Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor Country Profile 2024: GREECE

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway on the pillars and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (BIK+ strategy). The 2024 edition of the BIK Policy Monitor report examines the implementation of the BIK+ strategy in 29 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, and Norway.

The country profile outlines findings about the implementation of the BIK+ strategy based on BIK policies and BIK+ actions across the strategy's three pillars as surveyed in the BIK Policy Monitor (as per February 2024). Download the full BIK Policy Monitor report 2024 from the Better Internet for Kids website.

BIK policies

Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks describe the overarching approach for a better internet, and establish the underlying goals, principles and guidelines that shape individual policies within this area.

- This topic **is an important and emerging policy priority**, with children's online protection, digital empowerment, and digital participation partially covered in national/regional laws, regulations and policies.

- There are **separate, dedicated policies which address children and the digital environment** (protection, empowerment, and participation).

- The BIK / BIK+ strategy **is not explicitly referred to in national policies** but has informed policy development on children and the digital environment.

- **Children's rights in the digital environment are not explicitly recognised** in national policy documents but receive implicit support in policies dealing with children's digital activity.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Coverage of BIK+ issues in national policies		X		
Integration of policy provision		X		
Influence of the BIK+ strategy		X		
Recognition of children's rights		X		

Table 1: Topic summary - policy frameworks

Key national policy frameworks are:

- The national public policy on children online protection was defined in 2008 by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports together with the Greek School Network.

- The Greek Safer Internet Centre (SIC Greece) was launched in July 2016 under the auspices of the Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH).

- The Greek SIC has a close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, Ministry of Digital Governance and Ministry of Citizen Protection and is the main channel for the education of educators, parents and children. The SIC brought the BIK+ strategy to the centre of attention during its Advisory Board meetings in 2022 and 2023 and also during Safer Internet Day.

- The Greek SIC holds a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Greek Cybercrime Unit of the Ministry of Citizen Protection. It is also in the process of co-signing an MoU with the Ministry of Digital Governance, which is almost at the final stage. Furthermore, all educational material and activities for the promotion of safe use of the internet by minors but also the protection of their digital rights (webinars, informative sessions, school competitions, SID

celebration) of the Greek SIC obtain the aegis of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports.

Policy design

Policy design asks whether evidence and research support BIK-related policies and whether systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating those policies.

- Surveys of children's digital activities **are undertaken but only irregularly**.

- **Information is regularly gathered to inform policies on children and the digital environment**. However, this relies primarily on third-party sources, and there are limited opportunities to commission new data on children's digital activity.

- **There is no national research funding.** However, the European Commission co-funds the Greek Safer Internet Centre, like many other SICs across the EU.

- **Policies are monitored and evaluated but not systematically**. It depends on the needs at a particular time or when policies are being considered.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Regular data collection			X	
Other information supports		X		
National research fund				X
Monitoring and evaluation		X		

Table 2: Topic summary - policy design

Recent national research studies include:

- The Greek SIC carries out surveys on children's digital habits and interests. The survey, which was approved by the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, was conducted to 26,000 students aged between 10-17 years on Internet habits.

- Results of an online parent survey were published on Safer Internet Day 2021.

Policy governance

Policy governance examines how policies are coordinated at the governmental level, whether other implementation bodies are involved in their delivery, and whether structured mechanisms are available to guide their implementation.

- **Policy development sits across a range of ministries, and there is no lead with specific assigned responsibility** for developing government on policies, guidelines and programmes relating to children and the digital environment.

- **Coordination happens more informally across the different departments and entities** that contribute to government policies, guidelines, and programmes regarding children and the digital environment.

- **One or more programmes of action are underway** supporting children's online safety and participation in the digital environment. However, these lack accountabilities such as defined timelines, assigned responsibilities or key performance indicators (KPIs).

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Lead ministry for policy development			X	
National coordination body		X		
National action plan or strategy		X		

Table 3: Topic summary - policy governance

Representatives from the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs, and Sports attend the Greek SIC Advisory Board meeting every year. Furthermore, cooperation with the Ministry of Digital Governance on awareness-raising campaigns for protection from online fraud (phishing/smishing) and the realisation of webinars for gymnasium and lyceum students takes place. Beyond that, cooperation with the Ministry of Citizen Protection (signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with

the Greek Cyber Crime Unit through the Ministry of Citizen Protection) is ongoing mainly for the operation of the Greek Safer Internet Hotline, SafeLine.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires how different stakeholders can participate in policy development. Children's involvement in policy-making is one such key issue. Additionally, international knowledge exchange about children's digital participation is also relevant to this topic.

