

Template for WP2 national reports

Country: ...Greece..

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(background research in Greece wherever needed by Despina

Chronaki)

Academic base of countries

1 Number of universities in your country

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

There are 22 Higher Education Institutions in Greece, among which 2 Technical Universities (the National Technical University of Athens and the Technical University of Crete), two Universities of Economics (Athens University of Economics and Business and the University of Piraeus), and an Open University. The National and Kapodistrian University of Athens is the oldest HEI in the country and, together with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, they are the largest universities in the country (in terms of disciplines, student population and members of staff).

In addition, there are 18 TEI (technical colleges, oriented towards vocational education).

All of the above are public bodies. At this moment there are no private universities in Greece, although there has been a (heated to say the least) public discussion about setting the necessary regulatory framework to accommodate them; under public demand and pressure from academics and students alike, the conservative government and the leader of the opposition, the socialist PASOK, were forced to step back and abandon any attempts to introduce private higher education in Greece for at least the next five years. There are 44 privately-owned educational institutions (either Greek or annexes of, mainly, British universities in Greece) which, nevertheless, are not universities.

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

There are a number of media and communication studies departments in Greece, all of which are highly reputable and attract high-performance high school graduates.

The field of communication in Greece includes the study of the mass media, publicity, marketing, cultural studies and public relations. The discipline started at the beginning of the 80s and took off during the 90s. According to the website of the Department of Communication, Media and Culture of the Panteion University of Athens, the reason for the unprecedented popularity of communication and media studies in Greece was due to the country's accession to the EU (EEC of the time): major and coordinated efforts were needed in order to build up channels of communication both inside and outside the country. This was translated in the establishment of three University Schools of Communication Studies as well as a number of private colleges and institutes offering journalism studies (not at university level). It is at this time that both the industry and the public sector started to employ communication programmes for their employees.

1. the Faculty of Communication and Media Studies at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens was established in 1990 and currently (2008) employs a tenured full time staff of 25; visiting lecturers and other associates make up for another 15 members of staff. Among them, 12 internet and new technologies-related subjects are offered.
2. the Department of Communication, Media and Culture of the Panteion University was also founded in 1990, and employs 25 full time members of staff and another 7 as visiting lecturers and associates. There are 11 courses which revolve around the internet and new technologies.
3. the School of Journalism & Mass Communication of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, was set up in 1991. It is staffed by 19 full time academics (among a total of 45). There are about 10 internet and new technologies-oriented subjects offered.
4. the Department of Cultural Technology and Communication at the University of the Aegean is another relevant academic institution, 30 members of staff-strong, and offering 5 courses on educational technology and new technologies.

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

There are 15 Departments of Informatics across the country, among which four are specifically on Informatics and Telematics (Harokopio University of Athens); Informatics and Telecommunications (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens); Applied Informatics (University of Macedonia, Economic and Social Sciences) and Informatics and Biomedicine (University of Central Greece).

Additionally, there are other 11 related University Departments spread nationwide in: Electrical and Computer Engineering; Computer and Communication Engineering; Computer Science; Technology Management; Technology Education and Digital Systems; and Information and Communications Systems Engineering.

Overall, it can be safely argued that informatics and new media as a discipline is large in Greece either in terms of academic staff (there are 15 departments with academic teams between 17 and 50 people, and another 5 with teams between 51 and 88 people), or in terms of student intake (there are 6 departments with a first-year intake between 50-80 students; 12 departments with an intake between 105-190 students; and another 5 with a first year intake between 205-260 students).

