



FIGHTING BULLYING AND EXTREMISM IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN ALBANIA

ANTI-BULLYING OPEN DAYS IN 21 PILOT SCHOOLS IN ALBANIA

INFORMATIVE AND AWARENESS-RAISING EVENTS ON WHAT BULLYING IS, ITS FORMS
AND CONSEQUENCES AND PREVENTIVE MEASURES

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO TACKLE BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

17-31 OCTOBER 2017

*Dibër, Kukës, Lezhë, Durrës, Shkodër, Tiranë, Elbasan, Gjirokastrë, Vlorë,
Fier, Berat, Korçë*

ALBANIA



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Background

The overall objective of the European Union/Council of Europe Horizontal Facility Action “Fighting bullying and extremism in the education system in Albania” is to assist in enhancing the protection of the rights of vulnerable groups by applying anti-discriminatory approaches in the formal education system in Albania based on Council of Europe standards and practices. One of the specific objectives of the action *inter alia* include “*raising awareness on what bullying is, how it impacts children, what the consequences of bullying are, and how to prevent it*”. The desired result is “*increased awareness and improved knowledge at school, community and central level of the consequences of bullying and extremism in the education system*”.

From 17 to 31 October, 21 pilot schools all over Albania opened their doors to parents, local community and media to inform and raise their awareness on the consequences of bullying and extremism in schools and ways to prevent it.

Each pilot school organised a number of different activities on conveying the general message that bullying and extremist behaviour is not tolerated among peers in school. Informative sessions with teachers, students and parents, as well as class activities, projection of films against bullying, street parades against bullying, talking with local media about these issues, open debates, sketching, artistic exhibitions and performances are some of the activities that were organised for the anti-bullying Open days in 21 pilot schools across Albania.

As a result of these activities, awareness and knowledge at the school, community and central level of the consequences of bullying and extremism in the education system was increased for approximately 11,000 citizens.

NORTHERN REGION OF PILOT SCHOOLS

Teachers of the **secondary general pilot school "Said Najdeni" Dibër** worked closely with students and parents in planning and organising the activities for the "Anti-Bullying Open Days" which was organized in the Palace of Culture with a high community engagement around 1500 invitees. Students were engaged to tackle bullying through writing, artwork and videos. They developed leaflets with messages about the types of bullying and preventive methods. Three short films with different messages on physical, social and cyber-bullying were prepared by students. The videos prepared by the students were presented in a public event involving pupils, teachers and parents as well as local and education officials.

Links to videos prepared by students:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ushssMuj2SM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSQEpdxEhbo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QaZPkcaGvsc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cRPAWQenLA8>



In the **Secondary general pilot school "Havzi Nela" in Kukës**, a solidarity tree was created during the Anti-Bullying Open Day with anti-bullying messages prepared by teenagers, teachers and parents. The exhibition revealed three main messages: the destructive consequences of bullying, the role of peer engagement in stopping bullying and the necessity of cooperation among all school and community actors. During the Open Day students improvised debates on bullying aimed at provoking thoughts and reflection on what bullying is, its negative consequences, types of bullying and the role of each stakeholder in stopping it. Parents had also an active role in this activity where they held a speech on the importance of effective cooperation with children and cooperation with school in preventing this phenomenon. The activity was concluded with presentation of essays written by students and dancing conveying messages of peace, solidarity, inclusion and tolerance.

Link to the movie:

<https://youtu.be/u-Foa4XSBaM>

<https://youtu.be/HaQNHEFGidE>



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The “Anti-Bullying Open Day” in the **primary pilot school “Kosova”** in Lezhë gathered around 400 participants including all school directors from the city of Lezhë, representatives from the Regional Education Directorate, Students Government of all schools, parents and other professionals from the Municipality, Education, Health and Police. Students held various sessions such as recitals, dancing, singing, an art exhibition prepared by pupils, teachers and parents to convey direct messages “**NO to Bullying in Schools – Together for Safe schools**”. This activity was attended by the Head of Council of Europe Office in Tirana, Claus Neukirch who emphasised in his welcome remarks the need to create a new school culture based on human rights and democracy to eradicate bullying from schools for good.



In the **Primary pilot school “Naim Babameto”** in Durrës the event was attended by more than 500 participants: parents, teachers, students, representatives from the Regional Education Directorate Durrës and community members. Students, parents and educational professionals communicated anti-bullying messages through open debates, sketching, singing, art exhibition and videos. The director of the school and the representative of the Regional Education Directorate in Durrës emphasized the full engagement of the school in the fight against bullying and the importance of improving the psycho-social service in schools in Durrës.