- **Children are listened to directly in the policy development process** (e.g., through hearings, consultations, specific surveys) but are not formally involved in decision-making.

- **Policymakers are not actively involved in international knowledge exchange activities on this topic**. The main interaction and knowledge transfer is through the Greek SIC, which is actively involved in EU activities and events.

- **While there is no defined national action plan on children and the digital environment**, the Greek SIC, like many other SICs across the EU, is co-funded by the European Commission and has specific obligations that govern its operation. The operation of the SafeLine for reporting illegal content online, Helpline for psychological support, and awareness-raising has an action plan that is being followed for the effective results of the project.

•	High	Medium	Low	Other
Stakeholder forum				X
Public consultation				X
Involvement of young people		X		
International knowledge exchange			X	

Table 4: Topic summary - Stakeholder involvement

The Greek Safer Internet Centre (SIC) has an Advisory Board composed of representatives from major stakeholders such as Ministries, the Cybercrime Unit of the Greek Police, ISPs, Academia, NGOs, etc. The advisory board meets once a year.

The Greek SIC also interacts significantly with the general public, which likewise plays a key role in its activities. This includes a youth panel, where young students have the chance to express their opinions regarding the threats and problematic issues that arise while surfing the internet. This provides very valuable feedback for the SIC.

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – safe digital experiences

Safe digital experiences refers to actions taken to protect children from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact, and risks as young consumers and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment created in a way that respects children's best interests.

Responses to EU laws:

- Directive (EU) 2018/1808 (Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)) has officially been transferred to the Greek legislation by Act 4779/2021. Especially, Article 28 of the AVMSD has been transferred by Article 32 of Act 4779/2021.

- On 5 April 2024, the Greek Parliament adopted Law 5099/2024 (the law) for the implementation of the EU Digital Services Act (DSA) in Greece. The law designates the Hellenic Telecommunications and Post Commission (EETT) as the Digital Services Coordinator in Greece. Other competent authorities responsible for supervising intermediary services providers and enforcing the DSA in Greece are the National Council for Radio and Television (NCRTV) and the Hellenic Data Protection Authority (HDPA).

Addressing harmful online content:

- The term "harmful online content" is specified in the Greek Act 4779/2021 as the content that "may impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors". The strictest categories of harmful online content that are mentioned in the above Act are gratuitous violence and pornography.

- In Greece, there is no governmental or public body for removing or disabling access to harmful online content. SafeLine, the national hotline, can ask Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to remove illegal content from the internet. However, according to national law, there is no clear legal obligation for the ISPs to remove the content. Only the public prosecutor can order the removal of illegal or harmful content from the internet.

- Anyone, including a child, can file a complaint to the Cyber Crime Unit (CCU) of the Greek police regarding harmful and mostly illegal content online. Moreover, even anonymously, Greek citizens can submit reports to SafeLine, the Greek hotline against illegal internet content. SafeLine, being a trusted flagger of the most popular social networks, can ask to remove harmful online content hosted on their platforms.

Addressing harmful online conduct:

- Article 346 of the Greek Penal Code covers the protection of children and young people from intimate image abuse or 'the non-consensual sharing of intimate images'. The Greek SIC, through its axis of SafeLine, participates in the implementation of the STOPNCII tool and the Take It Down tool, which both aim at fighting the non-consensual sharing of intimate images.

- The term "cyberbullying" is not specifically covered in Greek legislation. However, it can be addressed under other categories of illegal conduct, e.g. personal data violation, defamation, etc. When young people are victims of cyberbullying, they can submit their reports and contact the Greek SIC Helpline for psychological support. From a legal point of view, a victim of cyberbullying can submit a report to SafeLine, the Greek hotline against illegal internet content /activities, or the Cyber Crime Unit of the Greek Police.

Age verification and digital identity systems:

- Despite the fact that Act 4779/2021 states that ISPs are obliged to protect minors from illegal and harmful online content by setting up technical standards for their platform, there are few accurate age verification mechanisms in place to restrict minors from accessing adult online content services.

