

National Report on Bullying and Cyberbullying Policies and Practices

Partner Country: Portugal

Partner Organization: Arcola Research Portugal LDA

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1. National Policy on Bullying and Cyberbullying

In Portugal, the Ministry of Education is the main authority responsible for defining and implementing policies addressing bullying and cyberbullying in educational settings.

The legal framework is primarily established in the *Student Statute and School Ethics (Law No. 51/2012, of 5 September)*, which defines students' rights and duties, disciplinary measures, and sanctions applicable to cases of intimidation, harassment, or peer violence.

The Directorate-General for Education (DGE) coordinates the [National Plan for the Prevention and Combating of Bullying and Cyberbullying](#), first launched in 2019 and operationalised through the official national portal *Escola Sem Bullying | Escola Sem Violência*. The Plan offers reference documents, manuals, studies, certification criteria, and pedagogical materials for teachers, students, and families, promoting safe, inclusive, and respectful school environments.

Complementary frameworks include the National Strategy for Citizenship Education and the National Plan for the Promotion of School Success, both highlighting socio-emotional learning, empathy, digital literacy, and respect for diversity as key preventive measures.

Other relevant bodies include the National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and Protection of Children and Young People (CNPDPJ), the Institute of Child Support (IAC), and the Public Security Police (PSP) through its long-standing "Escola Segura" (Safe School Programme). The PSP's programme combines preventive education and direct intervention, conducting awareness sessions on bullying, cyberbullying, digital risks, and citizenship across schools, while also responding to incidents reported by schools and ensuring coordination with child-protection authorities.

Portugal also participates in European and international frameworks, particularly the Portuguese Safer Internet Centre (Centro Internet Segura), co-funded by the EU's *Connecting Europe Facility*, which promotes

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digital literacy, responsible online behaviour, and protection of minors online.

2. Platforms for Pupils and Parents to Report Incidents

Portugal has developed a multi-layered system ensuring accessible and confidential channels for reporting bullying and cyberbullying incidents at national, regional, and school levels.

Table 1. Overview of National and Regional Reporting Platforms – Portugal

Platform / Service	Managing Body	Target Groups	Confidentiality / Anonymity	Availability	Support Provided	Reporting Channel
SOS-Child Helpline (Linha SOS-Criança – 116 111)	Institute of Child Support (IAC)	Children, parents, professionals	Confidential; anonymous option	24/7, free of charge	Emotional support, referral to child-protection services	Telephone, email
Internet Safety Hotline (Linha Internet Segura – 800 21 90 90)	Safer Internet Centre / Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT)	General public	Anonymous reporting available	24/7 (online)	Guidance and coordination with INHOPE network	Phone and online form
Inovar Alunos / Inovar Mais Família	Local schools (via Inovar Software)	Students and parents	Confidential internal system	School hours	Communication with teachers, counsellors, psychologists	School portal
DGE Bullying and Cyberbullying Portal	Directorate-General for Education (DGE)	Schools, families, professionals	Confidential forms	Continuous access	Guidance materials, prevention tools, referral links	Online portal

The SOS-Child Helpline (116 111), operated by the IAC, is a free, confidential service available 24/7, offering direct assistance from trained psychologists. Reports may concern bullying, cyberbullying, or other risks. The Internet Safety Hotline (800 21 90 90), coordinated by the Portuguese Safer Internet Centre and FCT, enables anonymous reporting of illegal or harmful content and cyberbullying. Many schools also use internal digital tools such as Inovar Alunos, while the DGE Portal offers official reporting

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forms and prevention resources.

3. School-Level Policies and Measures

Portugal applies a comprehensive and mandatory framework for prevention, detection, and intervention in bullying and cyberbullying cases.

All schools must include explicit anti-violence provisions in their Internal Regulation (*Regulamento Interno*), defining rights, duties, sanctions, and preventive measures. Compliance is monitored by the General Inspectorate of Education and Science (IGEC).

Schools maintain Well-Being and Inclusion Teams (*Equipas de Bem-Estar e Inclusão*) or Psychology Offices, working with parents and teachers to promote positive school climate.

They must also implement Anti-Bullying Action Plans under the Citizenship and Development Education curriculum.

The PSP – Escola Segura Programme reinforces this system through preventive education, school visits, and parental workshops. PSP teams also mediate conflicts and coordinate with CNPDPCJ when judicial referral or victim protection is required.