The **Primary pilot school “Ndre Mjeda” in Shkodër** organised an entire week devoted to awareness-raising activities on fighting bullying with all students at the school, their parents, teachers and community members. Informative sessions with teachers, students and parents, showing films against bullying, street parades against bullying, talking with local media about these issues, were some of the activities developed by the school.

The event was broadcasted on local media:

<http://www.starplus-tv.com/sociale/item/33609-shkolla-ndre-mjeda-i-shpall-lufte-bullizmit>

<http://www.starplus-tv.com/sociale/item/33742-ndre-mjeda-marshim-kunder-bullizmit>



In the **secondary general pilot school “Atë Pjetër Meshkalla” in Shkodër**, under the motto: **“Shall we go for bullying? NO, THANKS”** activities were organised to contribute to raising awareness among all students at school, parents, teachers and community members about the types of bullying, prevention methods and how students can respond when they are a victim or witness someone else being bullied. Some of the activities organised by the school were: seminars with students, meetings with parents, sportive activities, broadcast in local media. Students were actively involved in preparing, organising and implementing all the activities. The ideas developed by students were very helpful to target different groups in and out of school.

The event was broadcasted on local media:

<http://rozafa.tv/shkojme-per-bullizem-jo-faleminderit/>

In the **Vocational Education Training pilot school “Beqir Çela” in Durrës** under the motto **“Stop Bullying”** students shared messages about bullying, inclusion and tolerance. They tackled the phenomenon of bullying through sketching and drama. Interviews with parents on these issues

added value and interest in this event. This event was attended by directors of other schools in Durrës, representatives from the Regional Education Directorate, parents and local community.

<https://www.facebook.com/Shkolla-E-Mesme-Profesionale-Beqir-Cela-Durres-107178122659437/>



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CENTRAL REGION OF PILOT SCHOOLS

In the secondary general pilot school “Sandër Prosi” in Sauk, Tiranë students communicated anti-bullying messages to teachers, students and parents’ audiences. They held a recital with poems that they had written. They acted out a short piece on bullying and showed a video that they had produced with an improvised bullying event. Many posters covered the walls of the school and the outdoor environments in the school yard. Other neighbourhood schools were interested in holding anti-bullying open days in their schools in the future.



In the secondary general pilot school “Kostandin Kristoforidhi” in Elbasan concepts of bullying were presented by students through artistic performances, sketches, exhibitions conveying the key messages that bullying is not tolerated in their school. A fair was organised in the yard of the school in which every class presented its own posters against bullying. This activity was highly attended by parents and representatives from the local community and was covered by the local media: Best channel and by the Radio Voice 16+.

The event was broadcasted on local media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tN2MrVYYacE&feature=youtu.be>

Video prepared by students:

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=Y3ZMzc_ha2Q



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In the primary pilot school “Katundi i Ri” in Elbasan the event started with presentations and messages from students and school staff against bullying and was followed by activities organised in the school yard where every class displayed posters and pan cards conveying strong messages against bullying. The event was concluded with all students being together united in tackling this issue. All classes had prepared posters and drawings and they paraded in front of parents and guests holding messages against bullying. The event was attended by parents and representatives from local community and was covered by the local media.

https://www.facebook.com/Shkolla-Europa-Katundi-i-Ri-1106247362752358/?hc_ref=ARQDm_zY82S6j4BvF5n8kuWQ9tZxGUoeaxtleuOm28DgxwToC5z55lkOC4F9mf3CZ4o