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

- a) *data on the Internet*
- b) *data on the Internet and children*

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

- The **National Statistical Service of Greece** (www.statistics.gr) conducts a three-monthly survey on 'Information and Communication Technologies in households/ SURVEY ON THE USAGE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES' (Τεχνολογίες πληροφόρησης και επικοινωνίας από τα νοικοκυριά) since 2002 which includes individuals aged between 16-74 ys.
- **Focus-Bari** (www.focus.gr), a market research company, conducts an annual survey every quarter on the identity of internet users in Greece, entitled 'Web Id'. The sample comprises 10.000 individuals aged 13 and above and looks into the user profile and practices of internet use in Greece. Since 2007, Focus Bari is commissioned these surveys by the Observatory for the Greek Information Society.
- The **Observatory for the Greek Information Society** (www.observatory.gr) conducts itself a number of surveys and studies, on the 'Profile of Greek Internet Users', though not consistently every year (2007 and 2005); as well as **bi-annual reports on broadband diffusion**- among other things. It regularly subcontracts research to a number of private companies, such as the above mentioned Focus Bari, Public Issue, MRB Hellas, and VPRC. It also commissions public bodies, such as the National Network for Research and Technology (EΔET) (www.grnet.gr); the e-business forum (www.ebusinessforum.gr), which is a state consultation mechanism between the business and the academic community; universities; the Special Secretariat

of Digital Planning (www.infosoc.gr); ministries. In several cases, a market research company will realize the requested survey or study on behalf of the public body which has been subcontracted by the Observatory. For example, the National Study on New Technologies and Information Society (Εθνική Έρευνα για τις Νέες Τεχνολογίες και την Κοινωνία της Πληροφορίας) was realized by **VPRC** (a market research company) in collaboration with National Network for Research and Technology (ΕΔΕΤ) (a public body) between 2001-2006. The continuity of the research was safeguarded by the Observatory by subcontracting another private company to conduct the survey for 2007, **Public Issue** (<http://www.publicissue.gr/111/national-research-for-the-new-technologies-2/>). The study examines the penetration of computer, internet and mobile technology and its evolution within the general population, aged 15 and above. Apart from the National Study on New Technologies and Information Society, which takes place consistently since 2001, it is difficult to determine the regularity with which certain types of reports and surveys appear. However, in my view it can be safely argued that the portal of the Observatory for the Greek Information Society offers a wide database that spans across several Information Society themes, including internet usage; identity of internet users; e-government; e-business; studies of measuring eEurope 2005/i2010 indicators in Greece among individuals, households and enterprises; the spread of new technologies among senior citizens, people with special needs and immigrants; the spread of new technologies at schools. This means that apart from few exceptions, the majority of surveys and studies conducted in Greece are on a piecemeal basis, a snapshot of an IS aspect at a particular point in time, rather than a continuous and consistent study of the development of IS in Greece *across* time. **The age sample usually includes teenagers aged 13 or 15 and above**, which indicates that children of younger ages are largely absent and misrepresented in the national statistics. It also means that specific research aimed at investigating the relationship of young children and new media is also absent in Greece.

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

a) *data on the Internet*

b) *data on the Internet and children*

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

There are a few non-government organizations in Greece that conduct research related to new media, however, even in this case, the collection and analysis of data is largely sporadic and **does not involve the collection of national statistics**.

For example, the **Lambrakis Research Foundation** (Ιδρυμα Μελετών Λαμπράκη, www.lrf.gr) has initiated research pilot programmes on the application of new technologies and their impact on learning and the organisation of school education; it has designed and coordinated the largest European project, in the 4th R&D Framework Programme of the European Commission, for school-based, in-service teachers training through the Internet. It generally offers educational and cultural material in digital form, and has become one of the leading experts in the country in using new technological tools and educational software in schools, and in the use of new information technologies in new, "open" forms of education and training in lifelong and distance learning.

Another related example is the **Research Academic Computer Technology Institute** (RA-CTI) (Ερευνητικό Ακαδημαϊκό - Ινστιτούτο Τεχνολογίας Υπολογιστών, www.cti.gr), a non profit Private Legal Entity, supervised by the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs. It focuses mainly on applied research on new media, such as Algorithm Analysis and Design, Advanced Parallel Computer Architectures, Networks and Distributed Computing, Software Technology, High Performance Computing, and **Educational Technology**.