- In Greece, there are no digital identity systems available for minors. Minors can easily pretend to be adults and, as a result, have access to harmful and inappropriate content.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
DSA legislation enacted		X		
Codes of practice of digital services				X
Consumer code of practice			X	
Definition of harmful content	X			
Children's complaints mechanism	X			
Bodies can order content removal				X
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws	X			
Age verification for adult content			X	
Digital identity systems			X	

Table 5: Topic summary - pillar 1: safe digital experiences

Pillar 2 – digital empowerment

Digital empowerment incorporates actions so that all children, including those in vulnerable situations, acquire the necessary skills and competences to make sound choices and express themselves in the online environment safely and responsibly.

Supports in formal education:

- Although online safety is not officially part of the Greek school curriculum, it is important to mention that educational material under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports is developed continuously by the Greek SIC.

- The Greek SIC's educational material can also be found on the platform Dexiotites 21+ (Skills 21+), where the Ministry offers a pool of resources to all educators in the country. Teachers usually use this material to transfer knowledge to the classroom.

- The Greek SIC supports online safety policies in schools. A range of informative educational material is provided. Educational material includes resources for minors with disabilities.

- The Greek School Network, a national network of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports, provides the educational community with e-learning, e-government and user support services. Information workshops targeting teachers are also provided by the Greek SIC to train them on use of the European tool Esafetylabel.eu and on safe internet use.

- Furthermore, the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports has also issued guidelines for mobile phone use and safeguards for the protection of personal data.

Informal education:

- Various activities to reinforce informal education are in place, such as the Academy of Trainers involving Ambassadors from the Greek SIC. The Academy is composed of educators and health professionals who participate voluntarily, aiming to educate the public on how to use the internet better.

- The Greek Ombudsman has created a group of teenage counsellors. Their meetings focus on the rights of children in general and on the internet as well.

● The SIC carries out informative visits at schools and webinars, including Youth Panel members. It also collaborates with Stavros Niarchos Foundation to create informative events for high school students.

Empowering through digital skills:

● The Greek SIC has been dedicated to informing the Greek public about disinformation and how to distinguish fake news from accurate information during the last years. A large campaign was also carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic.

● Activities combatting hate speech include the Council of Europe No Hate Speech campaign, the ME TOO campaign, the SIC's informative presentations to schools for tackling online hate speech, and the SIC programme, in collaboration with the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, on online hate speech.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Teaching online safety		X		
Online safety policies in schools	X			
Adequate teacher training	X			
Informal education about online safety	X			
Peer-to-peer training in online safety	X			
Support for digital literacy skills	X			
Children's media literacy	X			
Challenge hate speech/digital civil courage	X			

Table 6: Topic summary - pillar 2: digital empowerment

Pillar 3 – active participation, respecting children's rights

Active participation, respecting children's rights, refers to actions which give children and young people a say in the digital environment, with more child-led activities to foster innovative and creative safe digital experiences.

Active participation:

- There are no specific laws, regulations or policies mandating youth participation in decision-making bodies at the national or regional level. However, the Youth Panel of the SIC, which is composed of 25 members from various locations and demographic backgrounds in Greece, exchanges knowledge and receives education from events at the pan-European level between Youth Panel representatives of other European Awareness Centres while participating in the activities of the Greek Safer Internet Day (SID). The voice of the Greek SIC's Youth Panel is crucial for the SIC to best assess the relevance of specific topics related to safer internet use.

- Research Projects realised by Greek schools all over Greece, focusing on topics related to entrepreneurship, communication and entertainment through the internet and the potential dangers of its use. Disseminated to the public with the support of the Greek School Network.

Inclusivity:

- There is no official governmental system in place to publish child-friendly versions of policy documents, but the Greek SIC has created a child-friendly environment at its portal. Soon, SafeLine, the Greek hotline against illegal internet content, will publish an updated version of its online form for reporting illegal internet content.

- Through its youth panel, the SIC gives young people the opportunity to be active and participate in activities and discussions related to internet safety. The SIC's Youth panel also participates in the advisory board meetings of the Greek SIC. The Greek SIC always keeps a balance of age, gender, and minorities when selecting the members of the Youth Panel.