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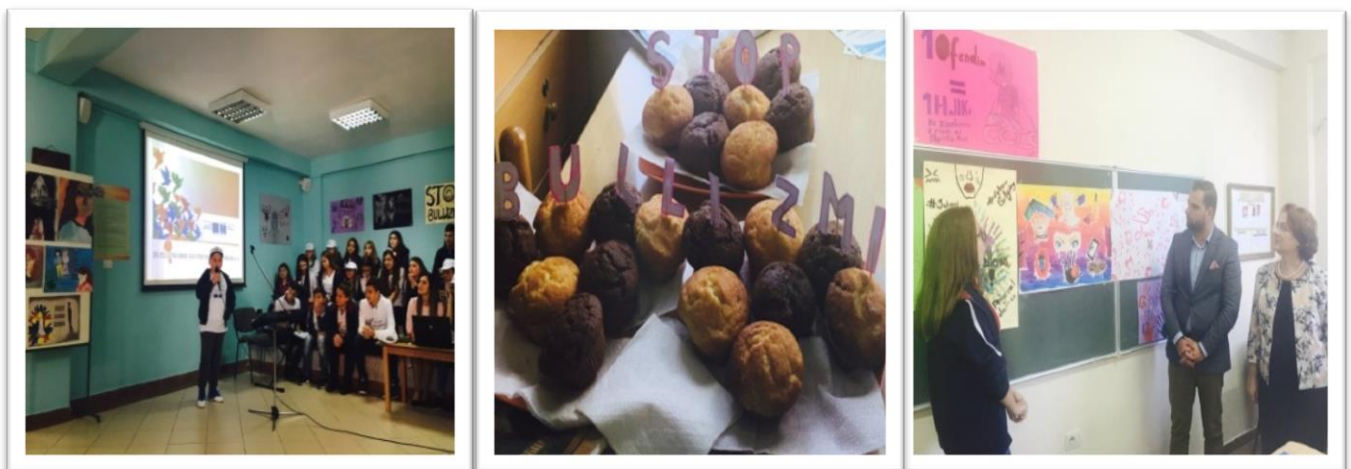
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In the primary pilot school “Fan Noli” in Tiranë, students presented the concept of bullying, its forms and the consequences on students all of which aimed at increasing the common understanding within the school and the larger community. Students discussed the different forms of bullying, provoking the audience to reflect on the effects of bullying. They discussed the ways of being proactive in preventing and combating bullying. The message focused on the ethical principles of justice and democracy, social responsibility to counter bullying and to protect human rights. Through poems and videos students clearly stated that what is the problem is not diversity but bullying in the name of difference. They recited poems that stressed the message of tolerance and welcoming diversity. At the end of the day, students recalled the role of school in preventing violent anti-social behaviour by educating democratic competences. This event was attended by the Deputy Minister of Education, Sport and Youth, Mr Shpat Kolgega and the Director of the Pre-University Education at the Ministry, Mrs Zamira Gjini who highlighted the importance of implementing this project in 21 pilot schools in Albania and the crucial role of community engagement as well as school-parents-students cooperation to tackle bullying in schools.



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In the primary pilot school “Vasil Shanto” in Tiranë the Anti-Bullying Open Day was opened with a session of free discussions on the bullying phenomenon in all classes and afterwards, pupils shared with each other sweets and other food brought from home thus creating a very relaxed, friendly



atmosphere. The event was then followed by a concert at the school yard opening with the “Anthem of Europe” sang by students in German, songs, poems, short sketches and dancing conveying anti-bullying messages performed by pupils. Anti-bullying posters, leaflets and drawings were prepared by pupils as contributions for the thematic competition “**SAY NO TO BULLYING**”.

In the primary pilot school “Turgut Özal” in Tiranë a concert was held with songs on friendship and drama written by students themselves, with significant anti-bullying messages and dancing performances with the same theme. All the essays, paintings and posters of the students conveyed ideas on how students perceive and challenge the phenomena of bullying in schools. The video prepared by the students with messages from parents, school staff and even bullied students was very significant and helpful in raising awareness against bullying.

The event was transmitted by TV channel: <http://top-channel.tv/2017/10/27/bullizmi-ne-rritjen-ndergjegjesohen-adoleshentet-neper-shkolla/>



In the VET “Hoteleri Turizëm” in Tiranë on the occasion of the Anti-Bullying Open Day the students prepared an anti-bullying art exhibition named “Corner of Paintings” with many interesting and meaningful anti-bullying messages. Students of the professional school prepared in a very creative way, culinary products with anti-bullying symbols. The concert was based on the real and specific bullying problems of the school, composed by students-members of different ethnic and religious communities. A dance performed by students from Roma and Egyptian communities gave the message: **“Stop bullying because of race and ethnicity!”** Another message conveyed was **“Stop bullying because of religion and beliefs!”** which was a call to respect and not to bully a student, for their way of dressing because of their religious beliefs.



SOUTHERN REGION OF PILOT SCHOOLS



In the secondary general pilot school “Siri Shaplo” in Gjirokastër, the open week started with a school survey on the bullying phenomena and the results were compared with the national survey and shared with the large audience of teachers, students and parents during the final day of the open week. Students organised an exhibition with paintings portraying the consequences of bullying. During the Open day students held a recital with poems and songs against bullying. A video produced by students showed different situations of bullying. The school was decorated with banners against bullying. All activities aimed at changing attitudes, behaviour and beliefs that support bullying among students. The messages aimed at preventing bullying from happening in school and protecting victims and aggressors. The awareness activities reached a wider audience and informed the public present on existing school and community resources to combat bullying.



Many of the youngsters of the **secondary general pilot school "Ali Demi"** in Vlorë are aware of the damaging effects of bullying among teenagers and peers. With support of the anti-bullying school team, they carried out Open Day activities aiming to raise awareness of teachers, parents and other schoolmates. The focus was on the issues created by the prevalence of this phenomenon and the particular role of psychologists and other school staff in combating it. Other activities included discussions and contests moderated by the students themselves as well as essays and posters produced by them. The 150 participants included students, teachers, parents and representatives of the regional authorities of education and local government.