The **Hellenic Audiovisual Institute** (IOM, www.iom.gr) is a private body which operates under the supervision of the General Secretariat of Communication; it is the national applied research organisation responsible for collecting information on audiovisual activities, with a particular emphasis on radio and television. It has recently completed and will present in the days to come (end of May 2008) a survey on 'The creative and safe internet use by young people up to 18 years of age'. The research sample comprised 1500 schoolchildren in secondary education (12-18ys old), 500 teachers and 500 parents.

Similarly, the **Institute of Computer Science** (ICS) (www.ics.forth.gr) is one of the institutes of the **Foundation for Research and Technology - Hellas** (FORTH), a major national research centre partly funded by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology of the Hellenic Ministry of Development. The mission of FORTH-ICS is to perform high quality basic and applied research, to promote education and training, and to contribute to the development of the Information Society, at a regional, national, and European level. **Research on children and new media, however, is not part of its mission.**

Apparently the only non-governmental body which conducts research on internet use is **AGB Nielsen Media Research**. The e-metrics is an online survey on the Greek internet (<http://e-metrics.gr>) and is conducted regularly since 2004 under the auspices of the Observatory for the Greek IS. It uses a random sample, and as usual with online surveys, respondents are self-selected. Nevertheless, being conducted by a market research company, this is a survey principally interested in internet use for e-commerce purposes; there is no provision about how children and young people use the internet- in fact, young users come into perspective only when the age profile of internet users is examined. Not only that but the questions asked vary over the years (e.g. the 2005 survey asks about blogging whereas the 2004 and 2007 do not).

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

In conjunction with question 4, it appears that repeated studies on patterns of use and practices of new technologies in Greece are conducted by the market research company Focus-Bari ('Web-ID'), the Observatory for the Greek Information Society (on broadband diffusion), and the National Statistical Service of Greece ('Survey on the usage of information and communication technologies'); 'e-metrics' by AGB Nielsen Media Research is only a partial fit since it varies the weight and kind of the questions asked, and only marginally (or accidentally) has any information about children and the internet to give.

Institutional process

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

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

No, there isn't.

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

No there isn't; perhaps there is such a procedure in the School of Medicine and related disciplines¹, but not within Communication and Media Studies.

¹ For example, at the Department of Dietetics and Nutritional Science of the Harokopio University of Athens, where many doctors teach and attend, there is a Bio-Ethics Committee.

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

No, they do not.

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

Yes, there is. It is expected that academic staff needs to have publications apart from their teaching load in order to step up the academic ladder. However, this is a relatively recent development, since during the eighties and early nineties many academics were 'planted' in various institutions in middle or high ranks without any previous publication record; political networking did the trick. In some cases, the previous generation of academics (who were practically 'handed in' their professorships) now passes judgement on new members of staff. There is no official ranking body or an official ranking procedure of academic publications in Greece, and it is only now that an official evaluation system is being established –faced with disdain by a considerable part of the academic teacher and student community. The result is that there are no fixed rules when it comes to being employed for the first time at a university department, or when it concerns career advancement: different rules (concerning the number, the linguistic reach, i.e. whether somebody has published in Greek or in English in an international journal; the type of publication, that is if there is a ranking among the various national and international titles relevant to one's discipline) apply in different institutions or in the same institution but under different circumstances.

Gitte, perhaps you could add sth about Greece, saying that academics in Greece are entitled to apply for a sabbatical, only once they have completed three years full time employment. Naturally, when the sabbatical is granted depends on how many people apply for it in the same department, and on who has been waiting for one for longer (if tough decisions have to be made)

e) Is there pressure to cooperate with industry?