Digital creativity:

- The Greek SIC's National Student Competitions are realised under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sports. The same happens also with the Greek SIC's informative material. Some SIC events

took place with the support of the SaferInternet4EU Ambassador and the MEP Maria Spyraki.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Activities to promote active participation	X			
Laws that mandate youth participation			X	
Awareness raising on children's rights	X			
Inclusiveness regarding active participation	X			
Child-friendly versions of policy documents			X	
Positive digital content	X			
Activities encouraging digital creativity	X			

Table 7: Topic summary - pillar 3: active participation, respecting children's rights

BIK+ index 2024: Greece

The BIK+ index has been developed to provide an aggregated at-a-glance overview of the levels of implementation across the two dimensions, BIK policies and BIK+ actions, in Greece compared to the EU27+2 average. Values are shown in per cent.
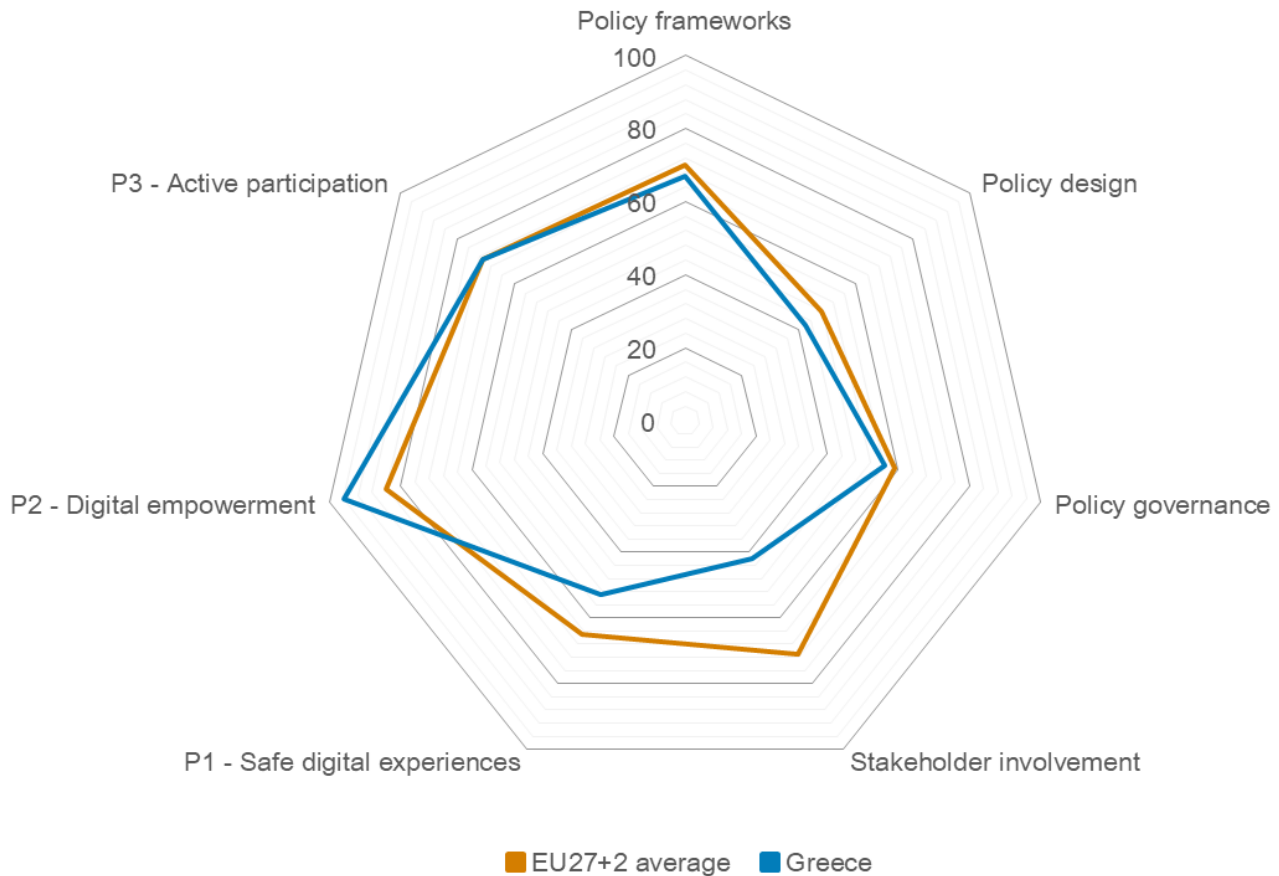

Figure 1: BIK+ index 2024: Greece - EU27+2 average comparison

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