometimes he contacted them as a young girl (sometimes with a photo of a teenager, sometimes of a cat). At some point in the relationship, he introduced the character of the stepbrother (who would actually be the offender, 54 years old), and it was the other characters who tried to convince the minors to meet and have sex with him: by offering money, encouraging a new experience, downplaying its importance or threatening to break up the couple in cases where a romantic relationship was established, or to make public photos of a sexual nature. Adding characters allows to improve the strategies mainly by creating trusting relationships. For example, the young girl told the victim how she liked older men like her father or coerced her to release the images through third party characters



in order not to lose trust. This is a clear example of how perpetrators combine different strategies and adapt them to different victims.

As authors such as Briggs and colleagues (2011) have pointed out, not all offenders pose as minors, but some present themselves as adults to generate interest in the child. In the sample, 50% did not go so far as to create a false identity, and 45% did not even lie. Among the deception strategies that do not include age, we found the example of the photographer who advertised himself through social networks such as Instagram or Facebook. When children contacted him, he offered a free service career in modeling. The photographer himself told some of them that it was okay to be naked because he would cover their genitals in post-production.

Within this strategy we also found the conversation topics appropriate to the age of the minor (Wells and Mitchell, 2007 cited in De Santiesteban and Gámez-Guadix, 2017b). Relying only on the information collected in the sentences, it is difficult to know whether the offenders really modify the language or whether they use their usual way of expressing themselves. In one case, the type of juvenile speech is particularly marked (the offender is 24 years old, but both he and the victim have a certain degree of disability). A similar use occurs with the offender with several male victims to whom he offers money, but to whom he does not lie about his age (39 years old). In another sentence, the offender impersonated a Dutchman, for which he also modifies the handwriting. However, in other cases the transcribed conversations reveal a correct tone and use of language appropriate for the age of the offender, although not in all cases the conversations are reproduced literally. The use of emoticons (in the form of a heart) is noted on one occasion.

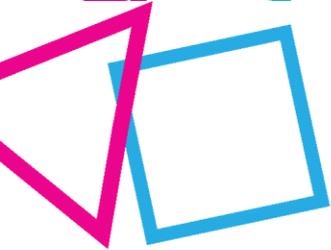
B) Corruption

Another strategy consists of offering gifts or money to minors in exchange for different sexual behaviors (Shannon, 2008). As mentioned above, the percentage of cases in which this offer is made is 40%, although it is not always the main strategy. In some sentences it does appear as the only strategy, offering money in exchange for material or some type of sexual practice. In others, it seems to appear as an extra motivation, for example, in the face of an attempt to upgrade the acts (from sending photos to physical encounters). In the latter, it can be given explicitly, through the offer of money, or more subtly with the promise of gifts. Some examples are described below.

In one of the cases with multiple victims, the offender contacted minors through Instagram and offered them money in exchange for fellatio. First, he initiated conversations with sexual content. Then, he sent pictures of his penis and/or videos of himself or other men, and then asked them to perform fellatio in exchange for money or a Play Station console. On one occasion, it was one of the minors who proposed to the offender to perform fellatio in exchange for getting tobacco.

The case of the photographer who promised to make them a book to promote them as models can also be considered a case of corruption, since the promise is of future fame/work. On one occasion, after receiving a fellatio he told the minor that this was the form of payment for the photo shoots he did for him.





Another sentence describes how the administrator of an online gaming website impersonated a 13-year-old minor to contact a minor, and after establishing a relationship told him that he could move up in rank and become a VIP player if he showed him his genitals first and masturbating afterwards. He repeated the same sequence with two of the minor's friends.

Along with the money, gifts of cell phones, sneakers and other types of presents appear, sometimes as promises, and sometimes ascertained. A frequent form of payment is the recharging of the cell phone after the material has been sent. In the case we saw of the 16 girl victims, one of the female characters invented by the offender, encouraged the girls by telling them that if they had sex with the older character, he would give them money or buy them handbags, cell phones and other gifts. In the same case, the identity of the young boy (who in principle had a romantic relationship with a girl) offered her 100 euros if she let his stepbrother "deflower" her.

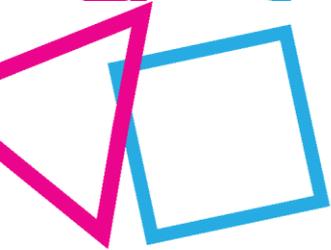
In other situations, as we said, corruption appears as a secondary strategy. For example, an offender asks the minor on several occasions to meet her. After failing to get it by other means, he ends up offering them money: "would you fuck a 30-year-old guy", to which the minor replied no, the accused insisting "and if I gave you 300 euros", "and for 500 euros" and "if it was only 10 minutes and that's it", "and for 1000 euros".

C) Aggression and coercion

Finally, one of the least used strategies is that of aggression understood as violent behavior, although if we include in it the different forms of coercion and blackmailing, up to 50% of the offenders in the sample use it. This type of strategy allows the continuation of the abusive dynamic by prolonging it over time, involving the minor so that he/she does not communicate the situation in which he/she is involved to third parties (De Santiesteban and Gámez-Guadix, 2017b). It usually takes place when the offender does not get what he wants. Next, we include some examples.

We saw already in the section on victims how it was frequent that after the blocking in networks, the offender threatened the child. Another frequent threat is, once they have obtained photos of a sexual nature, to threaten to publish them on social networks if the minor does not agree to have sex, or to show them to family members, or to tell the mother about the sexual relationship they had in the first place to force the minor to meet again. Physical violence is also threatened, as in a case in which a picture of a young girl naked, bound and gagged in the trunk of a vehicle is sent, asking the minor if she would like the same thing done to her.

Other forms of coercion are more subtle and occur when the minor (in our sample it occurs more with young females) considers that she is in a sentimental relationship with the offender. In these cases, along with insistence, there are insults and threats of breaking up if the person does not agree to a meeting or to increase the intensity. It also occurs as revenge, as in a case in which, after not wanting to meet in person again, the offender sent a photograph and a video of the minor to her extended family. Sometimes coercion is also used so that they do not say anything about the relationship "because it was a crime, and they could put him in jail".



D) Implication

The last strategy, present in at least 35% of cases, is one in which abusers try to involve the child in the abusive behavior, making it look like a free, mutually agreed relationship (Lorenzo-Dus and Izura, 2017). There are several situations in which young people fall in love and consider being in a romantic relationship with their abuser. Sometimes this takes place, even if the offender has lied about his or her age to begin with and then had to correct it, or even when there is no need to have lied previously, as other authors have found (Whittle; 2014). As mentioned above, in many situations the coercion follows romantic feelings, in one case even going so far as to try to get the girl to have a relationship with a third person (the supposed stepbrother, who was in fact the offender himself). In the young woman's response to this proposal, this feeling can be clearly seen: "When you tell me about your brother I get upset, I love you and I don't ask you for anything". The offenders in turn use phrases that promote this relationship, such as the one that, after insisting and receiving a photo of the minor, says: "I love you my life, sweetheart, I will make you happy".

E) Sex

As mentioned above, taking advantage of the sexual desire or curiosity of minors has not been considered an independent strategy because it is transversal to all the others. The tone of the conversations in many cases is very explicit on both sides, although with the information collected it is not always possible to assess how the offender gradually introduces and contributes to generating this curiosity.

Although it is not common, sometimes the initiative comes from the minor, as in the cases of dating websites, or another in which after a friend request from the offender through a social network, it is the minor who asks for a photo of his genitals in the first place.

On the other hand, it was found that in the majority (45%, n=9) of the cases the material exchanged was photos, followed by 25% of cases (n=5) in which both photos and videos were exchanged. However, 30% (n=6) did not exchange any type of content with the offenders. Of the cases in which material was exchanged, 93,4% (n=14) of the cases involved sexual content. The level of severity ranged widely, from bikini photos to streaming masturbation videos with more than one person watching.

To classify the level of severity of such sexual content, the classification of child sexual abuse material of the COPINE scale (Taylor et al., 2001) was followed. The results obtained are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentages of the level of severity of the sexual content exchanged.

Level	Designation	Percentage
1	Indicative	2
2	Nudists	2
3	Erotic	11
4	Posed	18
5	Erotic pose	18
6	Explicit erotic pose	31
7	Explicit sexual activity	16
8	Aggression	0
9	Aggressive aggression	0
10	Sadism/Bestiality	2

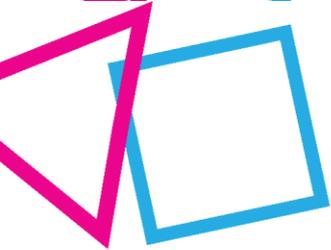
It seems that the more the offender receives, the more he insists on a higher-level sexual content, the way of insistence may involve coercion or blackmail.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Modus operandi

- The initial contact is usually made by a stranger through a social network. However, 25% of offender targeted known teens via WhatsApp, a situation that is more likely to end in a physical encounter.
- Persuasive strategies are multiple and change even within the same offender. All of them are used alone and together, following our sample, in this order: deception, coercion, corruption, implication and blackmailing. When offenders lie about their identity (50%), they usually pose as a younger boy, but they can also assume several identities (and play with them to make the manipulation more sophisticated). Corruption can be accepted for small gifts (such a mobile recharged in exchange of a picture). Coercion usually occurs after the try of blocking in networks or when the offender wants to arrange a meeting or to scale in intensity. Together with the threat of making public sexual pictures or the relationship, they threat with physical violence or, more frequently, with breaking up the relationship. Implication means achieving attachment of the child, who can considered be genuinely in love, despite of knowing the real age, the abuse situation, and even the coercion.

1.2.4 Gender differences

We found numerous differences in the modus operandi according to the sex of the victim, especially in the different persuasive strategies. However, these strategies were not found to relate with any of the variables studied in the offenders.



First, we found that the use of deception to gain the victim's trust was related to female victims ($\chi^2 = 12.53$, $p < .001$), since this type of strategy was used in 75.8% of the cases of female victims while in the cases in which this strategy was used and the victim was a man, the percentage was significantly lower (31.4%).

Similarly, the use of coercion was also significantly related to being a female victim ($X^2 = 4.58$, $p = .032$), with 33.3% of female victims versus 11.4% of male victims. In addition, from the data found in relation to the sex of the victims, we found differences in the age of the victims depending on whether coercion was used or not ($U = 191.00$, $p = .031$). In particular, the youngest victims suffered the most coercion.

Another strategy that is related to being a female victim is blackmailing ($\chi^2 = 12.53$, $p < .001$) since, of the sentences analyzed, this strategy was only used with female victims (20%). However, the corruption strategy was related to being a boy victim ($\chi^2 = 9.94$, $p < .002$) with 72.4% of cases in which the victims were boys compared to 25.7% of girls.

Similarly, the way of selecting the victim is related to the sex of the victim ($X^2 = 8.72$, $p = .033$). Specifically, the selection of female victims was in most cases (96.5%) on purpose, while with boys the selection was on purpose (67.6%), opportunistic (11.7%), and in 17.6% the approach was produced by the victim. It was also found that offenders tend to contact girls (77%) through a false identity ($\chi^2 = 21.81$, $p < .001$) more than with boys (18.5%).

Regarding the differences found according to the sex of the victims, the encounter with the offender occurred in practically the same ($\chi^2 = 0.29$, $p = 0.866$) percentage of cases in female (38%) and male (40%) victims. There were also no differences in the percentage of cases in which the offender proposed contact ($\chi^2 = 1.96$, $p < .374$), with 60% of cases in which the offender proposed contact to the female victim and 71% of cases to the male victim.

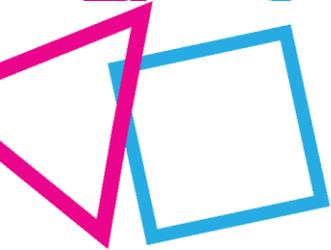
However, a correlation was found between agreeing to the encounter and the sex of the victims ($X^2 = 3.95$, $p < .033$), with boys who tend to accept having an encounter in 79% of the cases compared to 47% in the case of girls. In any case, the percentages in which the victims agree to have an encounter are high in both cases.

Other variables that were related with the sex of the victim were the background of the offenders, since 80% of the boys had a prior criminal history while no girl had a prior criminal record ($X^2 = 19.65$, $p = .006$). In addition, the cases in which another violent crime was committed along with the grooming happened to a greater extent with female victims ($X^2 = 4.83$, $p = .028$).

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Gender differences

- Female and younger victims are more likely to suffer coercion. Besides, offenders tend to use more deception, false identities, blackmailing, and commit another violent crime with girls, using corruption in a greater extent with boys. On the other hand, male victims are more likely to start the contact and to agree the physical encounter, which may suggest a less perception of the risk.





1.2.5 Facilitators of the encounter

Some of the variables that facilitated the encounter were the topic of conversation, the type of relationship they had previously maintained, and the persuasive strategy deployed by the offender. The topic of conversation that appeared as related to having a physical meet was the child's intimate and personal topics, alone or in combination with other topics ($\chi^2=5.835$, $p=.016$). No relation was found with sexual topics and the child's hobbies and interests.

The type of relationship previously maintained with the victim also facilitates offline contact ($\chi^2=8.013$, $p=.005$). Even though in most cases (81,5%) the offender was a stranger, in those where victim and offender were known the meeting was more likely to take place.

Likewise, there are situations in which the victims have been exposed to different strategies that have made it easier for the offender to encounter. The strategy of implication is related ($\chi^2=9.98$, $p<.003$), with the meeting, since in more than 80% of the cases in which this type of strategy was used, the minors were able to meet with the offender. It was also observed that in those cases in which blackmailing was present, there was a greater degree of offline contact ($\chi^2 =5.41$, $p<.020$) although blackmail did not lead to a greater level of acceptance ($\chi^2 =1.18$, $p<.277$).

Similarly, in those cases in which the offenders used a false identity to interact with the minor, offline contacts were lower (80%, $n=20$), and the probability of accepting the meeting proposal was lower ($\chi^2 =5.23$, $p=.022$) while the cases in which they did maintain offline contact with the minor using a false identity was lower (20%, $n=5$). Corruption strategy also showed a negative correlation with offline encounter ($\chi^2 =4.35$, $p=.037$) and with child agreement ($\chi^2 =4.78$, $p=.026$).

Finally, regarding the duration of contact, there are differences depending on if corruption strategies were used, with the duration of contact being longer in cases in which corruption was not used ($U=44.00$, $p=.014$). Likewise, in cases in which there was offline contact, the duration of contact was longer ($U=48.00$, $p<.001$).

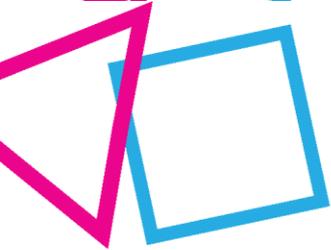
Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Facilitators of the encounter

- Some situations were more likely to be followed by a physical encounter: those in which the aggressor and the victim knew each other beforehand, those in which implication or blackmailing were used as a strategy, and those in which the topic of conversation included child's intimate and personal topics.

1.2.6 Some consequences of the crime

Some of the consequences of the process of online grooming for the victims are reflected in several sentences. For instance, in the case of a young disabled boy: "She observed that her son began to behave worse, he refused to continue to be showered as before and became more aggressive and argumentative". Once the abusive situation was over, this is how his reference professional summarized the evolution: "He has changed his behavior becoming more aggressive, giving bad answers and disregarding the rules imposed





on him, experiencing a setback in the evolution of the treatment of his disability, losing autonomy to perform activities alone, always demanding to be accompanied, reacting with fear if ever he occasionally meets the defendant, showing himself, sometimes, nervous at home and at school, ceasing to make an effort in the routines and roles played in his day to day activities of daily life, family and academic".

Among the consequences that appear in the long term are having to move house "for the minor's mental health", treatment for different "emotional alterations, sadness, anxiety, feelings of insecurity and inferiority, difficulty in identifying and expressing emotions, mistrust, feelings of guilt, discomfort and fear before stimuli related to aggression and feelings of anger". Or symptoms like "redness, swelling, shortness of breath, trouble falling asleep".

Although not all information is available, most cases are discovered due to police investigation, through other reports and successive cell phone or computer dumps. This implies a very high percentage of cases that remain unreported. In some cases, even after the discovery, the victims continued to deny having had relations (despite the existence of evidence). Some cases also discovered by the parents (especially the mother) when they check the contents of the cell phone or directly when they find the partner in the house. One of the victims reported it when he was of legal age, and others told a brother, their teachers, or their parents.

In this sense, although it only appears in one sentence, it is relevant that when two parents discover that their daughter has a relationship with an offender, they punish her without a cell phone and computer. However, taking advantage of the Internet access available to the console, she contacted the offender to warn him of the complaint and give him advice so that he would not go to prison. This example is in line with the strategies that emphasize the need to improve communication in the family environment, as opposed to simply cutting off networks.

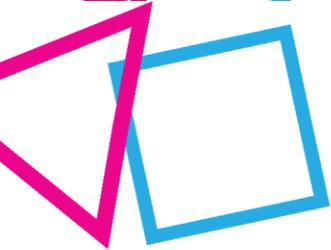
Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game. Revealing:

- More of the cases are discovered through police investigation or by parents, with victims disclosing only rarely the situation. When they reveal it, they may do it to a friend or a teacher rather than to their parents.

1.3. Belgium

1.3.1 Victims

The sample obtained from Belgium (Western area) consisted of ten victims with an age range between 12 and 16 years and a mean age of 14.20 (SD=1.22), like the Spanish analysis - the age of consent in Belgium is 16, as in Spain -, and with other research (Mitchel and collaborators; 2014). Seventy percent (n=7) of the victims were girls and 30% (n=3) were boys, in line with previous research (Wolak et al., 2010). In this case, only one victim was referred per offender in the sentences, in contrast to other areas, where offenders were found to have more than one victim.



1.3.2 Offenders

As for the 10 offenders, their mean age was 41.30 years (SD=15.69) with ages ranging from 21 to 70 years. Of the cases in which it was possible to obtain information on the background of the offenders, 30% had a criminal record of online grooming offenses, 10% had been convicted of a crime other than online grooming ((serious) violent crime), and 50% had not committed previous offenses.

In these sentences there is a lot of information on the psychological profile of the offenders, so that we can relate these data to the most frequent risk factors. Regarding sexual tendencies, from the five offenders with this kind of information, four had the diagnosis of pedophilia/paraphilia (one specifically hebephilia and two specifically with problems of recidivism) and one of hypersexuality. Two of them had lack of impulse control, and other two antisocial personality disorder. Besides, three presented narcissistic traits (with lack of empathy, lack of guilt and egocentric tendencies). In addition, two of them had also development problems with immature traits (PDD and defective cognitive development). Furthermore, there was one with the diagnosis of PTSD and one with disturber personality disorder. Regarding socio-familiar background just in one case it is pointed out that there was lack of affection in family, lack of cognitive support, divorced or alcohol problems parents, and negative peers. Finally, in another case loneliness and lack of social support are referred.

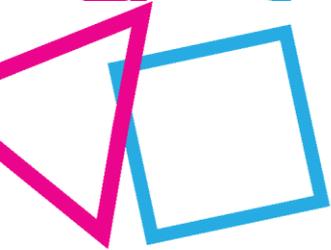
In relation to the topic of conversation between the victim and the offender, we observed that 70% (n=7) of the sample had conversations of a sexual nature. Less frequently, 20% (n=2) of the cases were found to share confident topics of the child together with sexual content and 10% (n=1) talked about the child's hobbies and sexual content. In most cases (60%, n=6) offender and victim exchanged material during the online contact, both images (30%, n=3) and videos and images (30%, n=3). Moreover, 100% (n=6) of the content exchanged was of a sexual nature, and in the sentences where this information is recorded, all the offenders kept these images and videos. At least in two cases the offender sent a picture of the penis (after sexual conversation), asking in one of them the victim to undress by video after that. In at least two of the sentences, the victim showed quite a lot of initiative in exchanging material. In contrast to the Spanish sentences, these ones at least do not describe as much insistence on the part of the offender to obtain the sexual material.