Although there is no official pressure to cooperate with industry within Greek academia, in reality many academics resort to the industry in order to secure funds for research (in terms of sponsorship) since some of the Universities have less funds to spare for research than others: regional Universities are usually in better financial shape than the two largest and oldest ones, the University of Athens and the Aristotle University; this is due to the fact that the former are new, more flexible and less bureaucratic and have been staffed in a greater proportion than the central ones from Greek academics from abroad. This means that there is a human infrastructure now

available, well trained in raising funds either from the EC, the state or the private sector. Sometimes, strong reaction against academic cooperation with the industry is raised by left-leaning student unions which fear that this signals the ‘selling out’ of universities to the market and results in its capitalist commodification. There are very few cases where there is a harmonious relationship between the university and the industry as far as student unions are concerned (e.g. the Athens University of Economics and Business). Finally, in all cases where there is collaboration with the industry, those departments and academics who have good personal networking are in a better position to secure funds in relation to those who do not.

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

Yes, it does sometimes and when it happens, it usually depends on personal networking on either end; people prefer to work with people they already know.

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

Again, this may happen occasionally and it will involve those academics who government officials are familiar with (hence personal networking becomes paramount once again).

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

There is no research council in Greece, such as the ESRC. Universities have a Special Research Funds Account (ELKE), the mechanism through which all research programmes are processed; ELKE retains a commission from the budget of all research proposals in the form of overhead costs. Sometimes, the ELKE may initiate a pay-back scheme, redirecting the income incurred through commissions from various projects back to the academic community- a means of resource re-distribution whereby interested academics are required to submit small research bids. The amount of money allocated to each individual depends on how many researchers have bided overall.

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

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

Similarly to 7.e, the relationship between academia and the industry depends on the institution. In some cases (the Economic University of Athens; the Technical University of Athens et.c), there is an established tradition of collaboration between the two; in other cases, it falls upon individual researchers or research laboratories to initiate such contacts and develop research opportunities with the industry; the outcome depends on whether or not the industry considers the research proposal of any interest (e.g. a collaboration has been drawn between the mobile phone company Vodaphone and the Laboratory of New Technologies of the Faculty of Communications and Mass Media, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens). Overall, I would describe the situation in Greece as one where the ties between academia and industry are occasional and piecemeal and depend on personal networking.

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

There is quantitative research taking place in all three disciplines in Greece. Some of it is established in the sense that it involves EC network projects through which academic networking and publications of international standing take place; some of it involves smaller or larger national projects. However, there also is a substantial proportion of academics who either only publish in Greek (hence the international academic community is never acquainted with their work), or who they rarely publish (most of them belong to the older generation of academics; they are now long established and do not feel they necessarily have to conduct research); on top of that, there sometimes exists great antagonism between related departments instead of a spirit of collaboration which leads to tensions and personal rivalries. In a country where the percentage of the national budget that goes to higher education has been consistently shrinking over the past few years, and a variety of academic agents claim funds for research, this lack of collaboration is sometimes detrimental to the building and maintaining a research tradition of high standards over the years

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

Same as in Q.8.

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

Mass media research in Greece was initiated in 1988 by the market research Focus-Bari, which was responsible for the first survey on radio and television on a daily

basis in Greece; academic research on the Greek mass media started off around the mid-nineties.

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

This is a much more recent field of academic research which hasn't given any fruits as yet either in Greek or in English. The majority of studies which have been published so far (in Greek) are oriented towards the impact of mobile communication on human health rather than its socio-economic impact. The first two mobile studies with socio-economic orientation involved heavy input from the private sector: the 'socio-economic impact of mobile telephony in Greece' was commissioned by Vodafone to the private college of management and administration ALBA in 2004; the 'wireless generation- Mobile youth' was partly executed by the Athens University of Economics and Business and the Lambrakis Research Foundation in 2005.

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

Overall, internet related academic research in Greece starts round about 2000. The department of pre-school Education at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and related departments have been researching teacher's attitudes towards ICTs in Greek schools since 2000; other internet related research in other departments, starts off also around 2000. The relationship between children and the internet is generally under-researched. Even research conducted within the Observatory for the Greek Information Society begins in 2000.