Table 2. Examples of School-Level Measures

Type of Measure	Description	Frequency	Responsible Body
Awareness Sessions	Talks on bullying, cyberbullying, empathy	Annual	Teachers, PSP
Peer Mediation	Conflict resolution by trained peers	Continuous	Psychology Office
Citizenship Education	Empathy, diversity, online ethics	Continuous	Citizenship Department
Annual Campaigns	“Safer Internet Day”, “Anti-Bullying Day”	Annual	DGE / Schools
Well-Being Teams	Monitor school climate and safety	Permanent	School Board

Certified schools under Escola Sem Bullying | Escola Sem Violência receive recognition for consistent implementation of these measures.

4. Teacher Training and Capacity Building

Professional development for teachers and staff is coordinated by the DGE and the Scientific-Pedagogical Council for Continuing Education (CCPFC).

The DGE promotes accredited training programmes on bullying, cyberbullying, digital citizenship, and socio-emotional skills, available through:

- Regional School Association Training Centres (CFAEs);

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- DGE’s e-learning platform and MOOCs, such as “*Bullying e Ciberbullying: Prevenir & Agir*”;
- Workshops by universities and NGOs, notably IAC and APAV.

Although not mandatory, training on inclusion, citizenship, and violence prevention is recognised in teachers’ career progression.

Table 3. Teacher Training and Capacity Building Initiatives – Portugal

Programme / Mechanism	Organising Body	Format	Focus Areas	Accreditation	Target Audience
Accredited Teacher Training	DGE / CCPFC	In-person & online	Bullying prevention, empathy, digital literacy	CCPFC	Teachers, school staff
CFAE Regional Programmes	Regional Training Centres	Workshops	Citizenship, inclusion, conflict resolution	CCPFC	Teachers, counsellors
DGE MOOCs	DGE	Online	Cyberbullying prevention, classroom management	Certificate	Teachers
NGO Workshops	IAC, APAV	In-person	Victim support, violence prevention	Institutional	Teachers, psychologists

5. Relevant Publications, Reports, and Research

Portugal has produced an extensive body of official documents, research, and educational resources on bullying and cyberbullying.

National Frameworks and Reports

Key national references include the [Working Group Report on Combating Bullying in Schools \(2025\)](#); the [National Plan “Escola Sem Bullying | Escola Sem Violência”](#); and the [National Strategy for Citizenship Education](#).

Annual monitoring is carried out through the [Internet Safety Hotline Reports](#) and [SOS-Child Helpline Reports](#), coordinated respectively by FCT and IAC.

Educational Resources and Digital Citizenship Initiatives

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- [SeguraNet Awareness Centre](#) – national platform promoting digital safety and ethics.
- [Digital Leaders Programme \(Líderes Digitais\)](#) – student-led awareness network.
- [SeguraNet Challenges Competition](#) – national digital citizenship contest.
- [MOOC “Bullying e Cyberbullying: Prevenir & Agir”](#) – online teacher training.
- **Digital Safety Seal (Selo de Segurança Digital)** and **Healthy School Seal (Selo Escola Saudável)** – recognition for safe and healthy school practices.
- [ENABLE Programme Manual](#) and [Web We Want Resources](#) – European Schoolnet partnerships for classroom activities.
- [“Violência em Contexto Escolar – Referencial de Apoio”](#) – DGE framework on school violence prevention.

Research and Academic Studies

Recent peer-reviewed studies explore empathy, moral disengagement, and socio-emotional skills in Portuguese students:

- Monteiro et al. (2024) – **The Relation Between Bullying and Cyberbullying, Emotional Intelligence, and Empathy in Portuguese Adolescents**; <https://doi.org/10.3390/adolescents4040043>
- Sousa et al. (2024) – [Bullying victimization and bullying perpetration, social anxiety, and social withdrawal in Portuguese adolescents: A reciprocal association model - PubMed](#); [10.1002/ab.22170](https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.22170)
- Francisco et al. (2024) – [Moral disengagement and empathy in cyberbullying: how they are related in reflection activities about a serious game](#); [10.1186/s40359-024-01582-3](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01582-3)
- Mateus et al. (2023) - **Measuring empathy online and moral disengagement in cyberbullying**. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1061482>
- Francisco et al. (2022) - **Behind the scenes of cyberbullying: personal and normative beliefs across profiles and moral disengagement mechanisms**. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2022.2095215>
- Machado et al. (2024) – [Cyber Interpersonal Violence: Adolescent Perspectives and Digital Practices](#); <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21070832>