To sort the level of severity of such sexual content, the classification of child sexual abuse material of the COPINE scale (Taylor et al., 2001) was followed. The results obtained are shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Percentages of the level of severity of the sexual content exchanged.

Level	Denomination	Percentage
1	Indicative	0
2	Nudist	0
3	Erotic	60
4	Posing	0





5	Erotic posing	0
6	Explicit erotic posing	20
7	Explicit sexual activity	20
8	Assault	0
9	Gross assault	0
10	Sadistic/Bestiality	0

1.3.3 Modus operandi

Initial contact

In relation to victim selection, in those cases where it is included in the sentence, 20% (n=1) of the offenders contacted the victims on purpose, 40% (n=2) of the cases were opportunistic and, finally, 40% (n=2) were carried out by combining the above strategies. In 89% (n=8) of the cases the offenders were persons unknown to the victim and in only one case (11%, n=1) offender was a person close to the victim.

Regarding the platforms through which the offenders contacted their victims, 50% (n=5) used platforms with chat service, 10% (n=1) used dating apps or websites, 30% (n=3) used social networks, while 10% (n=1) used video games to initiate contact with the victim. The social networks that were used later to maintain online contact with the victim are shown in Table 3, being WhatsApp (60%) and Facebook (50%) the most used.



Table 3. Percentage of social networks used.

Social networks	Percentage
Facebook	10
Facebook, Mobil and Chatten	10
Facebook, WhatsApp, and Skype	10
Facebook and WhatsApp	20
WhatsApp	20
WhatsApp and Skype	10
WhatsApp and WordOn	10
Word On	10

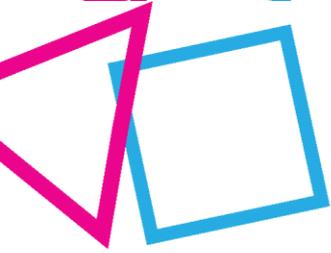
Regarding the modus operandi of the offenders, the most used strategy in this area was coercion (90%, n=9). However, the strategies of deception and blackmail, unlike in Spain, were only used in one case by the same offender (10%). Moreover, from the information provided in the sentences, only one perpetrator lied to the victim about his identity. In relation to the strategies described by Santiesteban (2017a), information could only be obtained from two cases, being the strategy in one the implication and in the other one lying and aggression. There were no sentences which pointed out corruption as a strategy.

There was one case that followed one of the classical online grooming strategies, in which the offender posed as a minor girl, contacted the victim, and started to exchange sexual materials. He forced the victim to send such materials back to him and tried to coerce the victim into a meeting by threatening to release the materials the victim had sent to him.

There is not so much information in the sentences about the modus operandi, but the sexual curiosity might be the main motivation for some of the victims, as no other ones are referred. Nevertheless, after the meeting at least 4 victim (40% of the sample) denounced the facts to the police. It is then hard to determine if there are other reasons or vulnerabilities playing a role there. For instance, in one case, the girl indicated multiple times that she wanted "lots of sex", liked "bad boys", and that she would let the offender do anything to her. At the same time, she wanted to run away from her grandpa, and asked the offender to go with him, so that could also be her main motivation.

In the sentence related to the implication strategy it seems that the victim was genuinely in love with the offender, but it also took place after her mother's death, what made her be in an especially vulnerable situation.

All the offenders proposed a meeting to their victims, which means that attending to Quayle and collaborators (2014) classification, there were just contact abusers in the sample, with no fantasy abusers included. This is because in Belgium, in contrast to Spain, the legal definition of online grooming implies at least an attempt to physically meeting. In all cases it was the offender who proposed the offline contacts to the victim, and in most cases a physical encounter took place (90% n=9). Of these offline contacts 70% (n=7) were sexual encounters. In total there were 15 physical encounters with a mean of 1.50 (SD=1.43), the



maximum number of encounters was five and the average duration of contact between offender and victim was 59.44 days (SD=54.43), with a minimum of six days and a maximum of 180 days.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game.

- In almost half of the cases the victim denounced after the physical encounter took place. It could be related to the dual identity that young people have (online and virtual). These teenagers first enjoyed with the online experimentation, becoming conscious of what was happening once they devirtualized the situation.

1.4. Slovakia

1.4.1 Victims

The sample obtained from Slovakia (East region) consisted in 10 sentences related to 10 offenders and 21 victims, with a mean age of 13,6 years (SD=1.26), slightly lower than Spain and Belgium, which is normal considering that the age of consent in the Slovakia is 15. 57.2% (n=12) of the victims were girls and 48.8% (n=9) were boys. In this case, a mean of 1.75 (SD=0.86) victims per perpetrator was found, with a maximum of three victims.

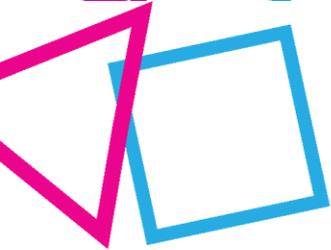
Initial contact

Information on the selection of victims could only be obtained from four cases, 75% (n=3) selected their victim on purpose and in 25% (n=1) of the cases the contact was made opportunistically. In 88% (n=8) of the cases the offender was a stranger to the victim and in 11% (n=1) it was a member of the child's own family.

Social networks were the platforms most used by offenders to initiate contact with victims (70% n=7). A smaller proportion used email (10%, n=1) and other platforms -Reddit in one case- (20%, n=2). In terms of the social networks, they used after initiating, the majority used Facebook (55.5%, n=5), and the rest of the cases used Instagram (11%, n=1), telephone (11%, n=1) and other platforms such as Reddit and Azet.sk (22%, n=2).

1.4.2 Offenders

The sample consisted of nine male offenders and one female offender, all of whom are Slovak nationals. In this case, it was only possible to obtain information on the age of the female offender, who was 17 years old. In those cases, in which the sentence included a criminal record, it was observed that 89% (n=8) had not committed a previous crime and 11% (n=1) had committed another crime previously. The only personal information presented in the sentences was that one offender was a student, that another owned a lot of child pornography, and that one of them had mental disability (as it happened with some offenders in both Spain and Belgium). In other case, although it does not specify the diagnosis it also refers that the offender did not truly understand the sexual boundaries including age boundaries, as he was in contact with very



young children and very old people, and he was finally directed to the psychiatric unit considered not to be generally harmful towards other potential victims.

The most predominant topic of conversation between the offender and the victim was sexual (80%, n=8) and in 20% (n=2) the topics of conversation were about personal concerns of the minor and sexual content. In all cases in which information was recorded (n=9), some type of material was exchanged with the offenders, specifically 77.7% (n=7) were images and 22.3% (n=2) were images and videos. Among the cases in which the information was included in the sentence, 100% of the content was of a sexual nature and was in turn saved by the offender. As it happened in the other zones, the content that is sent is often getting more and more explicit. For instance, in one case the victim started sending pictures in underwear, after that naked, and finally one imitating masturbation. As in the other regions, the offender usually starts sending naked pictures to encourage the victim to do the same.

To classify the level of severity of such sexual content, the classification of child sexual abuse material from the COPINE scale (Taylor et al., 2001) was followed. Information was only obtained on the level of severity of the content exchanged in seven cases, which are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Percentages of the level of severity of the sexual content exchanged.

Level	Denomination	Percentage
1	Indicative	0
2	Nudist	0
3	Erotic	0
4	Posing	0
5	Erotic posing	0
6	Explicit erotic posing	71,4
7	Explicit sexual activity	28,6
8	Assault	0
9	Gross assault	0
10	Sadistic/Bestiality	0

1.4.3 Modus operandi

Regarding the strategies used by the offenders to persuade their victims, considering the whole sample 33.3% used deception to gain the victim's trust, 20% (n=2) used coercion, and 20% (n=2) used blackmail.



In relation to the persuasion strategies proposed by Santiesteban (2017a), they are presented in the following Table 5.

Table 5. Percentage of strategies used.

Strategies	Percentage
Lying	28,6
Corruption	14,3
Implication	42,9
Aggression	0
Lying and aggression	14,3

We found in some cases the same strategies previously pointed. For instance, in one case, offender was first showing victims his collection of videos and pictures and afterwards he was encouraging victims to act similarly. In at least two cases, the offenders also blackmailed the victims for having a physical encounter or getting more material, with some naked pictures he previously had received. In one of those cases, he ended sending them to the victim's father.

As for offline contacts, 60% of the sample (n=6) met physically with the victims and in 70% (n=7) the offenders proposed the meeting, which means that the 86% got their objective. Of these offline contacts, 66.7% (n=4) of the cases had a sexual encounter. The mean number of contacts per offender was 1.82 (SD 2.96) with a minimum of zero contact and a maximum of 10. The mean duration of the contacts was 178.90 (SD=166.06) days with a minimum of 14 days and a maximum of 480 days.

Regarding discovery, in one case it was discovered when the offender shared the photos he obtained through Facebook, in another case the discovery was made because he shared the photos with another victim, and in other cases it was as part of another investigation. In none of the ten sentences was the crime discovered by the victim and subsequently reported, which is a cause for concern.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game.

- There is just one woman in the whole sample (51) that acted as an offender, being 17 years old in the time of the facts.

1.5. UK and Estonia

The sample obtained from the UK/Estonia area consisted of 11 sentences, 6 from UK and 5 from Estonia.

1.5.1 Victims

As for the victims, 17 victims were found with a mean age of 13.06 years (SD=.82), which is slightly lower than Spain and Belgium, which is normal considering that the age of consent in the UK is 16, but in Estonia it is 14. 64.7% (n=11) were girls, while 35.3% (n=6) were boys. Furthermore, a mean of 1.94 (SD=.89) victims per perpetrator was found. Four victims (related to two offenders) were Estonian under covered agents.

Initial contact

The selection of the victims was mostly (82.4%, n=14) on purpose, less frequently the contact with the victim was done opportunistically 5.9% (n=1). In one case the victim was the one who approached the offender - through a dating site- (5.9%, n=1) and finally it was found that in another case the selection was done by combining the above strategies (5.9%, n=1). Regarding the relationship that the offenders had with the victims, most of the offenders were persons unknown to the victims (91%, n=10) and in only one case the offender was a family friend of the victim (9%, n=1), in a similar percentage than other zones (East and West).

Social networks were the platforms most used by perpetrators to initiate contact with victims (65.6% n=5). Smaller proportions used chat platforms (11.1%, n=1), text messaging (11.1%, n=1), dating websites (11.1%, n=1) and video games (11.1%, n=1). As for the social networks they used after initiation, Facebook and snapchat were the more common.

1.5.2 Offenders

The sample consists of 11 male offenders with a mean age of 34.40 years (SD=13.92), with a minimum age of 16 years and a maximum age of 54 years. 72.8% (n=8) of the subjects had a criminal record, of which 62.5% (n=5) had committed a previous offence in addition to online grooming, 12,5% (n=1) had committed an online grooming offence and 25% (n=2) had committed another type of offence unrelated to online grooming. There is barely any information about the offenders' background, but in Northern Ireland sample two of the offenders (33%) were unemployed, which have been studied as a risk factor (Kloes et al., 2014).

In the cases where the information about the topic of conversation appeared in the sentence, conversations about sexual topics were the most predominant (93.3%, n=14). Only in one case (6.7% n=1) the conversation dealt with personal topics of the child in addition to sexual content. In all the cases in UK (6 sentences) sexual content was exchanged, what did not happen in any of the Estonian offences, contrary to the situation in other areas. Of the material exchanged, 85.7% (n=6) were images and 14.3% (n=1) images and videos. Of the content exchanged, 85.7% (n=6) was of a sexual nature, and 57.1% (n=4) of the offenders saved this content.

1.5.3 Modus operandi

Regarding the strategies used by the offenders, the use of deception to gain the victim's interest was used in only 11.8% (n=2) of the cases, while the use of coercion was the most used strategy in 81.8% (n=9) of the sentences. Blackmail was not used in any of the cases according with the information provided in the court cases. The persuasion strategies described by De Santiesteban (2017a) are listed in the following Table 6.

Table 6. Percentage of used strategies.

Strategies	Percentage
Lying	11.8
Corruption	29.4
Implication	29.4
Aggression	11.8
Corruption and implication	11.8

In the cases where corruption was used as a strategy, offender promised to take the child to events, or give the victim gifts, cigarettes, drinks, or money to transport. This offer was sometimes made in exchange of keeping the secret. As in other regions, there were cases where the offender created a fake alias to call the attention of the minor, and in which the offender threatened the child with telling their parents about their relationship.

Regarding offline contacts, offenders proposed a meeting in all the studied cases, in a trend like the other regions. In the Northern Ireland sentences, 5 of 7 of victims (71,4%) agreed to meet and finally met. In Estonian, not considering the cases with under covered police, one of two victims accepted and finally had a meeting. Furthermore, in all offline contacts there was sexual contact between the victim and the offender. Regarding the number of contacts, a total of 21 encounters were found, the average number of contacts per offender is 1.40 (SD 2.26) with a minimum of zero contact and a maximum of five. Finally, the mean duration of the contacts was 90.56 days (SD=88.39) with a time interval between two days and 300 days.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game

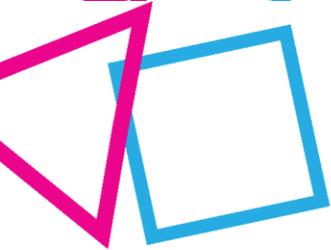
- In this region, every physical meeting ended in sexual contact, which underlines the importance of preventing that offender and victim end meeting each other.

1.6. Similarities and differences between zones

The total number of offenders was 51 with a mean age of 36.63 (SD=13.03), with ages ranging from 16 to 70 years. However, no differences were found in the age of the offenders according to the different regions (H=1.06, p=.589). The mean ages according to the European zone can be seen in Table 7 (no information was available for Slovakia).

Table 7. Average age of offenders by region

European region	Average age of offenders
Spain	35
Belgium	41.30
Slovakia	-
UK and Estonia	34.40



In relation to criminal records, 31.4% (n=16) had committed previous offences. In addition, differences were found according to the different regions ($\chi^2 = 11.77$, $p = .008$), with more offenders in the north having a criminal record (72%, n=8), while the south had the lowest number of offenders with previous offences (17.6%, n=3).

In terms of the information obtained related to the victims, 104 victims were found with a mean age of 13.78 years (SD=1.62) between the four European zones. Differences were also found in the age of the victims (H=9.26, $p = .026$), with the victims in the North (UK and Estonia) being the youngest and those in the West (Belgium) being the oldest victims. This difference is probably related with the national minimum consent age. The average ages of the victims by region are presented in Table 8:

Table 8. Average age of victims by region

European region	Average age of victims
Spain	13.96
Belgium	14.2
Slovakia	13.4
UK and Estonia	13.05

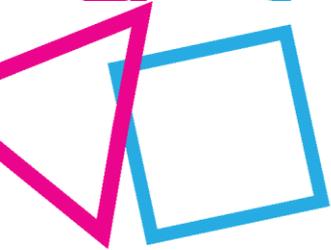
Regarding the sex of the victims, 53.8% (n=56) of them were girls while 46.2% (n=48) were boys. The percentages show that there were no significant differences in the sex of the victims according to the European area ($\chi^2 = 4.19$, $p = .24$).

In this type of crime, one offender may frequently have several victims, as the access to victims is easier due to the development of social networks and new technologies. We found a mean of 7.62 (SD=7.52) victims per offender, being the maximum number of victims per offender 19, and the minimum a single victim. Differences were found in this variable depending on the region ($\chi^2 = 34.64$, $p < .001$), with Spain being the area in which there are more victims per offender and Belgium the only area in which only one victim per offender was found.

In relation to the selection of victims, 77.5% (n=69) of them were selected by the offender on purpose, 8.9% (n=8) opportunistically, in 8.9% (n=8) of the cases it was the victim who approached the offender, and in 4.5% (n=4) the selection was carried out through a combination of the previous options. Furthermore, in 85.1% (n=86) of the cases the offenders were people unknown to the child and in 14.9% (n=15) they were people from the child's close environment. No differences were found in the type of relationship that the offender maintained with the victim depending on the regions ($\chi^2 = 15.19$, $p = .231$). In a small number of cases, offenders were friends of the victim (2.9%, n=3), a relative (1%, n=1) or had a professional relationship with the victim (5.8%, n=6). In 4.8% (n=5) of the sentences the offender was a person close to the victim with other type of relationship, like being the father of a friend of the child.

The platform more frequently used for the first contact was the social networks (52.9%, n=59), followed by chat services (14.4%, n=15), video games (4.8%, n=5), dating websites or applications (4.8%, n=5), text messages (1.9%, n=2) and other platforms (2.9%, n=3). In this variable, differences were found in the use of





one platform or another in relation to the different regions ($\chi^2 = 35.95$, $p = .007$). Thus, it was found that in the Southern region, most of the first contact was made through a social network (67.3%, $n = 33$) as well as in the Northern region (71.4%, $n = 10$). In the West, the most used platform was chat services (75%, $n = 9$) as it was in the East (50%, $n = 5$).

The frequency of topics of conversation is collected in Table 9:

Table 9. Percentage of topics conversation.

Topic of conversation	Percentage
Hobbies or activities that the minor like	1.9
Confident topics	1.9
Sexual topics	72.1
Confident and sexual topics	9.6
Hobbies and sexual topics	5.8
Hobbies and confident topics	3.8

The main topics of the conversations that were registered in the sentences were sexual topics, being non-sexual a very small percentage of the topics. It is difficult to know whether these figures represent the real conversations or is there is a bias in the sentences, not collecting the ones that are not specifically related with sex. The topics of conversation did not vary from one region to another.

Regarding the exchange of material, 74.4% ($n = 67$) of the victims exchanged some type of content with the offender, specifically 65.7% ($n = 44$) were images, 4.5% ($n = 3$) were videos, and 29.8% ($n = 20$) were images and videos. Of these, 98.5% ($n = 66$) were of sexual nature. The type of content exchanged did not vary between regions, being in all four zones the percentage quite high.

To classify the level of severity of such sexual content, the classification of child sexual abuse material from the COPINE scale (Taylor et al., 2001) was followed. The results are shown in Table 10.



Table 10. Classification of the level of severity of sexual content.

Level	Denomination	Percentage
1	Indicative	2
2	Nudist	2
3	Erotic	16.7
4	Posing	8.3
5	Erotic posing	2
6	Explicit erotic posing	41.7
7	Explicit sexual activity	25
8	Assault	0
9	Gross assault	0
10	Sadism/Bestialism	2

The most frequent severity levels are explicit erotic posing and explicit sexual activity in the four zones, as no differences were found ($\chi^2 = 22.00$, $p = .579$).

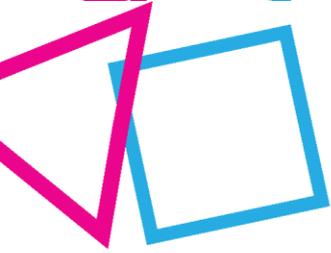
The most used strategy to get and maintain the contact with the victims was coercion (61,4 %, $n = 27$) in the four zones. However, it was found that this strategy was used more in some areas than in others ($\chi^2 = 46.33$, $p < .001$). Specifically, the South is the area where this strategy is less used (35%, $n = 7$) while in the North and the West coercion was found in a much higher percentage of cases, respectively 81.8% ($n = 9$) and 90% ($n = 9$).