Funding

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

Since there are no Research Councils in Greece, money for research -no matter how little- comes from the government. Having said that, there is no specified research budget for social sciences and education (or other, related or non-related, fields for that matter), and even if there was such a budget, it is a well kept secret. To illustrate further, the itemized state budget for Higher Education does not include a heading for research, while since 2003, the annual state budget for HE in effect *declines* rather than rises. At the same time, there are grants to bid in various ministries and general secretariats- the problem being that information about them does not abound and those academics who do not have the networking power or appropriate inside information are left out of the loop. Hence, academics are forced by this harsh reality

to turn to the industry (with not always guaranteed results as personal experience has shown).

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

No, there is no such research funding culture in Greece, only ‘pockets of research’ funded by commercial companies.

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

Based on the data provided by the wp1 repository, published research on children and the internet in Greece reveals a funding pattern that verifies the trends and practices sketched in this report: most of the published research is either funded by the state (in the form of the state budget committed to HE or as research conducted by state agencies) or by the EC. Since the repository may need updating, it is worth stating that there is also a (small) proportion of research realized and funded by the private sector. Overall, the funding pattern, however incomplete, is a further testimony to the fact that research on children and the internet in Greece is largely underdeveloped.

Political initiatives

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

Overall, apart from the odd article or conference paper, not much has been happening within Greek academia concerning research projects on the internet and/or the internet and children.

a) Government political initiatives, recommendations, white papers, discussion documents, ministerial reports (e.g. Information superhighways), etc

b) Changes in general media regulations, the boundaries of censorship, etc

c) Legal changes relative to the Internet e.g. what you put online

d) Government initiatives to try to encourage the Internet in schools

Although not related to research projects, and certainly not to project funding, the Operational Programme for the Information Society in Greece targets education and culture within its priority axis. The aim is to adapt the educational system to the digital age and achieve increased use of new technologies in education, including: the networking of schools, universities and the academic community (including administrative services); teacher and pupil training; and developing digital educational content. The objective is to achieve a very high level of services provided while at the same time to create the conditions for easier access to these services through the Internet. The Greek e-school and e-university actions are integrated in the framework of the [e-Learning](#) Community policy, which, in its turn, belongs to [i2010](#) strategy and [eEurope](#) action; through these the European Union aims at improving the quality and access to European education and training systems through the use of information and communication technologies (<http://www.infosoc.gr/infosoc/en-UK/education/specials/default.htm>).

e) Initiatives to train teachers in the use of the Internet

Other policy steps regarding the promotion of media literacy in the country include actions that aim at distant learning, ongoing teacher training, and development of digital content and software for primary and secondary education (http://www.infosoc.gr/infosoc/el-GR/epktp/priority_actions/paideia-politismos/hiddenchannel01/Page2.htm).

f) Government organised awareness raising campaigns

There are no such campaigns organized.

g) Changes in self-regulation agreements among ISPs

h) EC consultation document.

i) Other

Nevertheless, in neither case can it be argued that it was these initiatives that led to a particular research culture..

Media coverage, events, lobbies

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

a) Some particular media coverage

No.

b) The lobbying of NGOs

No.

c) Particular events

No.

Broader context

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

There is the occasional newspaper article (in quality dailies and Sunday papers only) that cauterizes the alarming number of television commercials with which young children are continuously bombarded, or comments on the loss of public space for children (i.e. municipal playgrounds). Apart from that, nothing else takes place; advertising targeting children includes their eating and spending habits, and promotes a consumerist and more 'adult' lifestyle for young children. This is further echoed in the weekly schedules where one of the talent shows currently showing is 'baby dance', a so-you-think-you-can-dance-type-of-show for children.