Table 4. Key Publications, Reports, and Research – Portugal

Type	Title / Author	Year	Focus	Link / DOI

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Government Report	<i>Working Group Report on Combating Bullying in Schools</i>	2025	National diagnosis & strategy	Relatório do grupo de trabalho sobre combate ao bullying nas escolas - XXIV Governo Constitucional
National Plan & Portal	Escola Sem Bullying Escola sem Violência	2019–2025	School without Violence	Framework, resources, Schools Recognition/Certification, Training Escola Sem Bullying Escola Sem Violência
Educational Programme	<i>SeguraNet & Digital Leaders Programme</i>	Ongoing	Digital citizenship & awareness	Resources, Training, Campaigns, Initiatives Página principal SeguraNet Líderes Digitais SeguraNet
MOOC	<i>Bullying e Cyberbullying : Prevenir & Agir</i>	2023	Teacher training	Bullying e Cyberbullying: Prevenir & Agir - Curso - NAU site
NGO Guide	<i>Bullying NÃO (IAC)</i>	2020	Practical guidance	Plan; Resources for Teachers, Families and Young People; Training for Teachers and Families todospintamoscontraobullying.com todospintamoscontraobullying.com
Academic Study	Monteiro et al.	2024	Empathy & emotional intelligence	https://doi.org/10.3390/adolescents4040043 The Relation Between Bullying and Cyberbullying, Emotional Intelligence, and Empathy in Portuguese Adolescents
Academic Study	Sousa et al.	2024	Victimisation & anxiety	10.1002/ab.22170 Bullying victimization and bullying perpetration, social anxiety, and social withdrawal in Portuguese adolescents: A reciprocal association model

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Academic Study	Francisco et al.	2024	Empathy & moral disengagement	10.1186/s40359-024-01582-3 Moral disengagement and empathy in cyberbullying: how they are related in reflection about a serious game
Academic Study	Francisco et al.	2023	Empathy & moral disengagement	https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1061482 Measuring empathy online and moral disengagement in cyberbullying.
Academic Study	Francisco et al.	2022	Cyberbullying roles	https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2022.2095215 Behind the scenes of cyberbullying: personal and normative beliefs across profiles and moral disengagement mechanisms
Academic Study	Machado et al.	2024	Online interpersonal violence	https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21070832 Cyber Interpersonal Violence: Adolescent Perspectives and Digital Practices

6. Additional Comments or Observations

Recent national monitoring shows that bullying prevalence in Portugal depends on the indicator used (time frame and frequency). In the HBSC national factsheets:

- In **HBSC 2018**, **81.2%** of adolescents reported **never** being bullied in the past two months — i.e., **≈18.8%** reported **some** victimisation in that period. [Microsoft Word - Ideias a reter HBSC 2018 Final.docx](#)
- In **HBSC 2022**, **81.1%** reported **never** being bullied in the past two months — i.e., **≈18.9%** reported **some** victimisation. (This is **school bullying**, not necessarily cyberbullying.) [HBSC Relatório Nacional 2022-1.pdf](#)
- For **cyberbullying**, HBSC 2018 data suggest **≈8%** reported being cyber-victimised in the previous two months (**92% never**). [FI Bullying 2020.pdf](#)

These levels differ from **monthly** measures used in international comparisons. As a benchmark, the **HBSC 2021/22 international report** highlights that **11%** of adolescents report being bullied at school and **15%** report cyberbullying **at least once or twice a month** across the HBSC network, underscoring how stricter frequencies yield lower point estimates. [Highlights](#)

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Complementary national evidence from the **Portuguese Safer Internet Centre (FCT)** indicates that **5.9%** of students reported having been victimised (bullying/cyberbullying, at some point) in a 2025 study of public and private schools; media summaries report a **~6.1%** cyberbullying figure in youth, consistent in magnitude with that finding. (Methodologies differ; values are not directly comparable to HBSC's two-month window.) [Relatório mostra impacto do bullying e do ciberbullying nas escolas públicas e privadas | Internet Segura](#)

Key challenges remain ([Relatório do grupo de trabalho sobre combate ao bullying nas escolas - XXIV Governo Constitucional](#)):

- **Underreporting and uneven data collection** across school clusters and regions.
- **Insufficient availability of school psychologists and specialised counsellors**, particularly outside major urban centres.
- **Implementation gaps** in whole-school prevention and monitoring, varying by local capacity.

Good practices and innovations include:

- **PSP – Escola Segura**: national police teams delivering **6,000+ school awareness actions** annually and **operational response** to incidents (e.g., 2024/25 figures). [Polícia de Segurança Pública](#)
- **DGE's "Escola Sem Bullying | Escola Sem Violência"**: national framework with **reference documents, school certification**, and practical toolkits.
- **SeguraNet** initiatives (**Digital Leaders, SeguraNet Challenges, MOOC "Bullying e Cyberbullying: Prevenir & Agir", Digital Safety Seal**): large-scale **digital citizenship** and online-safety education.
- **Partnerships with IAC and APAV**: **helplines, guidance, and community-based victim support**.