On the other hand, it was found that deception to gain the child's trust was also used by 34.9% ($n = 15$) of the cases. In this strategy, relationships were also found according to the zones ($\chi^2 = 47$, $p < .001$). The North zone had the lowest use of deception with 18,2% ($n = 2$), while in the West zone 90% ($n = 9$) of cases used deception and in the South zone 50% ($n = 10$). Regarding the use of false identities, they were used by the 44.4% of the offenders, with no significant differences ($\chi^2 = 5.65$, $p = .130$) between regions. Finally, the blackmail strategy was used in only 8 cases (17.4%), not existing differences between countries ($\chi^2 = 3.19$, $p = .363$).

In addition, the different persuasion strategies described by De Santiesteban (2017a) were analyzed and it was found that offenders tend to use at least two main strategies, as shown in Table 11:

Table 11. Percentage of used strategies.

Strategies	Percentage
Lying	21.2
Corruption	18.8
Implication	13
Aggression	9.4
Use of two or more strategies	37.6



Implication was found to be used by 35,9% of offenders (n=14) and corruption by 25,5 % (n=13) with no significant differences between regions. If we analyze the same differences considering the victims instead of the offenders the figures change, being corruption the most used strategy (44,7%, n=34), followed by deception (40%, n=38), coercion (34,9%, n=30), implication (20,7%, n=17) and finally blackmail (10,3, n=9). It is because the offenders with multiple victims used these strategies more than those with single or few victims, which might be related with the time that is needed to use different strategies. The only one strategy that correlated with having a physical meet was implication ($\chi^2 = .47$, $p = .011$).

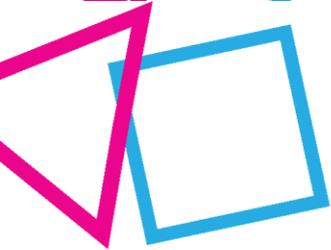
There were significant differences considering the modus operandi and the sex of the victim, as it happened in the case of the South region, where this kind of analysis could be conducted (because of the bigger sample). On the one hand, female victims were more likely to suffer from coercion ($X^2=4.23$, $p=.040$), blackmail ($X^2=4.91$, $p=.027$), other violent crime ($X^2=4,95$ $p=.026$), deception ($X^2=4.71$, $p=.030$) and implication ($X^2=4.08$, $P=.043$). On the other hand, male victims were more likely to suffer from corruption ($X^2=13.30$, $p<.001$). There were also significant differences between girls and boys in the platform used for the first contact ($X^2=12,85$, $P=.025$), using boys more frequently online games and date sites and girls' social networks and messenger applications.

The mean duration of the relationship when there was offline contact was 100.34 days (SD=136.77), with contacts lasting a minimum of two days and a maximum of 720 days, with no differences between the regions. In those cases where the information was recorded in the sentence, the total number of offline contacts collected across the four regions was 95 with a mean of 1.01 (SD=1.73) contact per case, with a maximum of 10 contacts. In this variable, significant differences were found in the number of contacts depending on the zone (H=8.63, $p=.035$).

Of the cases that ended in offline contacts, 63.63% (n=28) were found to be sexual encounters in those sentences where the information was recorded. In this variable, differences were found from one area to another in both having a meeting ($\chi^2 =10.23$, $p=.017$) and having a meeting with sexual contact ($\chi^2 =8.76$, $p=.033$). The West zone had the highest percentage of cases that had meetings (90%, n=9) followed by the North zone (62,5%, n=5), East zone (50%, n=6), and finally the South (38.1%, n=24) where the percentage was lower. Spain was the country where the least number of encounters took place, which could be explained by the wider definition of online grooming in their national legislation. Regarding the cases in which these encounters end in a sexual contact, in the zone they were 77,7% (n=7) of the meetings, in the North zone 42,8%, (n=3), in the South (39.5%, n=15) and finally in the East zone 27,27%, (n=3).

In most cases in all areas there was a proposal to carry out the offline contact, being this proposal made in 75.3%, n=67. In only one case it was the victim who proposed to meet in person, and in 24,7%, (n=22) there was no proposal. 44 Victims agreed, a 66,7% of those proposed. The only strategy that clearly correlated with having a physical encounter was implication ($\chi^2 =6.47$, $p=.011$).

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game.



- Most of the findings are similar when analyzing in one single zone and taking the whole European sample, which means a solid trend.
- Most of the victims exchanged sexual material and agreed to have a physical meeting on a high percentage, ending often in a sexual contact.

1.7. Conclusions and discussion

The objective of this analysis was to conclude whether the profile of victims and offenders and the modus operandi of online grooming found in the literature (D1.1) are consistent with findings in court sentences, as it may provide valuable information for effective prevention.

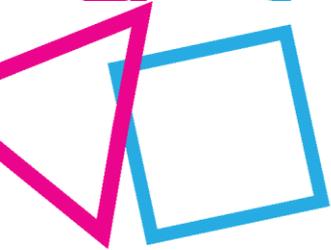
The analysis of the sentences shows that most offenders are young, unknown males with no criminal record, with this figure varying from region to region (from the 72% of ex-convicted in the North to the 17.6% in the South). In the case of Spain, recidivism coincides with the multiplicity of victims, suggesting a sophistication of the modus operandi, which could be studied further. Despite a lack of information on the offenders' backgrounds in the sentences, some elements that have been noted as risk factors are mentioned. Regarding work situations, there were several unemployed (Kloes et al., 2014), in addition to men who worked with children. While in some sentences the convicted person had child pornography or sadomasochistic material, in most cases this aspect was not mentioned, making it not possible to confirm the conclusions of Briggs and colleagues (2011). In the West region, with further information, a high prevalence of personality disorders has been found, being narcissistic the most common one as found in previous research (Briggs et. Al, 2011). Lack of social support and loneliness was also referred.

A small number of offenders in almost every region had mental retardation or other development disorders, which could have made them to search for the contact with minors instead of adults. In one of the cases, indeed, both the offender and the victim had IQ limit. This was a reason that was considering in some of the sentences to reduce the offender's punishment.

In accordance with the hypothesis of Quayle and colleagues (2012), in the studied sample adolescents are more at risk than younger kids, being the average age between 13 and 14. In contrast to what happens in offline sexual abuse, online abuse tend to happen with older kids, something that might be related to age-specific characteristics (Whittle et al., 2013). Due to their evolutionary stage, they seek a wider social network, which includes strangers. Other elements that characterize this vital stage, and that are simultaneously risk factors, are sexual curiosity, the search for new experiences, or certain insecurities that are usually increased in adolescence.

The first online contact takes place mostly in an opportunistic way by the offender, who uses a social network, such as Facebook or Instagram, with his mobile phone, being the subsequent online contact usually via WhatsApp and Skype. However, for instance in Spain, 25% of offenders exclusively target known children, a relevant fact if we usually think of the offender as a total stranger, and especially if we consider that, in that





region, almost half of the victims who were known to the offender ended up having physical sexual contact with their offender.

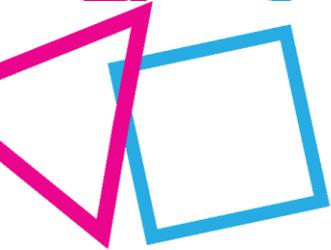
Almost half of the offenders lied to their victims and used a false identity, being this strategy more common in the West and the South than in the North. The topic of conversation was mostly sexual, although as commented, it is difficult to know if there is a bias in which was collected in the sentence. Most offenders proposed to meet in person, and most of the victims in all regions agreed to meet the offender when the offender proposed, mainly in a public place. The number of contacts that end in a physical encounter differs between regions, which could be explained by the type of offence that comes to court most frequently. For instance, in Spain, contrary to the other regions, the legislation consider that it is enough to exchange sexual material, not requiring the proposal of a meeting.

The average duration of online contact is almost 4 months, and in the cases where a physical encounter takes place, a month usually precedes the first offline encounter. The most used persuasion strategy is coercion, although many offenders use more than one strategy, in particular lies and corruption. Despite it is not the most frequent strategy (probably because it takes longer to develop it) implication showed to be the most successful one in terms of achieving a physical encounter. During conversations, offender and victim exchanged images and videos, mostly sexual and of an explicit nature, and offenders usually kept them on their devices.

In general, sentence analysis results agree with those obtained in the literature, even though some differences were found. The profile of the online groomer coincides with the one described by several authors, which seems to corroborate the hypothesis of greater self-control and less impulsivity in this kind of offenders (Seto et al., 2011), making their behavior less aggressive (Wolak et al., 2008). However, in our study we found coercion to be the most used persuasion strategy, which contradicts the results of the authors who indicate that the most used forms are deception and corruption (de Santisteban and Gámez-Guadix, 2017b). In addition, most of the offenders proposed a physical encounter, what might be seen as contradictory with the self-control idea. When using several strategies, perpetrators mostly opt for the combination of lying and corruption/implication and in the case of using aggression in addition, this is usually introduced at the end of the process, as de Santisteban and Gámez-Guadix (2017b) argue. However, comparatively, both individually and considering different combinations of strategies, the exclusive use of coercion remains in the majority. While most other crimes perpetrated on the victim are non-violent, which corroborates the lower aggression hypothesis (Seto et al., 2011; Wolak et al., 2008), the cases in which they are violent occur when the victim is a woman.

The results suggest that offenders would use different strategies depending on the sex of the victim: if the victim is female, blackmail, and the commission of a violent crime, such as sexual assault, would be more likely to be used alongside online grooming. Authors such as van Gijn-Grosvenor & Lamb (2016) have studied the behavioral differences of online groomers seeking to have a physical sexual encounter according to the sex of the victim. The findings of this paper, however, do not replicate theirs, but are closer to those obtained





by Grosskopf (2010), who found that offenders who contact girls are more aggressive than those who contact boys, as they seek a relationship of domination using threats and blackmail.

A strong general trend, shown both at local and general level, appears in terms of gender differences, which is especially useful in terms of prevention. When the victims are girls, coercion, threats of both violence and abandonment, and blackmail, for example with the dissemination of the exchanged material, are not only more frequent. The outcome is also more likely to involve another violent crime, such as rape or attempted murder. Deception and implication are also more likely to happen.

In the case of boys, the strategy of corruption, such as offering money, is used more frequently, even though is less likely to lead to an encounter than implication or coercion. Boys are more likely to initiate contact themselves (in the overall sample) and more likely to agree to meet when it is proposed (in the Spanish sample).

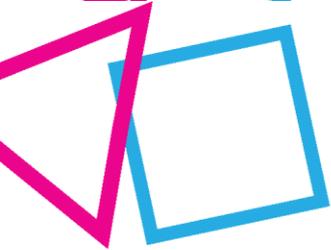
Along with other studies (Mitchel et al., 2007), most victims are girls, while offenders who contact boys (in the minority in our search) get more male victims. Several risk factors may explain this difference in boys. Firstly, as mentioned above, offenders use the strategy of seeking out homosexual boys (or boys who are questioning their sexuality) to encourage them to have sexual experiences. The Internet can facilitate people with minority sexual orientations to meet other people. An adolescent with doubts, afraid of coming out, or simply with few people around who understand their situation, finds on the Internet a place with infinite possibilities, but with certain risks. For instance, a young person who has not come out would find the shame or difficulty of revealing what is happening added to the fact that is happening with someone of the same sex. The risk of coercion or blackmail in these situations, however, according to our sample, remains higher for female victims whose perpetrators are male.

Secondly, boys' greater initiative in contacting and accepting an encounter when it is proposed to them, implies a perception of risk and sexuality, which is closely related to the gender role assigned to them and the ideal of masculinity. Additionally, changes in gender roles and the sexual liberation of women in recent decades have led many young women to see the sharing of private images with sexual content as modern and empowering, making them feel desired and cared for (Soriano et al., 2019).

Offenders use fear of abandonment as a coercive strategy particularly with female victims, which can be seen not only because of individual vulnerabilities, but also because of different socialization through gender roles. They also use the threat of violence to a greater extent with female victims. We can indeed speak of gender-based violence, as the higher incidence of crime among girls is coupled with a higher likelihood of coercion, blackmail, and violence. Thus, gender violence needs to be raised awareness by breaking down the stereotypes that place it as something that only happens to older, married women, something that characterizes a different generation.

Although girls and boys end up sending sexual material in equal measure, in girls this is often achieved after prolonged insistence, with phrases such as "what are you, a cock teaser", as can be observed in the conversations. As mentioned, threats of abandonment and violence also emerge when the offender is





grooming a girl. Both are strategies that take advantage of girls' insecurity, therefore tools to empower girls in these situations should be included in the prevention strategies, together with the need for consent in relationships, not just in virtual ones.

Understanding adolescent sexuality and its expressions as something that exists and must be understood by teenagers, is another important issue when it comes to prevention. In this sense, in the conversations we find in the sentences there is a desire for experimentation that cannot be explained only through blackmail or deception. This sexuality plays a role in the development of online grooming situations, so denying it can make it even more difficult to deal with the problem. For example, the fact that the definition of the crime in Spain includes that the offender must be the one who first contacts the victim -although case law does not always require this-, could leave out of the crime aggressions that occur, but in which the previous contact is made by the minor. Sexual curiosity should be accepted and legitimized but pointing out the risks and dangers of power and abuse relationships, taking care of not blaming the victim, as often occurs in cases of rape (Suarez and Gadalla, 2010) and sexting (Karain; 2014).

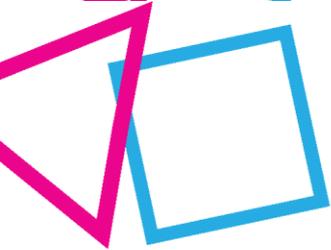
Disinhibition felt by many young people may be partially explained by the different understanding of identity online and offline (Boyd; 2014). This may also explain why they attach less importance to sexually explicit chat rooms and sending material than to face-to-face encounters. In this sense, they are more reluctant to arrange a meeting, and some of the victims report just after the encounter has taken place, as if they were unaware of the situation until it is devirtualised. Furthermore, disinhibition stands out as the most relevant personal characteristic and is even considered a predictor of victimization, along with physical attractiveness (Schoeps et al., 2020).

Following with prevention, another interesting finding is that there is no pattern in offenders, as they adapt and change their strategy according to the moment and the victim. This is especially noticeable in offenders who have several victims and who constantly change their pattern. Concerning the victims, the sending of sexual material occurs in most of the cases studied, with the severity of the material not varying according to gender.

In many cases, the contact with the offender is made through friends, resulting in what can be called a chain of abuse, which has implication related with prevention. Awareness interventions usually focus on the figure of the stranger, but what happen if the person is already a friend of a friend? Something that indeed is used by teens as a proof of trust and reliability may increase the chances of risky behaviors.

The socioeconomic dimension that has been pointed out in other studies (Villacampa and Gómez, 2016) should also be considered in future analyses. With the available data in the sentences, it is not possible to go into this aspect in depth, but the data from the corruption strategy point to a high prevalence of minors who act motivated by money or fame.

A final point to highlight is the low prevalence of children revealing to their parents what is happening, as the crime is often not disclosed, but discovered by the police investigation or by parents. The literature suggests that this is related to the fact that there is a higher risk of this crime occurring in households with



poor communication (Jonsson et al., 2019). In addition, adolescents tend not to trust their parents, especially in relation to new technologies. Finally, in their search for autonomy they try to experience on the Internet the freedom that they often do not have in the non-virtual world Lewkes, (2010). Therefore, it may be more useful in terms of prevention to insist on telling a teacher, a friend, or a sibling when they experience or witness this type of situation.

It can be easier to share the situation the child is going through when it is a person of the same age, as they can identify emotionally with the victim and understand how they feel. For this reason, the existence of mediators in schools could be promoted or used to intervene in the case of conflict, bullying or other problems with new technologies. Prevention should also include the need to break the chain of abuse, so that if the aggressor tries to do so, it becomes something that sets off alarm bells.

Finally, when it comes to working with families, it should be stressed that improving communication can be the best prevention tool, moving from parental control to supervision and negotiated accompaniment. The threat of cutting off networks can lead to not reporting for fear of disconnection. Prohibition without the young person understanding may result in particularly serious results, as we have seen in our analysis.

2. Analysis of sentences on cyberbullying

2.1. Introduction

This section reports the results and conclusions of the analyzed sentences on cyberbullying collected within the RAYUELA project. A total of 46 sentences have been analyzed. These were collected in the four European zones (North, East, South, West) as described below:

- Eight sentences from the United Kingdom, thus representing the north zone.
- Twenty sentences from Spain, thus representing the south.
- Eight sentences from Slovakia, thus representing the east.
- Ten sentences from Belgium, thus representing the west.

In many cases more than one offender and/or more than one victim were reported per sentence. In total 67 offenders and 47 victims are included in the analysis. For the data collection the same template was used in all countries to apply the same coding procedure. It must be noted that some data cleaning was necessary before proceeding with the analysis due to inconsistencies in coding (recoding of variables is available in a separate document).

In the first part of this document, we report on the descriptive statistics for offenders, victims, and modus operandi. This will be followed by a discussion on bivariate analyses between all variables discussed, to investigate which variables or characteristics have a significant association with one another. In these analyses, usually chi-square statistics are reported. To establish exactly where this association comes from, standardized residuals are inspected. In case the value of a standardized residuals is equal to or greater than



2 in absolute value, it is considered to contribute to the association. In cases where there are more than 20% of cells with an expected count less than 5, the alternative Fisher's exact test is reported on. For this test, the 2-tailed significance level is reported. No inspection of standardized residuals is done in case of Fisher's exact test, but rather relative proportion are inspected more closely to explain the association between two variables.

2.2. Descriptive statistics

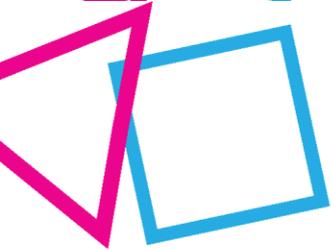
In the following paragraphs we describe the general characteristics of the offenders and victims in the sample. Given the fact that in the dataset, some cases had multiple offenders and in other cases one offender had multiple victims, a selection variable was used to identify all unique offenders and to avoid double counts. The results of this analysis are displayed in Table 12.

2.2.1 Offenders

Table 12. Offender descriptive statistics

			Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumul. percent
Sex	Valid	Man	33	49,3	50,8	50,8
		Woman	32	47,8	49,2	100,0
		Total	65	97,0	100,0	
	Missing	99	2	3,0		
		Total	67	100,0		
Age	Valid	< 12	1	1,5	2,4	2,4
		12-15	29	43,3	70,7	73,2
		16-19	10	14,9	24,4	97,6
		30-39	1	1,5	2,4	100,0
		Total	41	61,2	100,0	
	Missing	99	26	38,8		
Total		67	100,0			
Nationality	Valid	Same nationality and ethnic origin	27	40,3	87,1	87,1
		Same nationality different ethnic origin	4	6,0	12,9	100,0
		Total	31	46,3	100,0	
	Missing	99	36	53,7		
		Total	67	100,0		
Criminal history	Valid	No	21	31,3	91,3	91,3
		Yes, other than CB	1	1,5	4,3	95,7
		Yes, also cyberbullying	1	1,5	4,3	100,0
		Total	23	34,3	100,0	
	Missing	99	44	65,7		

	Total		67	100,0		
CB alone or in group	Valid	Alone	23	34,3	34,8	34,8
		In group	43	64,2	65,2	100,0
	Missing	Total	66	98,5	100,0	
		99	1	1,5		
	Total	67	100,0			
Number of victims	Valid	1	63	94,0	95,5	95,5
		3	1	1,5	1,5	97,0
		5	1	1,5	1,5	98,5
		10	1	1,5	1,5	100,0
		Total	66	98,5	100,0	
		99	1	1,5		
	Missing	99	1	1,5		
	Total	67	100,0			
Female victims	Valid	0	17	25,4	25,8	25,8
		1	47	70,1	71,2	97,0
		3	1	1,5	1,5	98,5
		10	1	1,5	1,5	100,0
		Total	66	98,5	100,0	
		99	1	1,5		
	Missing	99	1	1,5		
	Total	67	100,0			
Male victims	Valid	0	47	70,1	71,2	71,2
		1	18	26,9	27,3	98,5
		5	1	1,5	1,5	100,0
		Total	66	98,5	100,0	
		99	1	1,5		
		Missing	99	1	1,5	
		Total	67	100,0		
Relationship to victim	Valid	Former friend	14	20,9	28,6	28,6
		Classmate	20	29,9	40,8	69,4
		person doing the same sports	2	3,0	4,1	73,5
		Stranger	6	9,0	12,2	85,7
		Known from the internet	2	3,0	4,1	89,8
		Other (specify)	5	7,5	10,2	100,0
		Total	49	73,1	100,0	
	Missing	99	9	13,4		
		System	9	13,4		
		Total	18	26,9		
		Total	67	100,0		



Quality of pre-bullying relationship	Valid	No relationship	earlier	5	7,5	10,4	10,4
		Friendly		17	25,4	35,4	45,8
		Neutral		3	4,5	6,3	52,1
		Competitive		1	1,5	2,1	54,2
		Hostile		21	31,3	43,8	97,9
		Antagonistic		1	1,5	2,1	100,0
		Total		48	71,6	100,0	
	Missing	99		19	28,4		
	Total	67		100,0			

Table 12 presents the descriptive statistics for the offenders' present in the sample. Concerning sex, about half of the sample is male (50,8%), about half of the sample is female (49,2%), with slightly more men in the sample than women. Thus, the data in our sample suggest that cyberbullying is not something particular to either girls or boys.