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

In Greece, there was very little activity regarding the rights of children until 2003- when the Children's Rights Ombudsman was set up as part of the Greek Ombudsman, an independent authority, accountable to the Parliament, set up in 1997 in order to protect citizen rights and. The mission of the Children's Rights Ombudsman is to defend and protect the rights of all minors under 18; the authority, which liaises with the Greek school network, is also responsible for raising awareness on the rights of children, as well as for ensuring they participate in the matters that concern them and that their voices are heard. http://www.0-18.gr/gr/children/children_main_gr.htm.

2008 was another important year regarding the rights of children in Greece, since the National Observatory for the Rights of Children was set up within the General Secretariat for Youth. The Observatory organizes a conference on 'Children's Rights in Greece' in November 2008. Although the issue of political participation for children has not yet been tackled from an academic point of view, young students in Greece experience from quite early on some level of political participation in the form of 1. 'student councils', which are elected annually by secret ballot at school level, and 2. the 'Parliament of Youth', an educational programme set up for the first time in 1994 by the Greek Parliament and involves 'educating' young adolescents in secondary education in constitutional and civic affairs by role playing in the Greek Parliament.

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

There has been the odd newspaper article (on a quality newspaper, Kathimerini), written by architects, debating the loss and decline of public space in Athens. This has a knock-on effect on the opportunities children have to play safely outdoors. Having said that, the focus of the article was the deterioration of urban space in Athens rather than the (safe or not) use of public space by young children.

Case Studies

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

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

- a) What led to this research? Why was it decided to focus on this topic?*
- b) What led to the choice of methodology?*
- c) What led to the choice of the ages of children?*
- d) What led the particular questions being asked (as opposed to other potential questions)*

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

Doesn't apply.

OR

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

Response to what others have written

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

22. The French D1.1 national report said:

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

What is the situation in your country?

In Greece too, children and teenagers have been neglected by sociologists and media sociologists for a long time, leaving their study to psychologists and educationalists. In the last 4-5 years there has been a short number of studies looking at young people's social patterns of use of new technologies, most of which have been initiated, facilitated, or sometimes even realized, by market research companies (see for example the upcoming presentation of the research findings of a study conducted by the Hellenic Audiovisual Institute on 'The creative and safe internet use by young people up to 18 years of age', this report: page 5. The study was realized by a consortium comprising both state and private bodies). Although barely enough, this indicates a new trend within media sociology in Greece where online safety becomes of importance. This may be a result of the media awareness campaign on safer internet initiated by the Greek awareness node, www.saferinternet.gr, in 2007-8, in conjunction with the attention that the use of new technologies by young teenagers receives presently in the national media (sometimes equivalent to a health scare).

23. The Portuguese D1.1 national report said:

We should stress the absence of studies from Social Psychology, and Communication and Media Studies in our first data collection. In particular, academic research within

Communication and Media Studies in Portugal has been strongly influenced by the essay model, sometimes without an empirical dimension. This has to do with the French influence in the main Communication Departments.

Empirical research in Communication and Media Studies has not paid enough attention to audiences, compared with that paid to content analysis or even the production context. Media Departments that pay special attention to ICT have explained the absence of research on children's uses as being because they put an emphasis on professional practices.

Until recently Media and Communication research involving children was almost non-existent. Researchers interested in studying children's practices and cultures, or in media representations of children and young people or other associated issues, have difficulty in the implementation of programmes of study and modules regarding the subject in their faculties and departments.

What is the situation in your country?

In Greece too, a strong tradition of empirical research on children and new media is largely absent from communication and media studies departments. One of the possible reasons may be that audience studies, and a tradition of cultural studies altogether, in Greece is under-developed and, until recently, looked down upon by exponents of other approaches. As in the Portuguese case, Communication departments in Greece have been influenced by the French school and for some time have been theory-oriented.

24. The Belgian D1.1 national report said:

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

What is the situation in your country?

I'm not sure whether the current state of research in ICTs in Greece can be safely categorized in a similar way, since there isn't a concise body of research in one direction or another –rather, sporadic studies in a variety of issues. Perhaps the most consistent are the educationalists who have been examining teachers' attitudes to the introduction of new technologies at schools.

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