Policy note (2025): Portugal has moved to **restrict mobile phone use in primary classrooms**, informed by evaluations suggesting reductions in bullying and indiscipline where bans were implemented — a trend being monitored for impact. [Proibição de smartphones nas escolas diminui bullying e aumenta socialização dos alunos - XXV Governo Constitucional](#)

Portugal demonstrates that it is aiming to work towards a whole-school, cross-sectoral approach that blends education, psychology, law enforcement, and digital literacy programme. Continued priorities include standardising monitoring, expanding psychological support, and aligning indicators (time frames/frequencies) to ensure comparable prevalence tracking over time.

Best practices include:

- The **PSP Escola Segura** programme – combining prevention, community education, and direct intervention in schools.
- The **DGE's Escola Sem Bullying | Escola Sem Violência** – offering certification, training, and coordination tools for schools.

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- **Peer mediation programmes and municipal partnerships** linking schools, NGOs, and local councils.
- The integration of **digital citizenship and empathy education** into the **Citizenship and Development** curriculum.
- The expansion of **MOOC-based training, SeguraNet competitions**, and the **‘Bullying-Free School | Violence-Free School’ seal awarded by the DGE to public and private schools that provide robust responses to combat violence and develop a plan to prevent and combat all forms of violence, in particular bullying and cyberbullying.**

Annexes (if applicable):

The following annexes consolidate all key official documents, frameworks, and research sources referenced throughout Sections 1–6.

They are grouped by category for clarity and contain direct working links for verification and download.

A. Legal and Policy Frameworks

Title / Description	Issuing Institution	Year	Type / Relevance	Direct Link
<i>Law No. 51/2012 of 5 September – Student Statute and School Ethics</i>	Government of Portugal / Ministry of Education	2012	Defines student rights, sanctions, and disciplinary procedures	Lei n.º 51/2012 DR
<i>Working Group Report on Combating Bullying in Schools</i>	Ministry of Education	2025	National diagnostic and policy recommendations	ficheiro.aspx
<i>National Plan – Escola Sem Bullying Escola Sem Violência</i>	DGE / Ministry of Education	2019–2025	Comprehensive national framework, reference documents, certification scheme	Plano – Escola Sem Bullying Escola Sem Violência
<i>National Strategy for Citizenship Education (Estratégia Nacional de Educação para a Cidadania)</i>	DGE	2025	Cross-curricular strategy integrating empathy, diversity, and digital citizenship	enec-2025.pdf
<i>PSP Escola Segura Programme</i>	Polícia de Segurança Pública	Ongoing	Preventive and operational intervention programme in schools	Polícia de Segurança Pública

B. Reporting Platforms and Child Protection Services

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Platform / Resource	Managing Institution	Service Type	Access / Availability	Link
<i>SOS-Child Helpline (Linha SOS-Criança – 116 111)</i>	Institute of Child Support (IAC)	Free and confidential helpline for children and families	24/7 – national coverage	SOS Criança Instituto de Apoio à Criança Contacte-nos!
<i>Internet Safety Hotline (Linha Internet Segura – 800 21 90 90)</i>	Safer Internet Centre / Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT)/APAV	Online reporting of cyberbullying and harmful content	24/7 – online and phone	Linha internet segura Sobre a LIS Internet Segura
<i>CNPDPJ – National Commission for the Promotion of the Rights and Protection of Children and Young People</i>	Ministry of Labour, Solidarity and Social Security	Child protection commissions network	Continuous	Bullying, ciberbullying e segurança digital - Comissão Nacional de Promoção dos Direitos e Proteção das Crianças e Jovens

C. Educational Resources and Pedagogical Programmes

Resource / Programme	Coordinator / Source	Year / Status	Focus / Content	Direct Link
<i>MOOC “Bullying e Ciberbullying: Prevenir & Agir”</i>	DGE / CCPFC	2023	Teacher e-learning course on bullying prevention	Bullying e Ciberbullying: Prevenir & Agir - Curso - NAU site
<i>ENABLE Programme – Activities for the Prevention and Combat of Bullying</i>	European Schoolnet / DGE	2018	European toolkit for schools	untitled
<i>Web We Want – O meu bem-estar e o teu: O respeito... começa em mim!</i>	European Schoolnet / ENABLE	2025	Activities promoting empathy and respect online	webwewantenable.pdf
<i>Violência em Contexto Escolar – Referencial de Apoio</i>	DGE	2021	Practical framework for school-level violence prevention	miolo viol CV
<i>Healthy School Seal (Selo Escola Saudável)</i>	DGE	Ongoing	Certification recognising schools promoting health and inclusion	Candidatura “Selo Escola Saudável 2024–2025” Direção-Geral da Educação