In terms of age, it seems that most respondents in the sample is 12-15 years (70.7%), followed by those aged 16-19 (24,4%). This should, however, not come as a surprise as this is the target audience we aimed for during recruitment. It must be noted that there are a considerable number of missing values here, which amounts to 28,8% of the offenders included in the sample.

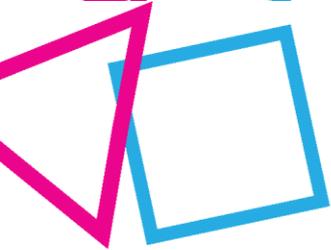
When looking at nationality, it is rather clear that the offenders usually have the nationality of their country of citizenship, as there are no respondents in the sample which were new immigrants. Only a small part of respondents (12,9%) clearly have an immigration background. However, given the fact that there might be an under-estimation of people with a different ethnic background (as this variable was only coded as such if it was clear that there is such a background present), it is safer to say that offenders in the sample are of the same nationality as the country the offence took place in, disregarding potential immigration background. This result should be interpreted with care, as in most cases this information was not present as appears from the high missing count (53.7%).

When looking to having a history of bullying or other deviant behaviors, it is very rare for offenders in the sample to have a history of bullying or other deviant behaviors, as 91,3% of those offenders for which information on criminal history was present did not have any precedents, neither bullying or otherwise. Only for one case this was specified, and it concerned similar bullying behavior in the past. Closer inspection of the data suggests that it concerns a case of online harassment. Again, however, this information was only coded for a small part of the cases due to missing information (amounting to 65.7% of the offenders for which this information was unavailable).

Further, offenders in our sample usually bullied their victims in group (65,2%), and only small part of the offenders bullied alone (34.8%).

As to the number of victims, this was limited to only one victim in most cases (91.3%), and only two exceptions existed where one offender had 3 respectively 5 victims. One outlier in this analysis is the number





10, which is a pretty large number of victims; therefore, data pertaining to this number were inspected more closely. It concerned a case of outing, where the offender collected sexual images from 10 people, not all of which were reported on.

When looking at what type of relationship offenders usually had with their victims, the great majority were either friends or classmates of the victim, both together accounting for 69,4% of the valid responses. Only in rare cases it concerned a stranger (12.2%), someone doing the same sports (4.1%) or someone the offender knew from the internet (4.1%). In 5 cases (10.2%) the relationship was different, and it concerned in these cases 2 cases in which the victim was in the class of someone the offender knew, 2 cases in which they were former schoolmates, 7 cases in which they were high school classmates, and 2 cases in which the victim was the offender's girlfriend. This confirms that victim and offender, in our sample, usually know each other from either a school environment or were friends of each other. However, the rare occurrence of a romantic relationship indicates that cyberbullying does occur also in cases where both are romantic partners. This might be an important insight to incorporate in the game: it is also possible that you are bullied by your romantic partner.

If we consider the quality of the relationship between the offender and their victim(s), our data suggest that, mainly, this relationship was either friendly (35,4%) or hostile (43,8%). In only rare cases, there was no earlier relationship (10,4%)¹, a neutral relationship (6,3%), a competitive relationship (2,1%) or an antagonistic relationship (2,1%). For about one third of the offenders (28,4%) this information was, however, not available.

When looking at the additional information provided on offenders, it seems that there is no specific offender profile that can be defined. For example, there are only a few cases in which it is reported that the offender 'had signs of slight mental retardation and wasn't able to start a normal relationship with a woman' or that 'the offender was unemployed'. While in other cases the offender is described as a normal person, e.g., in one case it is stated: 'Structured family system. It has a standardized adaptation at the personal, family, social level and certain difficulties of adaptation and school performance, without the assessment of attitudes or behaviors that indicate an increased risk of social exclusion'. In other cases, it is reported that 'the offender is an "easy kid" that does not pose any problems and does not have any problems at school' or 'There is nothing particular about the offender and he does well at school'.

Intermediary conclusion:

- The descriptive analysis does not reveal any specific profile for offenders based on the variables included in the study. It seems that cyberbullying is a phenomenon that is quite general, in the sense that it can occur for both boys and girls, which are in the same age range as the victim, the same nationality or ethnic origin, is usually carried out in group, targeted at people the offender knows (in a friendly or hostile manner) and is mostly limited to one victim. The finding that it is very rare to have a pre-history of bullying or other deviant behavior further bolsters the finding that cyberbullying is often limited to one event.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game:

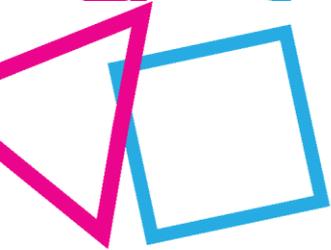
- The descriptive analysis shows that certain stereotypes that may exist regarding cyberbullying, such as the offender being a stranger, a poorly adapted or even evil individual does not hold. This is an important finding, as people may sometimes engage in bullying without realizing it constitutes bullying due to such stereotypes. This provides RAYUELA with a wonderful opportunity to debunk such myths and focus on educating people about which actions can be considered unacceptable as well as the consequences this may have on victims. This way, one could emulate, for example, disputes in the game and see how the other person reacts to this under certain circumstances (e.g., the availability of private photos of the victim).

2.2.2 Victims

Table 13. Victim descriptive statistics

Sex	Valid	male	14	29,8	31,8	31,8
		female	30	63,8	68,2	100,0
		Total	44	93,6	100,0	
	Missing	99,00	3	6,4		
	Total	47	100,0			
Age	Valid	< 12	1	2,1	3,2	3,2
		12-15	21	44,7	67,7	71,0
		16-19	9	19,1	29,0	100,0
		Total	31	66,0	100,0	
	Missing	99	16	34,0		
Total	47	100,0				
Nationality	Valid	same nationality and ethnic origin	22	46,8	88,0	88,0
		same nationality different ethnic origin	2	4,3	8,0	96,0
		new immigrant (first generation)	1	2,1	4,0	100,0
		Total	25	53,2	100,0	
	Missing	99	22	46,8		
Total	47	100,0				
CB alone or in group	Valid	alone	24	51,1	52,2	52,2
		in group	22	46,8	47,8	100,0
		Total	46	97,9	100,0	
	Missing	99	1	2,1		
	Total	47	100,0			

The victims in our sample were predominantly female (68, 2% female compared to 31,8% male). This stand in slight contrast to the sex of offenders, where about half of offenders were male and about half were



female. This way, our data seem to suggest that, indeed, males are relatively more prone to offending and females are, relatively speaking, more prone to victimization, as found in previous research.

Regarding the victim's age, most victims are between 12-15 years old (67,7%), followed by those aged 16-19 years old (29%). In only one case the victims were younger than 12 years old (3,2%). This way the ages of both victims and offenders are distributed in largely a similar way.

When looking at the nationality of the victims present in the sample, again a similar picture to that of offenders emerges. Most victims are national of their country of residence, and no immigrant background has been declared (88,0%). In two cases (8%) it could be established that the victim had an immigration background, and in only one case the victim could be established to be a new immigrant (4%). It must be noted that for a large portion of victims, there was no information on nationality or origin available (46,8%).

As there are many more offenders (67) than victims (47) in the sample, and as many offenders bullied their victim in group, it is worthwhile to see how many victims underwent cyberbullying by several offenders. This analysis reveals that 22 out of the 47 victims (47,8%), or about half of the victims, were bullied by multiple offenders.

When looking at the additional information provided on victims, it appears that many cases relate to sharing passwords or having weak passwords online. An example is where the "offender tricked her to gain the password form here social media accounts". Often, sexual pictures are shared online, for example "finding it painful that everyone had seen her naked". It is noteworthy that the impact of bullying can be quite severe, often resulting in anxiety and other disorders such as "(she) Suffered from an anxious, moderate, adaptive depressive disorder from the date on", "she was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder", and "As a result of online and offline bullying he suffers from mixed adaptive disorder, with anxious symptomatology - chronic depressive character, devalued self-esteem, ...". This way, the impact of cyberbullying on victims ought not to be underestimated.

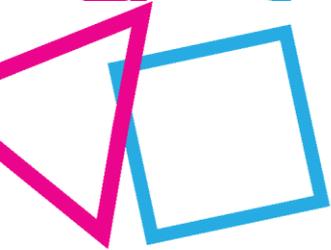
Intermediary conclusion:

- Like the analysis of offenders, no real victim profile emerges. Both men and women can be victim of cyberbullying, victim and offender are within the same age range, have the same nationality or ethnic origin, and many victims face multiple bullies. Whereas at first, we might have thought to create a couple characteristic personas, we may conclude this is probably not realistic. This is both the case for offenders and victims.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game:

- An interesting, albeit technically more challenging, approach to RAYUELA's serious game would be the introduction of fully customizable avatars. This will render the game more realistic to players, certainly so if the avatar can be linked to the actual social network the players use. This holds true for both victims and offenders. Further, such an approach may provide for incentives to the players, for example by making more customization options available as the game progresses. This way, we indirectly motivate and "reward" players in the game without an associated financial cost.





- In the learning component of the game, we consider it to be a unique opportunity for RAYUELA to break through stereotypes (such as associations that are made between ethnic origin and offending, or inapt meta-narratives of the “bad guy” versus the “vulnerable victim”) as everyone can be subject to cyberbullying. Therefore, we suggest a more graded approach that starts with general education about the internet and privacy and progresses into more concrete cases of cyberbullying. It is of the most importance that victims learn to recognize when certain boundaries have been breached, and RAYUELA can assist in generating this sensibilization as well as giving advice as how to react when cyberbullying occurs.

2.2.3 Descriptive statistics of the cases / incidents

To calculate the descriptive statistics of the cases or incidents, the selection variable “incident” has been used, which allows to identify each unique incident present in the sample. This is done, again, to avoid counting duplicate cases in the results. First, we will look at the primary internet platform used, followed by the type of cyberbullying the victim faced. Please note that in subsequent analyses, these variables have been recorded in dummy variables to optimize bivariate analyses (i.e., reduce the number of cells with an expected count less than 5).

Primary internet platform used

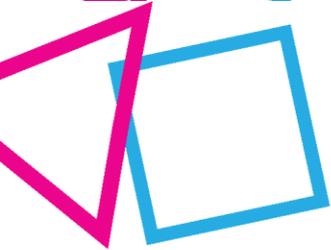
Table 14. Primary internet platform used.

Primary internet platform		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	chat	21	45,7	46,7	46,7
	texting	5	10,9	11,1	57,8
	social networks	18	39,1	40,0	97,8
	blogs and forums	1	2,2	2,2	100,0
	Total	45	97,8	100,0	
Missing	99	1	2,2		
Total		46	100,0		

As appears in Table 14, in our sample the primary internet platform used are chat applications, closely followed by social networks. In our sample, bullying through text messages or blogs and forums is rare, and no one was bullied through e-mail, videogames, dating sites, social review sites or professional networking sites.

The concrete platforms used were Snapchat, Messenger, Facebook, Text (SMS), Pokec.sk, azet.sk, Tuenti, YouTube, WhatsApp, Viber, Instagram, MeetMe. There are, however, some regional differences when it comes to the primary internet platform used. In Belgium, Facebook is the most widely used platform, followed by WhatsApp, Messenger, Viber, Snapchat and MeetMe. In Spain, Whatsapp is the most widely used platform, followed by Tuenti, Snapchat and Messenger. In the UK there is no real primary platform, and Facebook, Snapchat, Text, and Messenger are used to similar extents. In Slovakia, Facebook,





Pokec.sk and azet.sk are the platforms used for cyberbullying. Therefore, in the serious game we might give the player a choice between the most used platforms depending on the region.

Illustrations:

- “With the clear intention of violating the privacy of JM, broadcast it via WhatsApp to several students of the center.”
- “X uploads a photo of Y to Tuenti and encourages friends to comment derogatorily.”
- “The victim was added to a group chat in which the offender insulted and threatened her in front of his friends.”

Type and duration of cyberbullying

The most common types of cyberbullying in our sample were flaming, followed by outing, online harassment, denigration, and stalking. However, by far the most predominant types in the sample were **flaming** and **outing**.

Table 15. Type of cyberbullying.

Type of cyberbullying	Responses			
	N	Percent	Percent of Cases	
multiple response ^a	Flaming	14	26,9%	32,6%
	Online harassment	8	15,4%	18,6%
	Social exclusion	2	3,8%	4,7%
	Stalking	5	9,6%	11,6%
	Denigration	6	11,5%	14,0%
	Masquerading	1	1,9%	2,3%
	Outing	13	25,0%	30,2%
	Happy slapping	1	1,9%	2,3%
	Trickery	2	3,8%	4,7%
Total	52	100,0%	120,9%	

a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.

When looking at the duration of cyberbullying, we can say that in about half of the cases of our sample the duration was 1 day to 3 weeks, and in the other half of cases it concerned bullying over a period of one month to several months. Further in this report we will see if this can be statistically linked to any of the offender, victim, or modus operandi variables that were studied.



Table 16. Duration of cyberbullying in categories

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 day / discrete event	7	15,2	24,1	24,1
	< 1 week	5	10,9	17,2	41,4
	1-3 weeks	3	6,5	10,3	51,7
	1 month	3	6,5	10,3	62,1
	1-3 months	4	8,7	13,8	75,9
	4-6 months	3	6,5	10,3	86,2
	7-12 months	1	2,2	3,4	89,7
	> 12 months	3	6,5	10,3	100,0
	Total	29	63,0	100,0	
Missing	99,00	17	37,0		
Total		46	100,0		

2.2.4 Modus operandi

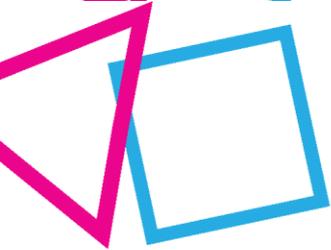
Next, we will discuss the main characteristics of the modus operandi used in cyberbullying. The descriptive statistics thereof are presented in Table 17.

From the inspection of the descriptive statistics, it appears that the predominant way of selecting the victim is **purposeful** (79,9%). Regarding the link with offline bullying, it seems in a large part of the cases, there does **not seem to be a link with offline bullying** (41%), but if there is such a link, it seems to be that there was previous as well as later offline bullying (28,8%). Further, in most cases there was **no use of coercion** (81,8%) and **no use of false information** (90,9%). **Sexual content** was more likely to have been used in our sample, where in 37% of cases this was coded as being present. The severity of the impact on the victim varied largely in our sample, but in most cases the impact on the victim was **moderate to grave** (82,9%). It must be noted, however, that the interpretation of the impact on the victim's self-esteem as "low" or "grave" for example can vary greatly among coders based on their subjective interpretation of the effects of bullying on the victim. Finally, our results suggest that **cyberbullying does not tend to go together with other crimes** (91,9%). In the following sections we will see if any of these characteristics are statistically associated with victim, offender, or other modus operandi characteristics.

Table 17. Modus operandi of cyberbullying

			Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumul. percent
Selection V	Valid	Purposefully	34	73,9	79,1	79,1
		Opportunistic	3	6,5	7,0	86,0
		Other (specify)	6	13,0	14,0	100,0
		Total	43	93,5	100,0	
	Missing	99	3	6,5		

		Total	46	100,0		
OB	Valid	No offline bullying	16	34,8	41,0	41,0
		Earlier offline bullying	5	10,9	12,8	53,8
		Later offline bullying	7	15,2	17,9	71,8
		Earlier and later offline bullying	11	23,9	28,2	100,0
		Total	39	84,8	100,0	
		Missing	99	7	15,2	
		Total	46	100,0		
False info	Valid	No	30	65,2	90,9	90,9
		Yes	3	6,5	9,1	100,0
		Total	33	71,7	100,0	
	Missing	99	13	28,3		
Total		46	100,0			
Coercion	Valid	No	36	78,3	81,8	81,8
		Yes	8	17,4	18,2	100,0
		Total	44	95,7	100,0	
	Missing	99	2	4,3		
Total		46	100,0			
Sexual cont.	Valid	No	29	63,0	63,0	63,0
		Yes	17	37,0	37,0	100,0
		Total	46	100,0	100,0	
Impact	Valid	Low to none	1	2,2	2,9	2,9
		Mild	5	10,9	14,3	17,1
		Moderate	10	21,7	28,6	45,7
		Severe	10	21,7	28,6	74,3
		Grave	9	19,6	25,7	100,0
		Total	35	76,1	100,0	
	Missing	99	11	23,9		
	Total	46	100,0			
Other crime	Valid	No	41	89,1	91,1	91,1
		Yes	4	8,7	8,9	100,0
		Total	45	97,8	100,0	
	Missing	99	1	2,2		
Total		46	100,0			
Other violent	Valid	No	43	93,5	95,6	95,6
		Yes	2	4,3	4,4	100,0
		Total	45	97,8	100,0	
	Missing	99	1	2,2		
Total		46	100,0			



Illustrations:

- Examples of the usage of sexual content: “Tricked the victim to share her password to her account”, “Offender stole the password from the girls from Facebook and Pokec”, “Offender was threatening to share her picture with sexual content”, “Disseminated the recorded video in which he showed his genitals”.
- Examples of flaming: "You, fucking seal, what are you saying, I already told you once, and I'm not going to tell you again, I swear that this time wherever I see you, you're not going to escape, bitch, filthy slut, I'm going to fuck up your life in the worst way they can fuck you up, you whore, lying bitch, buy yourself a life if you don't have one, but don't fuck up the lives of others", “WHEN I SHATTER YOU I'LL BREAK YOUR FACE, FOR MOUTHS AND FOR BITCH, FUCKING CLOWN, YOU'RE GOING TO SHIT.”
- Examples of outing: "I call it Shoeshine (an invented nickname that referred to "what faggots put in their asses to open their asses up") because as for me he is a faggot". Similar insults were made by other pupils. When analyzing the kind of insults that kids receive, they are sometimes related with gender roles, acting in a way that may result prescriptive and proscriptive, forming part of gender socialization. If boys tend to be insulted for being homosexual or too feminine, girls are frequently insulted for their physical appearance (such a posting a photograph with the text “fat”) or their sexual activity or behavior, as can be seen in these examples: "you cocksucker, you cross-eyed, greasy-haired bitch"; "bitch, slut, bitch, do you want us to make you a video?"; "bitch, whore, slut, slutty, cocksucker, cocksucker and sucker"; "You filthy whore, fuck you, you fucking mule, you're an easy one, a slut"; "You fucking seal"; “Little Slut”; In a WhatsApp group: "X, pass photo ass", "or photo tits", "X do you suck?, " do you like 69?, gangbang?, sado?, Bucakke?”. In the sample, some racist insults also appear.

