



SOCIAL MEDIA IN FORMAL EDUCATION QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY REPORT

Introduction and background

In the Erasmus+ project SOCIAL MEDIA IN FORMAL EDUCATION the partners from schools from Italy, Poland, Slovakia, Turkey and Slovenia are aware students are very active on social networks and tend to spend there more time than necessary. Our project is the reflection of the fact that teenagers don't spend their free time effectively and meaningfully, they confuse virtual world with reality and tend to be dependent on their performance on social media what might lead to negative phenomenon and decrease the quality of their lives. What is more, some of the risky behaviour such as casual sex, drug abuse and some kinds of bullying are shown as exciting and 'cool' on social networks. Thus, we need to make teenagers think, be critical and more responsible for their lives and the society in general.

On the other hand, we would like to show the possibilities how Social Media can be used for an educational purpose because there is no doubt they are the source of information that we can get very easily. That's why we would like to help our students sort out this information and learn how to use social media and networks for their benefits.

Before we can do that, it is essential to study and analyse the behaviour and performance of our students on social networks as well as to find out how much time the students spend using social media and how familiar they are with Social Media. We also wanted to know if students find social media beneficial in their learning process and if they are aware of possible dangers. Therefore, we decided to prepare a *Questionnaire on Social Media* and ask our students to fill it in, after which we collected the results for each country and compared them.

Before asking students to fill in the questionnaire, we assumed that the survey will show students spend a lot of time (at least one hour a day) on Social Media and we also anticipated that students use Social Media more for their private social interaction than for educational purposes. We expected students not to be aware of the dangers of Social Media.

The target group of our projects are the students from 12 to 19 years old. These students were chosen because we think they are the most vulnerable and easily manipulated.

Data Collection Process

The survey method we utilized in gathering data was an online questionnaire. It was structured so that the results could yield insights into social media integration in educational setting. The questions were prepared so that they could be clustered into three groups:

- 1) **students' beliefs about social media**
- 2) **students' social media behaviour**
- 3) **students' attitudes towards social media.**

The questionnaire was prepared by all the participating countries in English and then translated into each country's language respectively, so that the students would be able to understand the questions better and provide more accurate answers.

The activity took place from November to December 2016. Teachers from each school then collected the results, analyse them and prepared the survey reports (including graphs) for their schools. The survey results were presented, compared and analysed during the project meeting in Slovakia, which took place from 23rd to 28th January 2017.

Results and Analysis

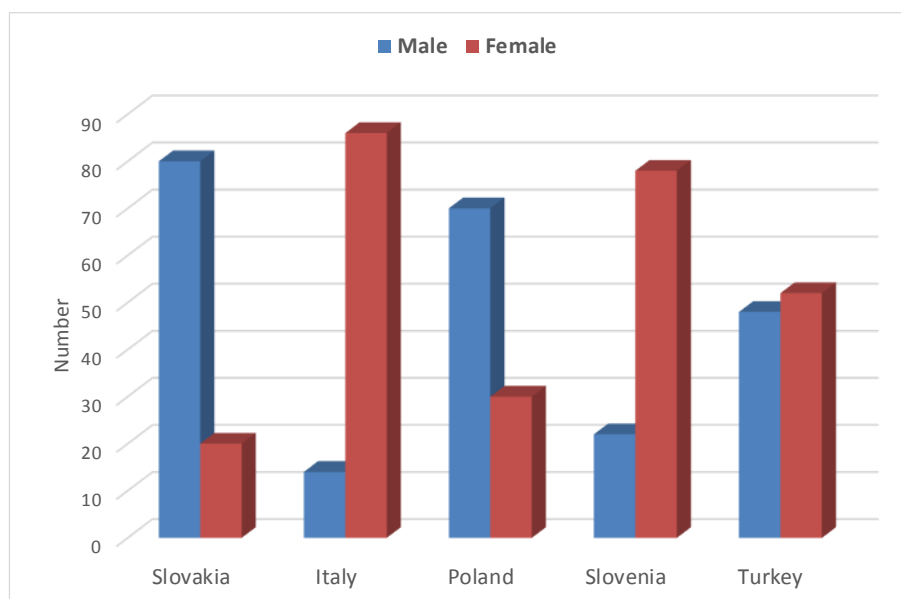
All together 500 students, aged 12 – 19, of which 53,2 % female and 46,8 % male students, were involved.