A long feature on the event was broadcast by local TV news: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qJkitaFrSew>

In the **secondary general pilot school "B.D. Karbunara"** in Berat the Anti-Bullying Open Day was organised under the motto **"All together against bullying"** and reached a wide public of teachers, parents, students community members, representatives of the Regional Education Directorate of Berat and media. The organised activities included indoor and outdoor art exhibitions of students' works, sketching, open discussions with parents, the projection of anti-bullying videos, disseminating of leaflets for citizens on the city hall and in the institutions by concluding the event with an awareness-raising parade in the town's streets comprised of students, teachers and parents all holding up messages against bullying.



This event was broadcasted by Top Channel: <http://top-channel.tv/2017/10/27/bullizmi-ne-rritje-ndergjegjesohen-adoleshentet-neper-shkollat/>

The small **primary pilot school "Sotir Beçka"** in the village of Bulgarec, commune of Korçë, organised activities such as exhibitions of students' painting and drawing works, essays, small video clips and other messages reflecting their views and feelings about bullying. Among the 150 participants, there were parents and community members as well as representatives of the regional authorities of education and local government who, together with school teachers conveyed their commitment to cooperate in order to create and implement safe school policies. The activities were featured in the local TV news: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1FcP4YnoxI&feature=share



In the primary pilot school "Mark Dashi" in Fier key messages on stopping bullying were presented to all the classes of the school with artistic work, sports, performance prepared by the students of all grades. Parallel informative sessions with parents and the socio-psychological service on what bullying and extremism is, its forms and preventive measures took place during the event. It was evidenced that the entire activity came as a result of the fruitful cooperation among teachers, students and parents. Overall, it was an inclusive event which gathered together representatives from the local community and media. Teachers and parents confirmed that this project is very welcomed and needed for schools in Albania not only as a relevant concerning topic but also as an element that has brought the community together.



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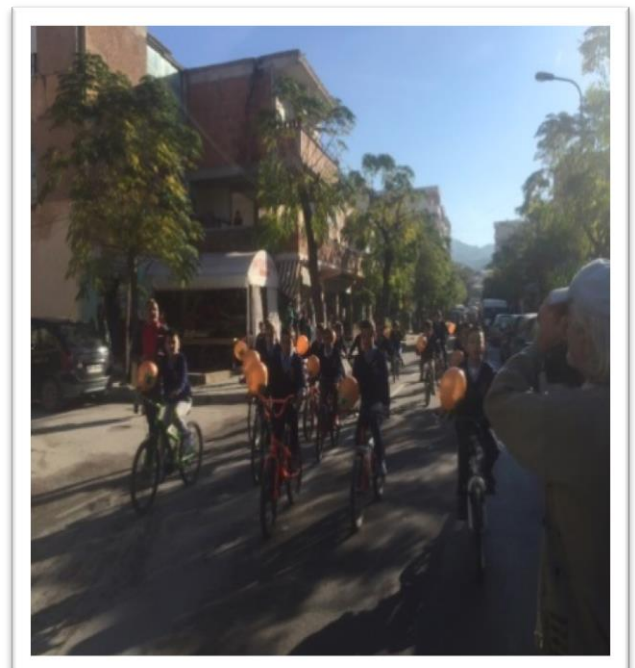
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The school staff and the school board of the **primary pilot school "Ismail Qemali"** in Vlorë carried out a wide range of Anti-bullying Open Day activities with an even wider participation of some 450 pupils, parents, community members, teachers from other schools, representatives from the municipality and from the prefecture of Vlore as well as from the Council of Europe. Activities took place simultaneously in different parts of the school, including indoor and outdoor exhibitions of students' art work, the projection of anti-bullying video clips and even a parade in the town of children with and without bicycles holding up messages against bullying. The messages were clear: **"Bullying can kill if no action is taken"** and **"Together we can make a change and fight off bullying from our school and society"**.

The event was broadcast by local TV channels and featured in several social media pages such as:

<https://www.facebook.com/6plus1vlora/posts/1560037044054125>

<https://www.facebook.com/shkollaismail.qemali.18/posts/252713551922683>



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In the **primary pilot school “Flatrat e Dijes”** in Fier the “Anti-Bullying Open Day” was organised in 24 classrooms where students, parents and guests attended various awareness-raising activities. Students prepared an awareness-raising programme “**Together, against Bullying, against Extremism**” conveying anti-bullying messages through sketches, games, video clips and art exhibition. Posters prepared by students were displayed on the walls of the school and the outdoor environment in the school yard.



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