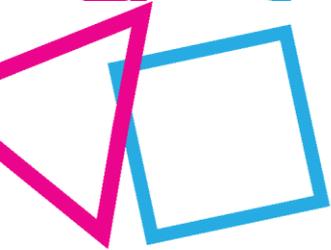
Intermediary conclusion:

- The most common forms of cyberbullying are flaming, online harassment and outing. This can be limited to a discrete event or last for many months. It is quite noteworthy that false information or coercion are rarely present in cases of cyberbullying whereas the use of sexual content is far more common. Apart from these points, we cannot conclude that there is any “typical” cyberbullying event, it may take many different forms. Furthermore, the findings seem to suggest that the internet is used as an instrument to bully the victim in a rather pragmatic way.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA’s serious game:

- RAYUELA’s serious game can limit itself to flaming, online harassment and outing, as the other types of cyberbullying are very rare. In line with the progressive educational approach, it is recommended to include a section on how cyberbullying may impact a victim, to help people to understand that their actions, even those micro-aggressions that may seem but trivial, may have enduring negative effects on their victims. Next to the online disinhibition effect the internet has, it also hides the consequences of online actions which is something RAYUELA is well-suited to address. Situations in which offenders are in the possession of sexual material should be included in the serious game, as this is common. In this sense, it may make sense to give the offender the option of sharing such material with friends in a fictive scenario, for example. Coercion is rarely used, so it seems less urgent to incorporate this into the game. It is also important to remember that if victims of CB are singled out because of their physical and social characteristics these characteristics are inseparable from the predominant values in each sociohistorical context. Therefore, it is impossible to address bullying





and CB without referring to homophobia, gender relations or racism, ultimately, the social structure and its inequalities.

2.3. Bivariate analyses

In this section we will explore possible statistical associations between the variables described above. For each section, a table with an overview of the analyses conducted is presented. Each significant association is highlighted by putting the variable in bold and italic, on a grey background. These tables should be read as follows: the variable in the top row is associated with the variables below.

2.3.1 Bivariate analyses of offender characteristics

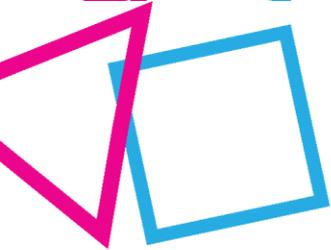
Table 18 presents an overview of the bivariate analyses within offender characteristics. Below the table, the significant associations are discussed.

Table 18. overview of bivariate analyses of offender characteristics

Offender sex	Girl victims	Boy victims	Former friend	Classmate	Stranger	Friendly pre-CB	Hostile pre-CB
Girl victims	Boy victims	Former friend	<i>Classmate</i>	Stranger	Friendly pre-CB	<i>Hostile pre-CB</i>	Multiple vi ct.
Boy victims	Former friend	Classmate	Stranger	<i>Friendly pre-CB</i>	Hostile pre-CB	Multiple vi ct.	
Former friend	Classmate	Stranger	Friendly pre-CB	Hostile pre-CB	Multiple vi ct.		
Classmate	Stranger	Friendly pre-CB	Hostile pre-CB	Multiple vi ct.			
Stranger	Friendly pre-CB	Hostile pre-CB	Multiple vi ct.				
Friendly pre-CB	Hostile pre-CB	Multiple vi ct.					
<i>Hostile pre-CB**</i>	Multiple vi ct.						
Multiple vi ct.							

Hostile pre-bullying relationship per offender sex: $\chi^2 = 10,049$, df. 1, $p = 0.002^*$. Inspection of standardized residuals indicates that this is mainly because **less boys than expected had a hostile pre-bullying relationship to the victim** (std. resid. : -1,8).

Former friend per classmate: $\chi^2 = 13,517$, df. 1, $p = 0.000$. Inspection of standardized residuals indicates that the significant association between both variables is primarily because in **less cases than would be expected, when the offender is a classmate, the offender is a former friend** (std. resid. = -2,1), and in **more cases than expected the offender is no classmate and is a former friend** (std. resid. = 2,0). So there does seem to be a difference between former friends and classmates when it comes to the pre-bullying relationship. Thus, the



results suggest that when the offender is classmate, he was not a friend of the victim and that when the offender is a friend, he was no classmate of the victim.

Classmate per friendly relationship: $\chi^2 = 11,070$, df. 1, $p = .001$. Inspection of standardized residuals indicates that this association is largely because **in less cases than expected, the pre-bullying relationship was friendly when the offender is a classmate** (std. resid. = -2,1). This finding further bolsters the finding that when the offender is a classmate there was no friendship relationship (i.e., former friends).

Friendly pre-CB per hostile pre-CB: $\chi^2 = 20,473$, df. 1, $p = 0,000$. Even though there is an association between both variables, it is one to be expected, not very informative. This is because in most cases when the relationship is friendly, it is not hostile, and vice versa. This is logical as it concerns quasi mutually exclusive characteristics.

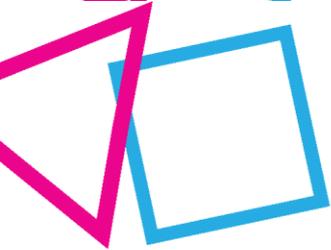
Intermediary conclusion:

- In general, no real specific profile clusters of variables can be identified using bivariate analyses. The only thing that emerges is that bullies who were classmates tend to not have had a friendship relationship before the cyberbullying started, but rather a hostile relationship. If both victim and offender were former friends, they are less likely to be in the same class. Again, and as stated earlier, this highlights that cyberbullying is a very diverse phenomenon (see previous intermediary conclusions)

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game:

- In RAYUELA serious game we should develop simulations of cyberbullying in which the offender is either a classmate with which a person did not have a very positive relationship or a friend outside of school. These situations may be trickier to emulate in the game, but one could mimic a school and out of school division in the game as well, to realistically educate young people about the boundaries of what one should do or accept in an online environment.





2.3.2 Bivariate analyses of victim characteristics

Table 19 presents the bivariate analyses within victim characteristics.

Table 19. Bivariate analysis of victim characteristics.

Victim sex	Victim age	Nationality
	nationality	CB in group
	CB in group	
CB in group		

There are **no significant associations** to report.

2.3.3. Bivariate analyses of incident characteristics

In this section we will report on the bivariate analyses of type of cyberbullying, duration thereof, and the primary internet platform used first. This will be followed by an overview of the associations between the type of cyberbullying and modus operandi characteristics.

Type of CB, duration of CB and primary internet platform used

The variable “type of CB” has been disentangled into one dummy variable for each type of cyberbullying, thus resulting in 10 new binary variables. The variable “duration of CB” has been recoded into a new variable, indicating whether the cyberbullying was a discrete event (so limited to one incident/day), or whether it was a prolonged event, thus resulting in one new binary variable. Primary internet platform used was treated in the same way, so that a binary variable was created for each internet platform used. These were brought into relationship with the type of CB, but none of those 33 analyses were significant.

Type of CB and modus operandi

An overview of the bivariate analyses conducted between the type of cyberbullying and the modus operandi is presented in Table 20. Below the table, significant associations are discussed.



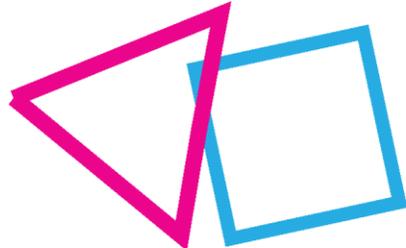


Table 20. Overview of type of CB and modus operandi characteristics.

Purp. selection	Opport. selection	Victim initiate contact	No prev. Bullying	Prev. OL bullying	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. bullying	False info.	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact
Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming
Online harrass	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment	Online harrassment
Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion
Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking	Cyberstalking
Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration
Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading	Masquerading
Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing
Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping
Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery	Trichery

Flaming * sexual content: $\chi^2=7,678$, df. 1, $p=0,006$. There are no standardized residuals greater than 2 in absolute value, but the residuals do indicate that **flaming does not tend to go together with sexual content**.

Outing * sexual content (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,007$). The results indicate that in 9 out of the 13 cases when outing is the type of cyberbullying, sexual content was used, whereas this was only the case in 8 out of 33 cases where the type of cyberbullying was different from outing. This suggests that **outing tends to go together with sexual content**.

Illustrations:

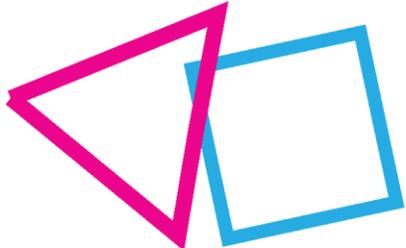
- For example in one case of outing it is reported that ‘the bullies recorded and took a photo in the school locker room, where in the background the child victim can be seen showering, completely naked. They upload the photo on Snapchat and passed it around to various groups in the school’. In another case of outing, it is reported that ‘The victim gives the offenders a photo showing his genitals which the offenders disseminate’.
- In most flaming cases there is no association with sexual context. The offenders usually offend the victim through words or images not sexually related. For example, in one case of flaming the following is reported: ‘very often when the victim posts something on either social network site, she receives negative comments from her former friends, be it in the form of text or images imitating her poses in a ridiculous way’.

Intermediary conclusion:

- There appear to be no real profiles for each of the different types of cyberbullying studied, nor any associations between the type and duration or the type and the primary internet platform used. The only conclusion we can draw relates to **sexual content**, which is **associated positively with outing**, and **negatively with flaming**.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA’s serious game:

- In RAYUELA’s serious game, the usage of sexual content in situations of cyberbullying should be avoided if the type of bullying is flaming and should especially be included in cases of simulated outing.

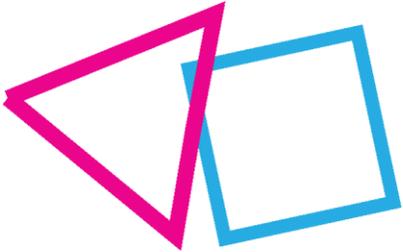


2.3.4 Bivariate analyses of modus operandi variables

Table 21 provides an overview of the bivariate analyses conducted for the modus operandi variables. Significant associations are discussed below the table.

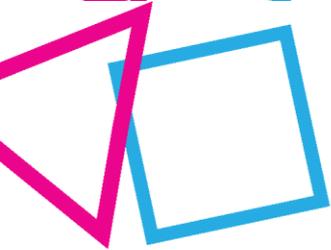
Table 21. Overview of bivariate analyses of modus operandi variables.

Purposeful selection	Opportunistic selection	Victim initiate contact	No Bullying	prev. bullying	OL	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact
Opportunistic selection	Victim initiate contact	No Bullying	prev. bullying	OL	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event
Victim initiate contact	No Bullying	prev. bullying	OL	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event	
No Bullying	prev. bullying	OL	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event		
Prev. bullying	OL	Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event			
Later bullying	OL	Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event					
Later and prev. OL bul.	False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event							



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False information	Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event
Coercion	Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event	
Sex. Cont.	Impact	Discrete event		
Impact	Discrete event			
Discrete event				



Purposeful selection of victim per use of coercion (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,013$). Out of the 33 cases in which the victim was purposefully selected, coercion was used in only 2 of them, whereas it was used in 4 out of 9 cases where the victim was selected in a different way. This suggests that **coercion does not tend to go together with a purposeful victim selection strategy.**

Purposeful selection of victim per sexual content (Fishers exact test, $p = 0,005$). Sexual content was used in 8 out of the 34 cases in which the victim was purposefully selected, whereas sexual content was used in 7 out of 9 cases where the victim was selected in another way. This suggests that **sexual content does not tend to go together with a purposeful selection of the victim.**

Opportunistic selection of victim per sexual content (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,037$). Given the fact that all 3 of the cases in which the victim was selected opportunistically, sexual content was used whereas this was only the case for a portion of the cases where the victim was selected in another way (12 out of 40 cases), the data suggest that there is a **positive association between sexual content and this mode of selection**, albeit a weak one.

Use of coercion per sexual content (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,002$). In 7 out of 8 cases in which coercion was used, sexual content was exchanged whilst in only 10 out of 36 cases in which no coercion was used sexual content was exchanged. Thus, use of **coercion tends to be relatively more paired with sexual exploitation** than no use of coercion as modus operandi.

Illustrations:

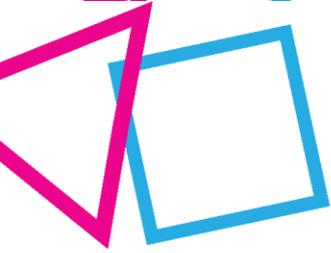
- There are only a few examples in which sexual content and coercion are both present. In these cases, the coercion consisted in "threatening to spread the victim's compromising, nude pictures."
- Another example in which there is evidence that cyberbullying can also occur within a romantic relationship: "The victim was the offenders' girlfriend, he asked her for sexy pictures (sexting), but he also sent these to his friend. Coerced the victim into sending more pics by threatening to send them to her family."

Intermediary conclusion:

- Regarding patterns in the modus operandi, we can only conclude that there is weak support for the hypothesis that in cases in which coercion is used, sexual content will likely also be present. However, inversely, it cannot be concluded from the presence of use of sexual content that coercion is likely to be present itself. In addition, for both coercion and sexual content, it is less likely that the victim is selected in a purposeful way, it is more likely to be opportunistically selected.

Implications for RAYUELA's serious game:

- If the opportunity presents itself, potential offenders might jump on sexual content and abuse the material to start/continue cyber bullying. Therefore, we should make players aware of the risks of sharing sexual material on the internet. This should not be done by prohibiting this, as this is a normal part of sexual exploration and expression today, but in more indirect ways. One example would be to sensitize them as to who and with which platform they send such information. In addition, the game could focus on what can be considered a normal, healthy, and consensual sexual relationship and help players identify coercion when it is present. We also deem it important to include tools



which players can use to deal with such situations, such as for example providing outreach numbers, or advising them to speak to a significant other.

- Coercion through cyber bullying is less likely to occur with friends, more likely with strangers which had a chance encounter with a potential victim (opportunistic). Such scenarios can be easily incorporated in RAYUELA’s serious game.

2.3.5 Bivariate analyses victim and modus operandi characteristics

Table 22 presents an overview of the bivariate analyses conducted between victim characteristics and modus operandi variables. Only two of those were statistically significant and will be briefly discussed below the table.

Table 22. Bivariate analyses victim and offender characteristics.

sex of victim	CB alone or in group	Age (categories)	Nationality (categories)
Purposeful selection	<i>Purposeful selection</i>	Purposeful selection	Purposeful selection
Opportunistic selection	<i>Opportunistic selection</i>	Opportunistic selection	Opportunistic selection
Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate
No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB
Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB
Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB
Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB
Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat
Text	Text	Text	Text
Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media
Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event
Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact
False information	False information	False information	False information
Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion
Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content

Cyberbullying in group per purposeful selection of victim ($\chi^2 = 6,453$, df. 1, $p = 0,011$). There are no standardized residuals greater than 2 in absolute value, but the data suggest that people who are **bullied in group** are more likely to have been selected **purposefully** by the offender. In this sense, out of the 22 cases of victims who were bullied by a group, 20 have been selected purposefully, whilst this is the case for only 12 out of 21 cases in which the offender acted alone.

Cyberbullying in group per opportunistic selection of victim (Fisher’s exact test, $p = 0,021$). Even though victims were selected **opportunistically** in only 5 out of the 43 cases included in the analysis, all five of them were so selected by an offender **who acted alone**, thus suggesting that opportunistic selection is less likely in case the offender acts in group.

Illustrations:

- There are cases, for example, in which the offenders selecting purposefully the victim were former school mates or friends acting in group. There is also one case in which the victim knew only one of the offenders who later purposefully involved other offenders who previously didn’t know the victim.

Intermediary conclusion:

- We cannot conclude any specific victim profile by inspecting associations between victim characteristics. The victims seem to be a **homogenous group** rather than fitting a specific profile. The only takeaway message is that **victims** who face **multiple offenders** are less likely to be opportunistically selected, and it is more likely they are selected in a **purposeful way**.

Implications for RAYUELA's serious game:

- In the game this type of situations could be simulated: bullies in group are instigated by (an) offender(s) to bully a specifically chosen victim. Indeed, it is often the case that victims of a group are chosen purposefully, rather than opportunistically.

2.3.6 Bivariate analyses victim and type of CB

No significant associations have been found. None of the characteristics of victims can be related to a specific type of cyberbullying in our sample

2.3.7 Bivariate analyses of offender and modus operandi characteristics

The analyses that have been conducted to check for associations between the offender characteristics and modus operandi variables are presented in Table 23. Significant associations will be discussed below the table.

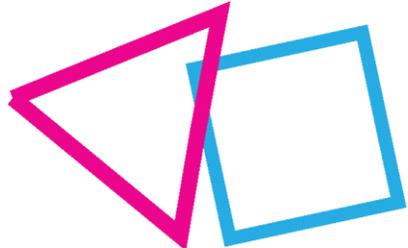
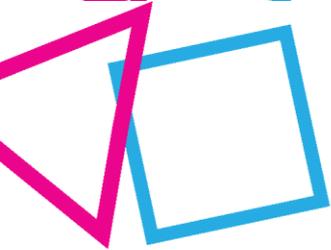


Table 23. Bivariate analyses of offender characteristics and modus operandi variables.

Offender sex	Criminal hist	Vic girl	Vic boy	Mutl vic	Friendly relation	Hostile	Friend	Classmate	Stranger
Purp. selection	Purposeful selection	Purposeful selection	Purposeful selection	Purposeful selection	Purposeful selection				
Opport. Selection	Opportunistic selection	Opportunistic selection	Opportunistic selection	Opportunistic selection	Opportunistic selection				
Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate	Vic initiate
No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB	No OB
Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB	Prev OB
Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB	Later OB
Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB	Prev and later OB
Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat	Chat
Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text	Text
Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media	Social media
Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event	Discrete event				
Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact	Impact
False information	False information	False information	False information	False information	False information	False information	False information	False information	False information
Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion	Use of coercion
Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content	Sexual content				



Offender sex per purposeful selection of victim: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0,013$ (2-sided). Our data suggest that **men are slightly less likely than women to purposefully select their victim** (74,2% of men do so compared to 96,9% of women). Overall, it remains a fact that for both in most cases the victim is selected purposefully as in 85,7% of cases the victim was selected purposefully.

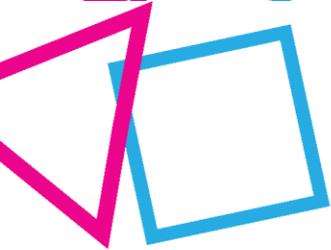
Offender sex per opportunistic selection of victim: fisher's exact test: $p = 0,024$ (2-sided). In this context, **women appear to be less likely to select victims in an opportunistic way**, as 0 women selected their victim opportunistically and all 32 women in the analysis did not choose this method of selection. Then again, for men too, the vast majority (83,9% of men) do not choose their victim opportunistically. In total, only small part of victims was selected opportunistically (7,9% of all cases were selected opportunistically).

Offender sex per no previous bullying: $\chi^2 = 14,332$, df. 1, $p = 0,000$. Inspection of standardized residuals indicates that this relationship is explained by the fact that in **more cases than expected there was no offline bullying when the offender was a man** (std. resid. = 2,2), and that in **less cases than expected there was no offline bullying when the offender was a woman** (std. resid. = -2,2). Regarding the former, in only 13 out of 29 cases (44,8%), there was a link with offline bullying for male offenders, whereas this number amounts to 28 out of 31 (90,3%) for female offenders. Thus, it seems **men are less likely to commit offline bullying** (44,8% of men do so compared to 90,3% of women). Overall, in most cases (68,3%) **offline bullying is present**, and this is primarily committed by **women** (68,3% of offline bullying cases are committed by women compared to 31,7% of cases of offline bullying are committed by men).