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<i>SeguraNet Challenges (Desafios SeguraNet)</i>	DGE / SeguraNet	Annual	Interactive competition promoting digital citizenship	Desafios SeguraNet SeguraNet
<i>Digital Leaders (Líderes Digitais)</i>	DGE / SeguraNet	Ongoing	Peer education on online safety and cyberbullying	Líderes Digitais SeguraNet
<i>Digital Safety Seal – eSafety Label (Selo de Segurança Digital)</i>	DGE / SeguraNet	Ongoing	Recognition for good digital safety practices in schools	Selo de Segurança Digital (eSafety Label) SeguraNet

D. NGO and Professional Guidelines

Title / Resource	Institution / Author	Year	Scope	Direct Link
<i>Bullying NÃO – Teacher and Parent Guide</i>	Institute of Child Support (IAC)	2020	Practical guide for parents and educators	todospintamoscontraobullying.com todospintamoscontraobullying.com
<i>Vamos Falar Sobre Bullying</i>	Order of Portuguese Psychologists (OPP)	2022	Psychological guidance for prevention	opp_vamosfalarsobrebullying_documento.pdf
<i>Para uma Escola Inclusiva – LGBTI+ Guidelines</i>	Commission for Citizenship and Gender Equality (CIG)	2023	School inclusion and diversity framework	IDAHOT Orientações Para uma Escola Inclusiva#07_luso.indd
<i>Annual Report on Youth and School Support Services</i>	Portuguese Association for Victim Support (APAV)	2025	Data on violence, counselling, and prevention	cyberbullyingv5_2 Crianças e Jovens Vítimas de Crime e de Violência (2022-2024)
<i>Stop Bullying!</i>	Amnesty International Portugal	2017	Educational manual for schools	Manual -Stop Bullying Al Portugal.pdf

E. European and International Sources

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Title / Source	Institution	Year	Relevance	Direct Link
<i>ECRI Sixth Report on Portugal</i>	Council of Europe	2025	Includes evaluation of equality and anti-violence measures	1680b6668f
<i>European Safer Internet Network</i>	European Commission / INHOPE / Insafe	Ongoing	Collaborative EU network on digital safety	INHOPE - Association of Internet Hotline Providers Início

F. Academic Research (2022–2025)

Author(s)	Year	Title	Journal / Publisher	DOI
Monteiro, A.P., et al.	2024	<i>The Relation Between Bullying/Cyberbullying, Emotional Intelligence & Empathy in Portuguese Adolescents</i>	<i>Adolescents</i> , 4(4), 620–634	https://doi.org/10.3390/adolescents4040043
Sousa, M., et al.	2024	<i>Bullying Victimization and Perpetration, Social Anxiety, and Withdrawal in Portuguese Adolescents</i>	<i>Aggressive Behavior</i> , 50(4), e22170	https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.22170
Francisco, S.M., et al.	2023	<i>Measuring Empathy and Moral Disengagement in Cyberbullying</i>	<i>Frontiers in Psychology</i> , 14, 1061482	https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1061482
Francisco, S.M., et al.	2022	<i>Behind the Scenes of Cyberbullying: Personal and Normative Beliefs</i>	<i>International Journal of Adolescence and Youth</i> , 27(1), 337–361	https://doi.org/10.1080/02673843.2022.2095215
Machado, B., et al.	2024	<i>Cyber Interpersonal Violence: Adolescent Perspectives</i>	<i>International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health</i> , 21(7), 832	https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph21070832

Portugal presents a comprehensive national response to bullying and cyberbullying, integrating legal, educational, digital, psychological, and protective frameworks. The country adopts a whole-school and cross-

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PreMedBullying

Preventing Bullying in Primary Schools at the Mediterranean Region
2024-1-EL01-KA220-SCH-000246861



sectoral approach, in which the DGE provides policy leadership and implementation support to schools, the PSP – Escola Segura reinforces prevention and operational intervention, and SeguraNet initiatives strengthen online safety and responsible digital behaviour among students.

This ecosystem is complemented by both accredited continuing education programmes (validated by the CCPFC through CFAEs) and certified training initiatives delivered by universities, NGOs (such as IAC and APAV) and local authorities. Alongside a growing body of academic research supporting evidence-based practice, these capacity-building efforts contribute to a solid and continuously evolving national architecture for preventing, detecting and responding effectively to bullying and cyberbullying in Portuguese schools.

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