Offender sex per discrete event: Fisher's exact test: $p = 0,013$ (2-sided). The data suggest that **men are relatively more likely than women to limit themselves to 1 cyberbullying event** (38,5% of men compared to 5% of women). Overall, most cases are not one discrete event, but a series of at least 2 events (76,1% of cases)².

Offender sex per sexual content: $\chi^2 = 8,629$, df. 1, $p = 0,003$. There are no standardized residuals greater than 2 in absolute value, however percentages seem to suggest that **men are more prone to using sexual content than women**: 19 out of 33 men use sexual content (57,6% of men) compared to only 7 out of 32 women (21,9% of women).

Friendly pre-bullying relationship per no previous (offline) bullying: Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,032$ (2-sided). The data suggest that this relationship is weak to moderately positive, indicating that **offline bullying tends to (weakly) go together with a friendly pre-bullying relationship**. However, in most cases there has been no previous bullying (76,1%), and of the 23,09% of cases in which there was previous offline bullying, in only 4 cases there was no friendly pre-bullying relationship (36,4%) and in 7 cases there was a friendly pre-bullying relationship (63,6%) which explains the association. This finding is further corroborated by the significant association between a friendly pre-bullying relationship and previous offline bullying (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,037$ (2-sided)). Of the 8 cases in which there was previous offline bullying, a friendly pre-bullying relationship existed in all 8 of them, so this association can be weakly negative. A last corroborating instance of this association is the weak and negative association between a friendly pre-bullying relationship and the existence of offline bullying in general (so in its binary form) disregarding when it occurred (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,032$). Out of the 35 cases in which cyberbullying went together with offline bullying, in 26 cases



there existed no friendly pre-bullying relationship, whilst in 9 cases such a relationship did exist. If we compare this to the 11 (valid) cases in which no offline bullying was reported, in 4 cases there was no friendly pre-bullying relationship whilst such a relationship did exist in 7 cases where no offline bullying was reported. Based on these three insights it can be concluded that **offline bullying tends not to go together with a friendly pre-bullying relationship.**

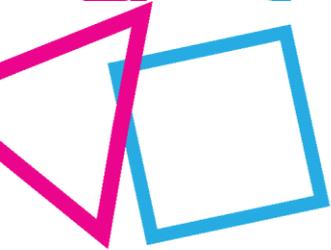
Hostile pre-bullying relationship per purposeful selection of victim (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,028$ (2-sided)). Our data suggest that in **relatively more cases where a hostile pre-bullying relationship existed, the victim was selected purposefully** (19 cases to 1 cases) compared to those cases where no hostile pre-bullying relationship existed (17 to 9 cases respectively). In general, however, the main mode of selection remained purposeful (78,3% compared to 21,7% of the total cases) disregarding the existence of a hostile pre-bullying relationship, so this is not a very strong association.

Hostile pre-bullying relationship per no offline bullying (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,001$ (2-sided)). In the 26 cases where there was no hostile pre-bullying relationship, in 15 there was offline bullying whilst there was no previous bullying in 11 cases. Interestingly, in the 20 cases where there was a hostile pre-bullying relationship, also offline bullying was mentioned. Therefore, we can conclude that **a moderate positive association exists between a hostile pre-bullying relationship and offline bullying.** This finding can be refined when looking at whether the offline bullying preceded, succeeded, or pre-and succeeded the online bullying. In this respect a difference emerges.

For **offline bullying preceding the online bullying, a moderately positive association emerges** (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,000$) as in the 20 cases in which a hostile pre-bullying relationship existed, previous offline bullying existed in 8 cases, whereas in the 26 cases where there was no hostile pre-bullying relationship, previous offline bullying occurred in no case. A **similar picture emerges regarding offline bullying occurring before and after the cyberbullying event** (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,003$ (2-sided)). In the 20 cases where a hostile pre-bullying relationship existed, offline bullying before and after cyberbullying existed in 11 cases, whereas in the 26 cases where no hostile relationship existed, this only occurred in 3 cases. This differs from **offline bullying after the cyberbullying** (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,003$ (2-sided)), where a **moderate negative relationship seems to exist**, as in the 20 cases where there was a hostile pre-bullying relationship in only 1 case there was offline bullying before and after the cyberbullying, whereas in the 26 cases where there was no hostile pre-bullying relationship there was later offline bullying in 12 cases.

Hostile pre-bullying relationship per sexual content ($\chi^2 = 6,583$, df. 1, $p = 0,010$). The relationship seems to be negative in the sense that of the 21 cases in which there was a pre-hostile relationship, there were only 4 cases of sexual contact compared to the fact that in the 27 cases where there was no hostile pre-bullying relationship sexual content was used in 15 cases. Thus, **use of sexual content does not tend to go together with the existence of a hostile pre-bullying relationship.**

Offender is former friend per earlier and later offline bullying (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,005$ (2-sided)). Out of the 14 cases in which the offender is a former friend there are 0 cases in which previous and later offline bullying occurred. This stands in contrast with the 33 cases where the offender is not a former friend and



later and previous offline bullying exists in 13 cases. This way, **earlier and later offline bullying does not tend to go together with the bully being a former friend.**

Offender is former friend per primary internet platform chat ($\chi^2 = 5,121$, df. 1, $p = 0,024$). This seems to be a **negative association between the offender being a former friend and the usage of a chat service** given that in only 3 out of 14 cases where the offender is a former friend, the primary platform is a chat application, compared to 20 out of 35 cases where the offender is not a former friend.

Offender is classmate per later offline bullying (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,001$ (2-sided)). Given the fact that in the 19 cases where the offender is a classmate there were 0 instances of later offline bullying whereas in the 28 cases where the offender is not a classmate this is the case in 12 of such cases, it can be concluded that there exists a **negative association between the offender being a classmate and later offline bullying.**

Offender is classmate per later and previous offline bullying ($\chi^2 = 14,571$, df. 1, $p = 0,000$). Inspection of standardized residuals reveals that this association is explained by the fact that in more cases than expected, the offender is a classmate and there is previous as well as later offline bullying, whereas in less cases than expected the offender is not a classmate and there is no previous and later offline bullying. So, **if the offender is a classmate, this tends to moderately be accompanied by both earlier and later offline bullying.**

Offender is stranger per use of coercion (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,019$ (2-sided)). This relationship seems to be moderately positive, as in comparatively more cases where the offender is a stranger (out of the 6 cases where the offender is a stranger, in 3 cases he or she uses coercion) coercion is used compared to the situation where the offender is not a stranger (out of 43 cases where the offender is not a stranger, he or she uses coercion in 3 cases). Thus, it can be concluded that the **use of coercion tends to go together with the offender being a stranger**, even though the offender is a stranger in only a vast minority of cases.

Offender is stranger per sexual content (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,005$ (2-sided)). This relationship seems to be positive, as in **relatively more cases where the offender is a stranger, sexual content is used** (6 out of 6 cases) compared to the cases where the offender is no stranger (16 out of 27 cases). Be this as it is, it remains a fact that sexual content is used in a large part of the cases (22 out of 49).

Illustrations:

- The following illustrations focus on the abuse of sexual content by men and women: "Meeting girls in a chatroom and then asking them for sexually tinted pictures, and sending them sexually tinted pictures", and "Female offender photographed female victim in the shower, sent to other minors via WhatsApp." An example of offline bullying which is followed by online bullying via social media is the following: "Couple of offenders went to find the victim and put him in a rubbish bin. They filmed the incident and further humiliation spreading it afterwards to other pupils at their school."

Intermediary conclusion:

- Men are slightly more opportunistic than women, yet in most of our cases (with male/female offenders) victims were chosen purposefully.
- Men are less likely to also bully offline. In most cases there's also offline bullying, but then it's mostly committed by women.

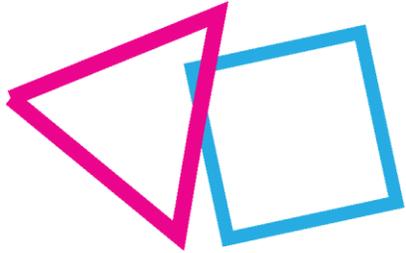
- Offline bullying tends to not go together with a friendly pre-bullying relationship. Relatively more cases where a hostile pre-bullying relationship existed, the victim was selected purposefully.
- Offline bullying is more likely to have happened before CB than after. It seems to be a possible precursor.
- Sexual content is more likely to be used when the victim and the offender were former friends than when they had a hostile previous relationship.
- Men are more prone to use sexual content than women.
- It is however a fact that sexual content is used in a large part of the cases.
- Earlier and later offline bullying does not tend to go together with the bully being a former friend.
- Bullies through chat services tend to be strangers more often than former friends.
- Coercion tends to go together with the offender being a stranger.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game:

- We should make sure to profile both sexes equally, for both offenders and victims. Differences are not large enough to matter.
- Prior relationships might be difficult to portray, although these scenarios are quite standard: hostile relations can turn into bullying, friendly relations are less likely to turn into bullying.
- In all the cases where the offender is a stranger, sexual content is used – not excluding the fact that in many cases where the offender is no stranger sexual content is also used. All things being equal, it is recommended to also include sextortion in the game, executed by a fictive character.
- We should also address the possibility of relationships turning sour, as a matter-of-fact exes could easily abuse explicit material acquired during the relationship.

2.3.8 Bivariate analyses offender characteristics and type of CB

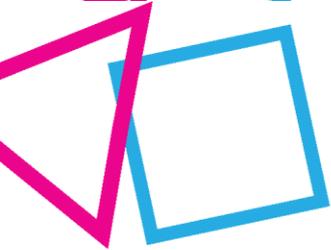
An overview of the bivariate analyses of offender characteristics and the type of CB is presented in Table 24. Significant associations are discussed below the table.



D1.5 Open Report on Case Study Results

Table 24. Overview of bivariate analyses of offender characteristics and type of CB

Offender sex	Criminal hist	Vic girl	Vic boy	Mutl vic	Friendly relation	Hostile Relation	Friend	Classmate	stranger
Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming	Flaming
Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment	Harassment
Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion	Exclusion
Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking	Stalking
Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration	Denigration
masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading	masquerading
Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing	Outing
Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping	Happy slapping					
trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery	trickery



Friendly pre-bullying relationship * denigration (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,041$). Our data suggest that **denigration** is more probable if the **pre-bullying relationship was not of a friendly nature**. In this sense, no single case of denigration was present in the 17 cases where there was a friendly pre-bullying relationship whereas in 7 out of 31 cases where the pre-bullying relationship was not friendly, denigration was the type of cyberbullying. Thus, the data suggest a negative relationship between the variables, albeit a weak one.

Hostile pre-bullying relationship * social exclusion (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,002$). A **hostile pre-bullying relationship seems to be positively associated to social exclusion**, as in 7 out of the 21 cases where there was a hostile relationship, social exclusion was the type of cyberbullying. In the 27 cases where the pre-bullying relationship was different, there were no cases of social exclusion. Thus, social exclusion seems to go together with a hostile pre-bullying relationship, even though it is not the main form of CB in such relationship.

Hostile pre-bullying relationship * denigration (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,015$). Out of 21 cases where there was a hostile pre-bullying relationship, 6 cases were identified as denigration whereas out of the 27 cases where the relationship was of a different nature this was only the case for 1 case. Thus, **denigration** seems to be **positively associated to a hostile pre-bullying relationship**.

Offender is former friend * denigration (Fisher's exact test, $p = 0,015$). In 5 out of 14 cases where the offender is a former friend, denigration was the type of cyberbullying. This is relatively speaking more compared to the situation where the offender is no former friend, where denigration was the type of bullying in 2 out of 35 cases. Thus, it seems **denigration** is somewhat **more likely if the offender is a former friend**.

Illustrations:

- “Both open a fake profile pretending to be the victim and upload photos with various messages to make fun of her. They posted negative comments from this profile on photos of schoolmates posing as the victim, which causes social isolation from her classmates and makes them avoid greeting her if they meet her in the streets.”

Intermediary conclusion:

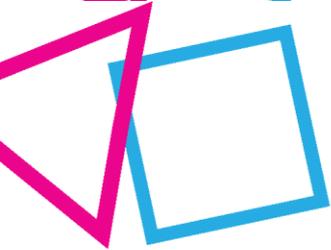
- The results suggest that **denigration** is more probable as a type of cyberbullying in the case that there is a **hostile** pre-bullying relationship between offender and victim. **Denigration** seems also to be weakly associated with a **former friendship**. Finally **social exclusion** also seems to go together with a **hostile** pre-bullying relationship.

Takeaway points for RAYUELA's serious game:

- It is a possibility to emulate a similar situation as mentioned above.

2.4. General conclusion

In general, from the sample of sentences analyzed we can conclude that there **do not seem to exist specific offender and victim profiles** concerning **cyberbullying**. Also, the differences between European countries and zones are negligible according to our sample. The only interesting **difference between zones**, that could be used for the RAYUELA Serious Game, seems to consist of the **platform** used for the cyberbullying (see section “Type of CB, duration of CB and primary internet platform used”).



This is already an interesting conclusion meaning that the serious game should point more in general to all youngsters, by **simulating several different possible situations** they could encounter on the internet. However, there are some interesting results that can be used for the development of the game and for the creation of such situations.

As seen in the previous sections, there does not seem to be a link with the offender and victim nationality or origin, about half of the offenders are women and about half are men, in most of the cases there is no offender previous history of cyberbullying or other crimes. Even though the goal was to look for specific victim and offender profiles – which do not seem to exist – this does provide RAYUELA with a rather large freedom as to the situations to emulate in the game. Further, we deem it extremely important that RAYUELA's serious game addresses the issue as it is: everybody can be subject to online bullying, disregarding race, ethnicity, or previous bad experiences.

Taking this wide variety of victims and offenders into account it might be interesting to offer the player a fully **customizable avatar**, preferably linked to real-life data such as existing profiles on social media. This way the player can identify more easily with the role they are playing. However, to make sure it's clear that appearances can be deceiving, it's important for in-game characters to also be portrayed in a variety of ways. Stereotypes should be avoided as much as possible; RAYUELA should seize the opportunity to **break through these stereotypes**. In this context, it was an interesting finding that offenders can also be (ex) romantic partners of the victim, thus underlining the finding that offenders can be virtually anyone in the social entourage of the victim. Something that might further help with this, is to give players a chance to play both as an offender and a victim to give them an alternative view of the situation.

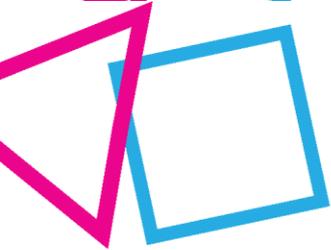
Another interesting point is that cyberbullying often happens **in group**, so this fact should be simulated in the RAYUELA serious game. Also, the type of cyberbullying should mostly be **outing** and **flaming**, but other types should not be neglected. Denigration and **social exclusion** could be used in the case of a simulated **hostile pre-bullying relationship**, even though it remains unclear at this point how such pre-existing relationships can be emulated in RAYUELA's serious game.

Lastly, we shouldn't forget that in more than half of the cases **sexual material** was abused and/or shared by the offender. Rather than prohibiting practices like sexting etc., RAYUELA should **educate** youngsters on ways to do it consciously and in a way, it can't implicate them, e.g. by making themselves unrecognizable or similar. We can make players aware what is okay in a "healthy" relationship and what shouldn't be a part of it.

3. Analysis of sentences on human trafficking

3.1. Introduction

In this section we will discuss the sentences analyzed in the West and East zones concerning human trafficking of minors for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The discussion is limited to these two zones as the partners from the North and South zones indicated that there were no sentences available on this subject in their respective zones. The discussion will be limited to a descriptive / narrative account of the

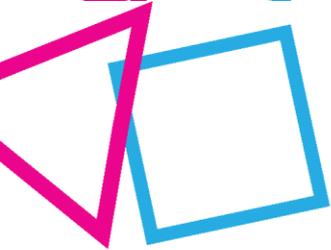


phenomenon, as the number of sentences is limited. That being said, a narrative account of certain instances is a very apt approach to highlight the different types of human trafficking of minors for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Overall, we note a difference between the East and the West in terms of the type of human trafficking that occurs. Whereas in the East, more “classical” types of human trafficking are most prominent in the sentences, in the West, the phenomenon of “loverboys” seems to be predominant in jurisprudence. It is worthwhile mentioning at the onset of this narrative account of human trafficking sentences that sentences do not necessarily reflect reality or the actual incidence of a phenomenon, and are necessarily biased by prosecution priorities, political and societal tendencies. In this respect, it should equally be noted that the predominant presence of the “classical” paradigm in the East does not imply that the “loverboy” phenomenon does not take place there; it is simply not reflected in the zone’s jurisprudence. In this sense, it can also be assumed that the “loverboy” phenomenon is factually present in all zones of Europe, albeit not necessarily recognized or prosecuted as such (K. Vanhoutte, personal communication, April 4th, 2021). This important finding is underlined by the joint Europol action organized by Portugal, Spain, and the UK, on child trafficking. In this Europe-wide action, no less than 388 people have been apprehended, with 298 potential victims identified in all parts of Europe¹

¹ Participating countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Lithuania, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom





(Europol, 2020). As a European project on cybercrime directed towards minors, we deem it of the utmost importance to underscore the fact that human trafficking of minors remains an **underreported crime which affects the most vulnerable young people in Europe** and ought rightfully to be a priority for the RAYUELA project.

3.2. Human trafficking in the East: the “classical” paradigm

When saying “classical”, we refer to the instances of human trafficking which involve forced marriage or the selling of victims, which often occurred by people known to the victim, such as family members or friends. Below are some prominent accounts of this type of human trafficking in Slovakia and the Czech Republic:

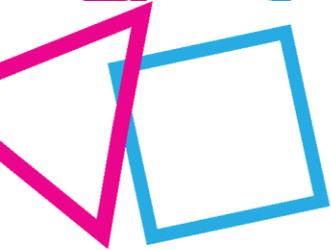
*Parents of the child (girl under 18 years of age) were from low class **unemployed**. They were both working only to get paid benefits from social services in Slovakia, coming from **minority group** in rural area- eastern Slovakia. Their child was **sold online** to country abroad (not specified – but from studying the case we assume that it was UK). The child was stopped abroad and through program returned to Slovakia –however was sent back to **orphanage**, because of the case.*

*The victim (**boy** under 18 years of age) was discovered by police in rural region in Eastern Slovakia. He was in Slovakia **without papers** and was **sold** here. There was nobody accompanying him. Victim was from Romania and was not willing to talk so much about the case, but he agreed that he was offered to Slovakia and smuggled here. Victim showed the interest to be return to his country where he will be placed in specialized center for helping the victims of HT.*

*There were also two offenders in this case they had **organized network** with abroad concretely with Belgium. There was existing contact who was dealing with the girls once they arrived at Belgium. Offenders were using **different tactics** to hire and find women they were using clubs in Czech Republic, but also internet especially **Messenger and Wazzup**. Their main tool was to **promise girls lots of money** for offering escort services and doing prostitution abroad. There is no direct link how they were choosing victims as they were from different regions in Czech Republic. They placed their pictures and videos on the **online escort services**. They had many victims and one of them, which they also connected through Messenger and Wazzup was 17 years old. From the communication between them she stated many times she was underaged as she was stating she was still visiting the school. Modus operandi was that these girls/women were sent abroad for couple of days and then they came back and **give the money to the offenders**, who were sorting out for them another “job” abroad (usually they did 3-week terms).*

These three instances are exemplary of the sentences found in the Eastern part of Europe and highlight the classical form of human trafficking of minors. In general, factors that increase vulnerability to this form of crime are of a socio-economic nature, psychological/developmental nature, and a social nature (isolation and culture). As to the **socio-economic factors**, a precarious financial situation seems to be an important driver behind this type of human trafficking. Often, people struggle to make ends meet, indirectly forcing them to find money in non-conventional ways. As is illustrated in example one, this may even move parents to buying their child on the internet. In other instances, potential victims are seduced by (false) promises of making large gains, thus luring them into sexual abuse (see, for example, illustration 3). Thus, monetary gain ought to be a main driver for **both offenders and victims** of human trafficking, depending on the specific context of the case.

When looking at who the offenders are, not much information is provided in the sentences, and no specific profile can be established. However, an important finding regarding offenders, is that they can be **both**



people who are close to the victim and people unknown to the victim. Even though no clear offender profile can be established, we deem it of the utmost importance to underline that even close relatives can be seduced into trafficking their relatives. The sentences suggest that the degree of closeness to the offender implies a different type of recruitment strategy. Whereas in the case of family members the victims do not appear to have a choice and is **forced** into human trafficking, a victim needs to be **seduced** first in cases where the offender is a stranger (e.g., example 3). In the latter case, the victim is misled by the promises of the victim and trapped in human trafficking.

As to the **victims** of human trafficking, again no clear-cut profile can be established based on the information provided in the sentences. As is the case with online grooming, offenders seem to be adaptive to the individual victim, and target certain individual vulnerabilities. One such vulnerability that does emerge in the sentences is the need or wish for **financial success** as discussed above. A second vulnerability is **social isolation** of the victim (e.g., example 2), in the sense that the more socially isolated a victim is or has become once entered the trafficking network, the more easily they can be exploited. A factor that greatly enhances this effect is **being without papers**, as this factor not only socially, but also legally limits the potential of the victim to escape their precarious situation.

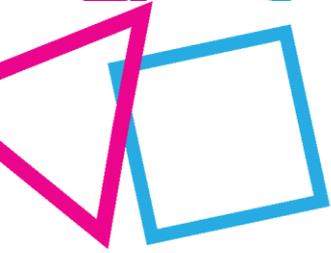
In direct relation to social isolation is the fact that victims find themselves **in an institution** such as an orphanage or youth correction center. In theoretical terms, such victims lack the necessary social network and social support which provide a protective safety net against human trafficking. In literature as well, it is highlighted that these venues are preferred recruitment places for human traffickers. Ironically, young people rescued from human trafficking are often put into such institutions after the crime, thus heightening the risk for them to end up in a similar situation in the future (e.g., example 1).

As to the **modus operandi**, there is no clear-cut red line to be found in the sentences. One common factor already discussed is the **seduction by financial gain or success**. In many cases, however, victims need to give the money they gained to the offender, thus maintaining a dependency relationship (e.g., example 3). In addition, often a **criminal network** is involved in these cases, to find potential customers and to move victims beyond borders. **Usage of the internet** is rather limited to an instrumental usage, as, for example, posting advertisements for jobs, getting into contact with traffickers, or publishing ads on prostitution websites. In general, though, we conclude that the tactics used by offenders are diverse and adapted to the targeted victims.

We conclude there are two subtypes of human trafficking in the classical paradigm which is predominant in the sentences from the Eastern part of Europe. One can be defined as the **forced type**, and the other as the **seductive type**. With the forced type, we refer to those instances where victims are trafficked beyond their will by relatives or strangers, whilst the seductive type refers to those victims who are seduced into trafficking by promises of wealth and/or fame.

3.3. Human trafficking in the West: the “loverboy” phenomenon

In the Western part of Europe, the predominant form of human trafficking recorded by the sentences is the **“loverboy” phenomenon**. In short, this phenomenon refers to the situation where usually young males



seduce underage girls and subsequently force them into prostitution. Below are exemplary accounts of this phenomenon as they are registered in the sentences:

The accused has together with another person in the manner proven to - in brief - commit human trafficking. The accused recruited three underage girls for prostitution using so-called loverboy methods. He got them to make themselves available for the performance of sexual acts with third parties. A large part of the money that the girls earned, they had to hand over to the suspect or his co-perpetrator. If the girls did not want to work for the defendant (any longer), the defendant blackmailed the girls into revealing their work to their families and threatened them with violence.

The accused has brought an underage and vulnerable girl into prostitution, kept her there for several months and profited from her. During this period the accused had a relationship with the victim and, as a so-called loverboy, took advantage of the fact that she was very much in love with him. The accused is convicted for human trafficking, production, possession and distribution of child pornography, assault, and threats.

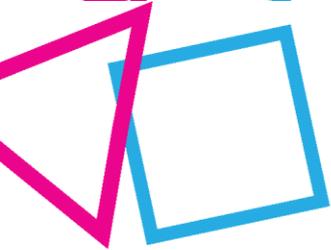
During almost ten months the accused made a young woman work for him in prostitution. Moreover, in cooperation - and by abusing her feelings of love - with this woman he forced an underage girl in the age of 16 to work for him. Hereby the young woman and the underage and underage girl were put under pressure in all kinds of ways, whereby violence was not shunned by the accused. The accused did not shun violence and they had to hand over all proceeds of prostitution to the accused. The court is of the opinion that these 'loverboy' practices being human trafficking, must be severely punished. The accused has repeatedly met the police and the judiciary in the past and has been the accused has repeatedly met the police and the judiciary in the past and has been convicted several times of mainly violent offences.

A central element in the “loverboy” phenomenon is the **seduction** of the victim by giving complements, attention (love), and gifts. In this respect, “loverboy” tactics always start with a grooming phase, in which the offender plays into the interests of the victim thus gaining his or her trust and commitment. In this respect, “loverboy” tactics can be considered a special case of online grooming, but which goes further by forcing vulnerable victims in prostitution for financial gain for the offender.

How this seduction takes place is not discussed in the sentences, but a commonality that can be identified is that victims often have a **certain need or vulnerability**, which the offender seemingly fulfills. The sentences do not specify which needs or vulnerabilities these are concretely, but there is a general tendency to make the victim emotionally dependent on the offender, which in turn allows the offender to make the victim do things they would not normally do. Supposedly, this need or vulnerability on behalf of the victim can take many forms – such as social isolation, searching for identity, and lack of social support – and offenders cunningly play into these needs in the grooming phase.

Whilst there is no specific profile for offenders, they are often of a **relatively young age** (20-30), and sometimes, but not always, have certain vulnerabilities themselves such a precarious financial situation or certain mental issues such as impaired cognitive development. The latter, however, is not constitutive for offenders as they are often described as socially fluent and attractive young men in the sentences. What does appear from the sentences, is that having **judicial antecedents** or **multiple victims** is no rarity.

After the grooming phase, when the victims are emotionally dependent on the “loverboy”, **coercive tactics**, **manipulation**, and **violence** are rather commonly used. Often, “loverboys” incite their victims to use drugs



and abuse them physically. The money victims earn, must be given to the “loverboy” thus also generating a **financial dependence** of the victim on the offender.

The **internet** plays an increasingly important role in the grooming process in case of “loverboys”, as it facilitates the search for potential victims and their respective interests, for example through Instagram and Facebook profiles and the information they contain. Even though information on the internet platforms used is scarce in the sentences, it can be deduced that the internet plays an equally important role in the phase of actual abuse, as often victims are **advertised on dating sites or pornography websites** to prostitute themselves.

We conclude that the “loverboy” phenomenon is a very serious issue in Europe, which merits special attention due to its precise nature. Even though no sentences on this topic have been found in various regions of Europe, one needs to be careful in judging the problem does not exist. Awareness needs to be raised locally about the potential existence of this phenomenon, and prevention thereof is of the utmost importance. Given that the central element of “loverboy” tactics is a (romantic) intimate relationship with the victim, it can be assumed that – even in zones where it is prosecuted or considered a judicial priority – this crime is seriously underreported.

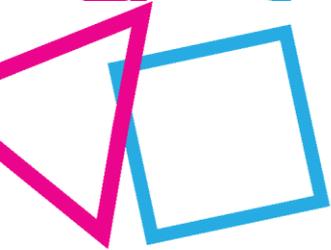
3.4. Conclusion

In this descriptive account of human trafficking sentences, we have highlighted the existence of mainly two forms of human trafficking in Europe. The first form is what is traditionally understood as human trafficking, in the sense that potential victims are forced into prostitution by offenders. This form of human trafficking was the predominant form in the Eastern part of Europe. However, a far more subtle form of human trafficking has been identified in the Western part of Europe: the “loverboy” phenomenon. This is a particularly concerning phenomenon, as the coercion applied in these cases is based on an emotional relationship between the offender and the victim, and thus merits special attention in the RAYUELA project.

A lot more is to be done in terms of sensitization and awareness raising concerning both forms of human trafficking, as these crimes often go underreported. The fact that many project partners declared not to have found sentences on these phenomena further underlines the importance of awareness raising on this issue, as this may indicate that local authorities are not aware of the existence of these severe and often hidden crimes. In this vein, we recommend the following strategies for RAYUELA:

1. Regarding the more traditional forms of human trafficking, false advertising of jobs should figure in the serious game. Often, people fall for the promises made in terms of financial gain and / or success, and this can easily be highlighted in the serious game.
2. As there are some difficulties associated with the prevention of the traditional forms of human trafficking in which the victim is forced (e.g. by parents) the options for prevention through the serious game are limited. However, what is possible, is to raise awareness about the existence of this phenomenon among young people, thus enabling them to identify and report potential cases of human trafficking.
3. Special attention should be given to the “loverboy” tactics, which are presumably present in all parts of Europe, yet hidden. This is a particularly difficult form of crime to combat as it involves complex



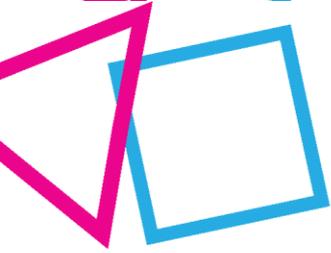


emotions such as love for the perpetrator, which underlines the simple fact that is better to prevent this crime than heal it afterwards. In this context, RAYUELA should use its privileged networks with LEA's and state institutions to sensitize and inform local policy and authorities on this issue.

4. Given the absence of clear victim and offender profiles, we deem it important to concentrate on more general prevention strategies in the serious game. In this context, young people should be educated about what constitutes an acceptable relationship, what constitutes a normal sexual relationship, and – importantly – how to guard their boundaries.

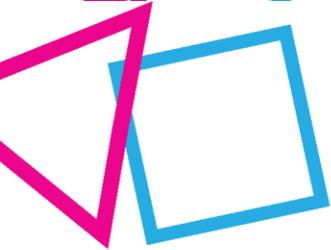
Finally, as these crimes are severely underreported, the serious game could also help in educating people about the red flags of human trafficking that might be present in their own environment, thus enabling them to identify, and ideally report, potential cases of human trafficking in their own environment.



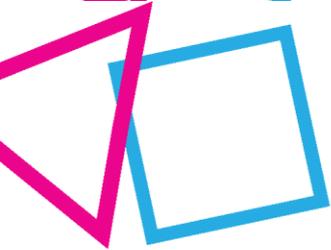


4. References

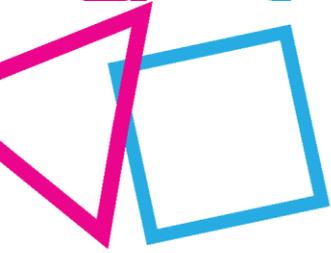
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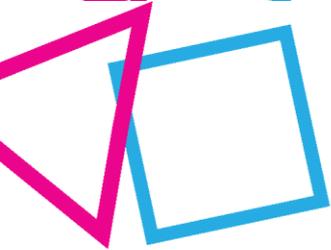


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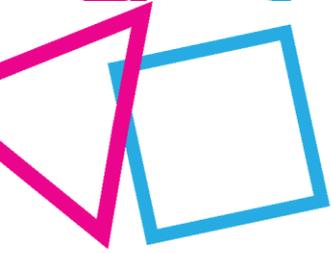


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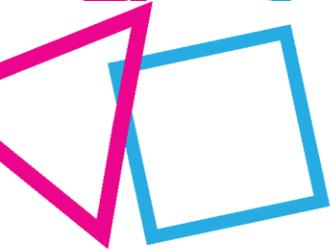
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Annex 1. Short overview of legislation

Online grooming

Online grooming means approaching and contacting children and building a trust relationship with them with the aim of enabling sexual abuse by removing or lowering the child's sexual or other barriers and inhibitions. The internet is a medium that can be easily used by potential sex offenders to manipulate children, often in a subtle, covert and incremental way.

Belgium

Is online grooming punishable? How is the crime defined?

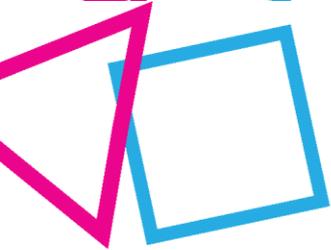
Yes. The term as such is not used but it is encompassed in Article 377quater of the Belgian Penal Code. This article defines that it is an offence for an adult to use information and communication technologies to make a proposal to meet a minor younger than 16 with the intent to commit a sexual offence. In addition, the proposal must be followed by material actions leading to a meeting with the minor.

Consequently, the constitutive components of the crime are as follows:

- The victim is younger than 16
- The offender is an adult (18 or older)
- There is a proposal by the adult to meet, using information and communication technologies (telephone, SMS, e-mail, chat, social media, internet sites, etc.)
- The proposal is made concrete/accompanied by actions (“material actions that lead to a meeting”).
- The goal of the meeting is to commit a sexual offence (sexual harassment, rape, sexual abuse, prostitution, child pornography etc.).

There are several issues or points of discussion relating to these constitutive components, namely the following:

- *Age of the victim:* since online grooming is only punished when the victim is younger than 16, issues may exist in determining that the offender knew this or should have known this.
- *Age of the victim (2):* discussion exists about the practice of law enforcement posing as minors to locate offenders. First, any proposal to meet would then be addressed to an adult. In addition, there is discussion on whether this form of elicitation is permissible.
- *Proposal made by the adult:* There is no online grooming when the proposal to meet is made by the minor. Of course, other offences may exist when the adult would accept such a proposal and meet the minor. Discussion may exist however, when concrete actions are proposed by the minor instead of the adult to make the meeting possible. It seems that this would still be punishable as online



grooming depending on the circumstances, but especially when it is the adult pushing for concrete material actions of the minor (e.g., the adult convincing the minor to meet at his/her house and the minor providing the address and how to get there).

- *Material actions that lead to a meeting:* It is unclear whether a meeting effectively must happen. The language of “material actions that lead to a meeting” seems to suggest this, but there is no clear support for this in the preparatory works. While vague intentions are not sufficient, it seems that concrete actions such as planning a route, buying a ticket for the minor etc. or the adult showing up to the meeting would suffice as such material actions. Equally, there is no support in the preparatory works to suggest that in case there is a meeting, that a sexual action must happen to qualify the previous contact as online grooming.
- *Intention of the offender:* to qualify as online grooming, the intention of the offender to commit a sexual offence must be shown based on the content of the conversation. If no such intent can be established, the behaviour is not classified as online grooming.
- Belgium will prosecute offenders also if they committed online grooming outside the Belgian territory and irrespective of the nationality of the victim or offender, if there is a link to Belgium (e.g., the victim resides in Belgium).

What is the punishment?

Online grooming is punishable with 1 to 5 years of imprisonment. When online grooming indeed has led to sexual offence, the minimum sentence is 2 years instead of one.

Online grooming is punished as a separate crime and consequently is added to any sentence received for the sexual offence itself.

Offenders can also be prohibited from working in professions that allow contact with minors. Where necessary, the court may decide to inform the offender's employer if the offender meets minors through his job. Perpetrators may also be prohibited from living, residing or being present in an area designated by the court.

Slovakia

Is online grooming punishable? How is the crime defined?

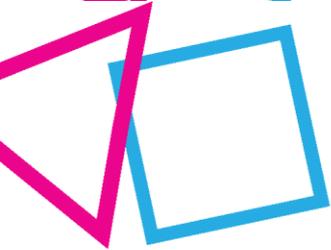
Yes. Section 201a of the penal code defines an action that falls within the concept of online grooming.

It states that any person who, through electronic communication service, suggests a child under fifteen years of age a personal meeting with the intent to commit the criminal offence of sexual abuse or the criminal offence of production of child pornography against him while not himself a child.

From this it can be deduced that at least the following must be present:

- The offender must be an adult (18 or older).
- The victim must be a minor younger than 15 years.





- The offender must make a proposal for a meeting in person.
- The proposal must be made with the intent to commit the criminal offense of sexual abuse or the criminal offence of production of child pornography.

Note that there is no requirement in the law for the offender to take material actions towards making a meeting happen. Hence, punishable online grooming will already exist when there is the proposal for such a meeting, if there is proven intent for committing the offence of sexual abuse, which is described in Section 201 of the code.

By not requiring material actions the Slovak code goes further than the minimum standard required by Article 6(1) of Directive 2011/93/EU. At the same time, however, the Slovak code does not extend the list of offenses which qualify for online grooming if the intention was to commit one of these offenses, like for example Belgium.

What is the punishment?

The punishment is a term of imprisonment of six months to three years.

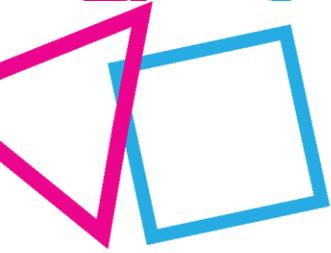
Northern Ireland

Is online grooming punishable? How is the crime defined?

Yes. Section 22 of the sexual offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 defines an offence that encompasses online grooming, namely “meeting a child following sexual grooming etc.”.

- The focus of the offence is heavily on material aspects of arranging the meeting.
- The following conditions must be present for the act to be punishable:
 - The offender must be an adult (18 or older).
 - The victim must be younger than 16.
 - There must no reasonable belief on the part of the offender that the victim was 16 or older.
 - The offender and victim have communicated on one or more occasions and subsequently:
 - o The offender intentionally meets the victim; or
 - o The offender travels with the intention of meeting the victim in any part of the world or arranges to meet the victim in any part of the world; or
 - o The victim travels with the intention of meeting the offender in any part of the world.
 - o The offender intends to do anything to or in respect of the victim, during or after the meeting, any in any part of the world, which, if done constitutes a relevant offence being:
 - o All sexual offences under the sexual offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 (rape, assault, abuse of a position of trust, abuse through prostitution and pornography etc.); and





- Offences relating to human trafficking and sexual exploitation; and
- Anything done outside Northern Ireland not caught in the preceding two bullet points, but which would be an act if carried out in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland also prosecutes if communications were coming from outside the own territory or when the meeting happens abroad, as well as for offences intended to be done abroad which would be illegal if done on the territory of Northern Ireland.

What is the punishment?

On summary conviction, the offender can be convicted to imprisonment for maximum six months and a fine. On conviction on indictment, an offender can be convicted to imprisonment for up to 10 years.

Spain

Is online grooming punishable? How is the crime defined?

Yes. The term online grooming is not used but Article 183ter, first paragraph of the Penal Code of Spain defines an offence that encompasses online grooming and punishes anyone who, using the internet, telephone or any other information and communication technology contacts a minor younger than 16 and proposes to arrange a meeting with the minor with the intent of committing sexual offences.

The conditions are the following for the act to be punishable:

- There must be an adult offender of 18 years or older (the law states “the person who”, which could be interpreted as encompassing non-adults, but this is not the intention).
- The victim must be younger than 16.
- The adult must contact the minor using the internet, telephone or any other information and communication technology.
- The adult must propose to arrange a meeting with the minor.
- There must be intent to commit the offence of sexual abuse of a minor under sixteen or a child pornography offence.
- The proposal must be accompanied by material acts aimed at approaching the minor.

As in other jurisdictions, there is discussion about what constitutes a material act. The act should facilitate a meeting, such as determining where the meeting will take place or how the transport will be arranged.

That is the punishment?

The law foresees that the offender shall be punished with one to three years' imprisonment or a fine of twelve to twenty-four months, without prejudice to the punishment the offender may receive if he or she has also committed the offence of sexual abuse of a minor under sixteen or a child pornography offence.

The law also specifies that penalties shall be imposed in the upper half of the specified range when the successful approach of the minor is obtained by means of coercion, intimidation, or deception.

Estonia

Is online grooming punishable? How is the crime defined?

Yes, Section 178-1 of Estonia's penal code provides for an offence that encompasses online grooming.

The conditions for the offence are the following:

- There must be an adult offender of 18 years or older (this is again not specified in the law but follows from the context of the penal code and the fact that this is a national transposition of Directive 2011/93/EU, which clearly relates to adult offenders).
- There must be a victim younger than 18 if that person was not capable of comprehending the situation or younger than 14.
- The adult offender must make a proposal to meet the minor or conclude an agreement to meet him or her.
- The adult offender must also perform an act of preparing the meeting.
- The aim of the meeting must be to commit an offence of a sexual nature with respect to the minor (child pornography offenses, human trafficking to take advantage of minors, sexual excitement of children, prostitution of minors, rape, sexual harassment, etc.)

What is the punishment?

The offense is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to three years' imprisonment.

Cyberbullying

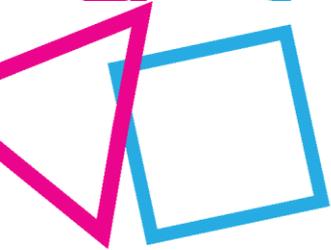
Belgium

Belgium applies several criminal offences to the context of cyberbullying.

A generally applicable offence is found in Article 145, paragraph 3 of the Belgian law on electronic communication punishes any person who uses an electronic communication network or means of electronic communication with the intent of causing nuisance or damage to the correspondent. Also punishable is the person who helps prepare electronic means/devices for this purpose. The punishment is a fine of 50 to 300 EUR (in practice to be multiplied by eight), a prison sentence of 15 days to 2 years, or only one of those sanctions.

In addition, there are several crimes that could apply to cyber bullying scenarios, depending on the situation at hand. They are the following:

Harassment and stalking (Article 442bis of the Belgian penal code): punishable when the offender seriously disturbs the peace of mind of a specific person, whilst he or she knows or should have known that his or her actions would cause this effect. The punishment is a fine of 50 to 300 EUR (in practice to be multiplied by eight), a prison sentence of 15 days to 2 years, or only one of those sanctions.



When the harassment or stalking is committed in respect of someone who is in a particularly vulnerable situation because of age, pregnancy, illness, or a physical or mental defect or unfitness and this was clear to the offender or known to him or her, then the minimum sentence is doubled.

Slander and defamation (Articles 443 and 444 of the Belgian penal code): this can be applicable when the cyberbullying is carried out in a public way online. Slander and defamation can be present when the offender accuses someone of something that will hurt the image of the victim or can have other negative public consequences, without being able to prove such allegations and with the intent to cause harm. For this to apply, the actions of the offender must be public. In the online context this includes:

- Public online meetings and spaces where other are present (websites, public profiles)
- Online spaces that are not public but accessible to several persons authorized/registered to access that online space (chatrooms, online forums, profiles accessible only to friends)
- Any other online space where there are witnesses in addition to the victim.

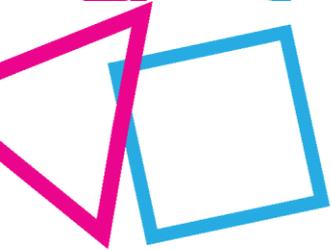
In addition, slander and defamation will be present when the offender spreads, posts or otherwise disseminates (also including the sale of) text and/or images to hurt the victim's image, e.g., on a social network site or sends text to several correspondents directly containing these allegations (e.g., mailing lists, newsletters, direct messages on online platforms including social media).

The sanction for slander and defamation is a fine of 26 to 200 EUR (in practice to be multiplied by eight), a prison sentence of 8 to 1 year, or only one of those sanctions.

Another specific offence is public insult by using text or images with the intent to cause harm (Article 448 Belgian Penal Code). It applies in the same context as slander and defamation and is punished with a fine of 26 to 500 EUR (in practice to be multiplied by eight), a prison sentence of 8 days to 2 months, or only one of those sanctions

Other offences may be relevant as well, depending on the context:

- Racism, sexism, discrimination: if the cyberbullying is accompanied by specific general encouragement or calls for violence, hate or discrimination, this behaviour may be punishable under general anti-discrimination law and specific anti-discrimination laws (anti-sexism law, anti-racism law).
- If the cyberbullying involves suggestive or sexual content, it may come within range of several sexual offences, especially when involving a minor.
- When cyberbullying is accompanied with hacking of accounts, sending viruses or other technical actions, it may come within range of several specific offences relating to hacking and digital forgery.
- When accompanied by extortion, behaviour may be punishable under specific offences relating to extortion and related criminal behaviour.



Slovakia

Slovakia applies a wide range of provisions of the Criminal Code to situations of cyberbullying. Depending on the cyberbullying scenario, the following offences may become of relevance:

Stalking (Section 360a of the Slovakian Criminal Code): punishable is behaviour where a person continually pursues another to an extent that may give rise to justifiable fear for his/her life or health, or the life or health of someone close to this person, or significantly worsens his/her quality of life by

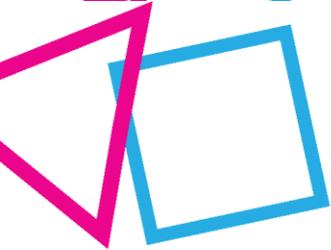
- a) threatening with bodily harm or other injury to him/her or to someone close to him/her; or
- b) seeking this person's physical proximity or pursuing him/her; or
- c) contacting him/her against his/her will through a third party, through an electronic communication service, in writing or another manner; or
- d) exploiting this person's personal data for the purpose of obtaining personal or other contact; or
- e) otherwise limiting him/her in his/her usual way of life.

The punishment in this case is a term of imprisonment of up to one year. However, the offender may be sentenced to imprisonment between six months and three years, if he commits the offense:

- a) against a protected person (which includes minors)
- b) in a serious Manner
- c) with specific motives
- d) in public.

Defamation (Section 373 of the Slovak Criminal Code): Defamation is defined as communicating false information about another person that can seriously damage the person's reputation among fellow citizens, the person's career, business, and/or family relations, or cause the person serious harm. The punishment is imprisonment for up to two years. This may be applicable to scenarios of cyberbullying. In addition, if the act of defamation causes substantial damage, the maximum prison term is increased to five years. If the act causes large-scale damage, loss of employment, or divorce, the offender faces three to eight years in prison.

Duress (Section 192 of the Slovak Criminal Code): applies where the cyberbully forces the victim to do, omit doing or endure something being done while abusing his material need or urgent non-material need, or distress caused by the victim's adverse personal circumstances. The sanction is up to three years in prison. Sanctions are stricter (one to five years) when committed with aggravating circumstances (against a protected person such as a minor, acting in a serious manner, out of a specific motive, etc.). When grievous bodily harm, death or substantial damage is caused, even stricter sanctions apply (four to ten years imprisonment). Duress that leads to large-scale damage, the death of several persons or is committed as a member of a dangerous group (e.g., terrorist organization) can lead to a term of imprisonment of fifteen to twenty-five years or even a life sentence.



Harm Done to Rights of Another (Section 375, 376 of the Slovak Criminal Code): Article 375 of the Criminal Code applies when a person causes serious prejudice to someone else by misleading another or taking advantage of the mistake of another. Could apply in certain scenarios of cyberbullying. The penalty is imprisonment of up to two years and between six months and three years if committed in a more serious manner, against a protected person (including a minor) or by pretending to be a public official. Imprisonment of one to five years is applicable if the offense is committed to obtain a substantial benefit.

Article 376 in its turn punishes persons who unlawfully breach the secrecy of a document, video, or recording, causing serious prejudice to the rights of another. In the context of cyberbullying this could easily be applicable if the cyberbully discloses materials previously shared in personal capacity with the bully by the victim. The penalty is imprisonment up to two years.

In addition, specific scenarios may also exist that include several other provisions:

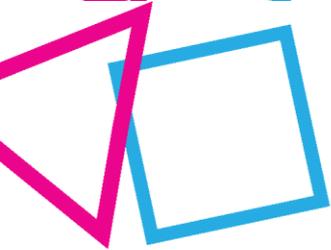
- When cyberbullying is accompanied by some form of extortion, Section 189 of the Slovakian Criminal Code on extortion will apply.
- If the cyberbullying involves a sexual component, a range of sexual offences may come within range such as sexual Exploitation (Section 201, Section 201a, Section 201b of CC), Manufacturing of child pornography (Section 368 of CC), Dissemination of child pornography (Section 369 of CC), Possession of child pornography and Participation in Child Pornographic Performance, Corrupting Morals (Sections 371, 372 of CC), Corrupting Morals of Youth (Section 211 of CC), etc.
- If the cyberbullying is specifically motivated by racism, religious hatred or similar discriminatory drivers, a range of anti-discrimination provisions may come within range such as: Establishment, Support and Promotion of Movements Directed at the Suppression of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (Section 421 of CC), Expression of Sympathy for Movements Directed at the Suppression of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms (Section 422 of CC), Production, Distribution, Possession of Extremist Materials (Sections 422a, 42 2b, 422c of CC), Denial and Approval of the Holocaust, the Crimes of Political Regimes and Crimes against Humanity (Section 422d of CC), Defamation of Nation, Race and Conviction (Section 423 of CC), or Incitement to National, Racial and Ethnic Hatred (Section 424 of CC).

Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland applies three other pieces of legislation to provide protection.

First, is the Protection from Harassment (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, which makes courses of conduct that amount to harassment or which the offender knows or ought to know amount to harassment of another punishable. Courses of conduct are defined as actions on at least two occasions. The same piece of legislation also punishes behaviour that puts people in fear of violence, a sort of stronger version of harassment.

A person guilty of an offence of harassment can be sanctioned on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or a fine not exceeding £5000, or both. A conviction on indictment could lead to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or a fine, or both. Persons guilty of putting people



in fear of violence may be sanctioned on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum, or both. A conviction on indictment may lead to a prison sentence not exceeding seven years or a fine, or both.

The court may also grant a restraining order to prohibit the offender from further acting in a way which amounts to harassment or will cause a fear of violence. If without reasonable excuse the offender breaches the court order this will amount to another criminal offence and the offender will be able to be punished with imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months, or a fine not exceeding £5000, or both.

Second, the Malicious Communications (Northern Ireland) Order 1988 punishes the sending of letters or other articles (which includes various methods of communications including over the internet) which are, in whole or in part, of an indecent and grossly offensive nature or convey (a) a message which is indecent or grossly offensive, (b) a threat, or (c) information which is false and known or believed to be false by the sender when the purpose or one of the purposes of the sender is to cause distress of anxiety to the recipient or another person to whom the content is intended to be communicated. It is punished on summary conviction with up to six months imprisonment and/or a fine not exceeding £5000.

Third, the Communications Act 2003 deals with improper use of a publicly available electronic communications network, which may catch situations of cyberbullying. Section 127 of the Act provides that a person is punishable:

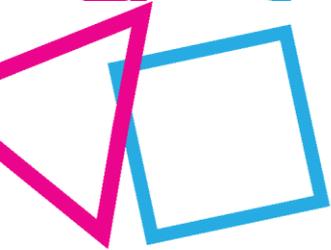
- If he sends by means of a public electronic communications network a message or other matter that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene, or menacing character or causes any such message or matter to be so sent.
- If, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, or needless anxiety to another, he:
 - sends by means of a public electronic communications network, a message that he knows to be false; or
 - causes such a message to be sent; or
 - persistently makes use of a public electronic communications network (for those purposes).

These offences are punished, on summary conviction, with imprisonment up to six months or to a fine not exceeding £5000, or to both.

Spain

Spain deals with cyberbullying through a range of provisions that may apply depending on the scenario of cyberbullying.

Article 169 of the Spanish Criminal Code punishes threats (including online) regarding a range of behaviours that, if carried out, would qualify as crimes, such as murder threats, threats of injury, threats against freedom and relating to torture, threats against moral integrity, of a sexual nature etc. This could easily cover situations of cyberbullying and is sentenced with six months to 2 years in prison if the threat was non-conditional. Threats that are condition, i.e., a situation of extortion are punished with six months to three years' imprisonment, and one to five years if the offender was successful in the extortion. Threats in relation to ethnic, cultural or religious characteristics are punished more strictly (Article 170 of the Criminal Code).



Threats of behaviour that does not constitute a crime may still be punishable (Article 171 of the Criminal Code).

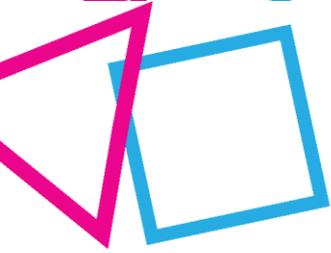
Article 172 of the Spanish Criminal Code deals with stalking behaviour, including online stalking and cyberbullying. Such behaviour is punishable when it is repeated and insistent and seriously alters the development of the daily life of the victim. Sanctions are a prison sentence of three months to two years or a fine of six to twenty-four months. If the victim is particularly vulnerable due to age, illness, or another situation a prison sentence of six months to two years can be imposed.

Article 208 of the Criminal Code punishes public insults. Only insults that, due to their nature, effects, and circumstances, are considered serious in the public sphere will constitute a crime. When they are serious the insults made public shall be punishable by a fine of six to fourteen months and, in the other case, with a fine of three to seven months (Article 209 Criminal Code). Accusations are only punishable if carried out with knowledge of their falsehood or reckless disregard for the truth.

Article 197 of the Spanish Criminal Code punishes the unlawful seizure or interception of private documents and communications or the use of listening devices, or devices for transmission, recording or reproduction of sound and image, as well as the seizure, use or modification to the detriment of a third party of personal data recorded in a file, a computer or electronic or telematic media or any type of public or private registry. Also punishable is accessing such storage places or using them to the detriment of the owner of the data or a third party, as well as anyone who uses such information knowing about its illicit origin. This seems to cover a range of cyberbullying behaviours such as hacking accounts, recording without the knowledge of the victim, taking screenshots and spreading them, etc. It also seems to cover the use of photos and personal content on a social media channel etc. for malicious purposes and without the consent of the victim. The Article also explicitly catches images and video recordings made by the offender him/herself, but without the authorization of the person concerned. Dissemination, revealing or transfer such images or video is punishable. The penalties range from three months to one year, over one year to four years, to five to three years depending on the circumstances. Penalties are stricter when the data has been disseminated, transferred, or revealed to third parties. If personal data that reveal ideology, religion, beliefs, health, racial origin, or sexual life is involved, or the victim is a minor or a person with a disability in need of special protection, the penalties provided will be imposed in their upper half. Additional sanctions are present if there's an intent to profit from these acts.

If technical measures, circumvention, or hacking are an important part of the cyberbullying scenario, other Articles such as Article 197 bis of the Criminal Code or Article 264 and 264 bis of the Criminal Code may be relevant.

When the cyberbullying involves a sexual component, such as (forcing) the making of pornographic or obscene materials by the victim or spreading such materials, some sexual offences come within range (notably Article 189 of the Code).



Estonia

Estonia has several provisions that may be found application in cyberbullying scenarios, depending on the facts at hand.

Section 156 of the Estonian Penal Code punishes the violation of confidentiality of messages with a fine. This may apply in the context of cyberbullying if the offender shares a personal message with a third party for whom it was not intended or makes it public.

Section 157-1 of the Estonian Penal Code punishes the illegal disclosure of or the enabling of illegal access to special categories of data (e.g., relating to race, ethnic origin, sexual preferences, religion, etc.) with a fine. This may be applicable to many cyberbullying scenarios that deal with sexual preference or personal beliefs as the target of the attacker. A stricter punishment, including a pecuniary punishment or up to one year's imprisonment can be imposed when the illegal disclosure was committed for the purpose of personal gain or if significant damage was caused.

Section 157-3 of the Estonian Penal Code deals with harassment, which does not constitute unauthorized surveillance, which is a specific offense regulated by Section 137 of the Code. Section 157-3 punishes repeated or consistent attempts to contact another person, watching him or her or interference in the privacy of another person against the will of such person in another manner, if the intent or effect thereof is to intimidate, humiliate the other person or disturb him or her in any other manner. The penalty is a pecuniary punishment or up to one year's imprisonment.

When the offender uses a threat of violence, Section 120 of the Estonian Penal Code will be applicable in the context of cyberbullying. Section 120 punishes threats to kill, cause health damage or cause significant damage to or destroy property if there is reason to fear the realisation of such threat. The offense is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to one year's imprisonment.

When cyberbullying involves extortion, this will be caught by Section 214 of the Estonian Penal Code. This section punishes coercion of another person to transfer proprietary benefits by use of threat to restrict the liberty of the person, disclose embarrassing information, or destroy or damage property, or by use of violence. The offense is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to five years' imprisonment.

If in the context of the cyberbullying an account is hacked, this may be punished under Section 157-2 (illegal use of another person's identity). Other technical measures may be punishable under specific offences such as Sections 206, 207 or 217 of the Penal Code.

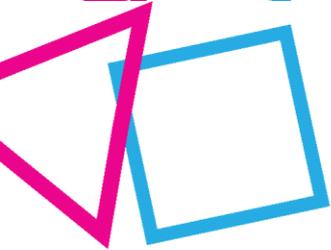
If the cyberbullying scenario involves sexual motives, several specific offenses may come within range.

Human trafficking

Slovakia

Human trafficking, including scenarios where the internet is used to facilitate the crime, is criminalized in Slovakia by Sections 179-181 of the Criminal Code.





Section 179 of the Slovak Criminal Code generally punishes trafficking in human beings for the purposes of prostitution or another form of sexual exploitation, including pornography, forced labour and services including beggary, slavery, or practices like slavery, servitude, forced marriage, misuse for committing criminal activities, removal of organs, tissues or cells or other forms of exploitation. The methods by which the trafficking is enabled does not matter much as virtually every method is within scope of the Article. The standard sanction is imprisonment for four to ten years.

The section also specifically mentions that it punishes any person who entices, transports, harbours, hands over or takes over a child, even with his consent, for the purposes of his prostitution or other form of sexual exploitation, including child pornography, forced labour or forced services including beggary, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude, forced marriage, misuse for committing criminal activities, illegal adoption, removal of organs, tissues or cells or other forms of exploitation.

The sanction is seven to twelve years if the crime is committed against a minor or when other aggravating circumstances exist. For organized cases where the perpetrator obtains substantial benefits, causes grievous bodily harm or death, or other particularly serious consequence to one or more people, or is a member of a dangerous group (criminal syndicate, terrorist organization), more severe sentences are available in two steps (twelve to twenty years and twenty to twenty-five or life).

Section 180 of the Slovak Criminal Code punishes trafficking in children, namely the situation where the offender places a child under the control of another for the purpose of adoption. The standard punishment is up to three year's imprisonment. More serious cases or cases where the offender obtains a larger benefit for himself, or another are punished by imprisonment for four to ten years. Where the offender also causes grievous bodily harm or death, or other particularly serious consequences the sanction is a prison sentence of ten to fifteen years.

Section 181 of the Slovak Criminal Code punishes anyone who, in exchange for money, places a child under the control of another for the purpose of exploiting the child for child labour, or for any other purpose. The standard punishment is a prison sentence for four to ten years. Several stricter penalties are imposed in different steps according to the presence of aggravating circumstances.