The age of students

Age	Slovenia	Slovakia	Italy	Turkey	Poland	Sum
12 -14	1	21	25	5	0	52
15 - 19	99	79	75	95	100	448

The gender ratio of the students was differing from country to country, while majority of the Slovene and the Italian students were females, males were most of the students from Slovakia, and Poland, but all together there were 266 (53,2%) female students and 234 (46,8 %) male students involved.

Gender

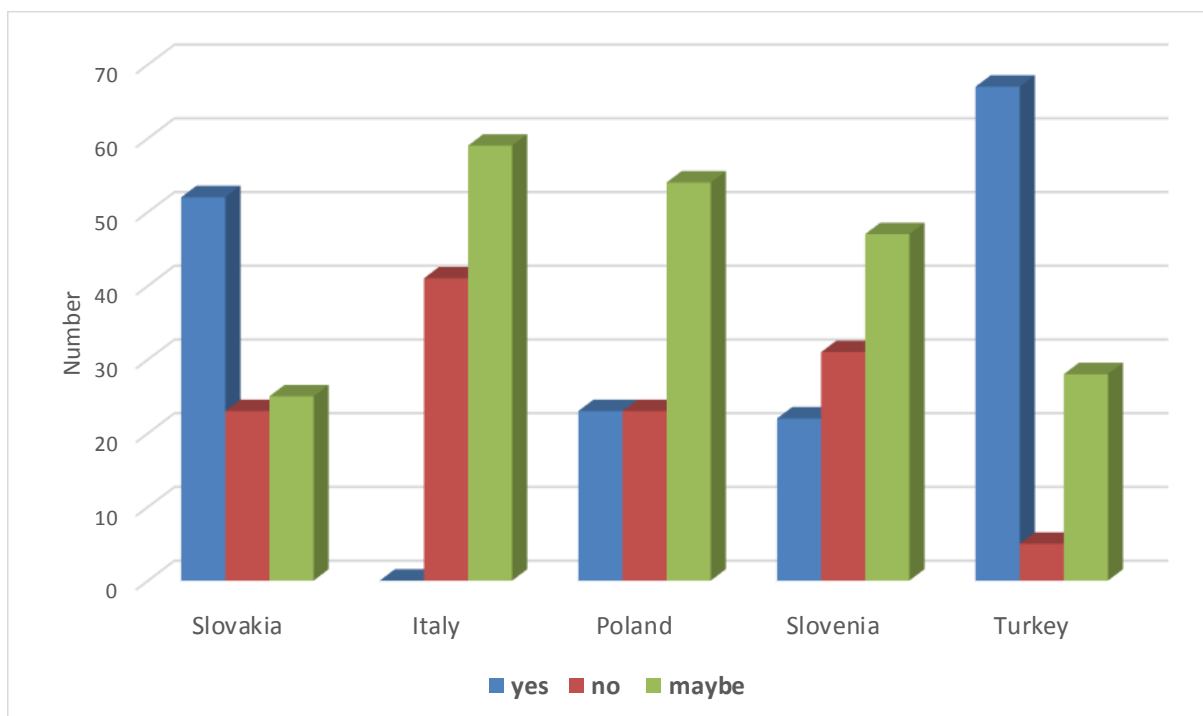


Students' beliefs

Students were asked about some *positive* as well as some *negative* aspects of involving social media in schools. Our survey showed most of the students (90 %) believe teachers **should** use Social Media in the classroom teaching. They also find Social Media a great tool for teachers – parents communication, for the promotion of their schools, and for exchanging files, links and information. Furthermore, they strongly believe using Social Media improves their English language skills.

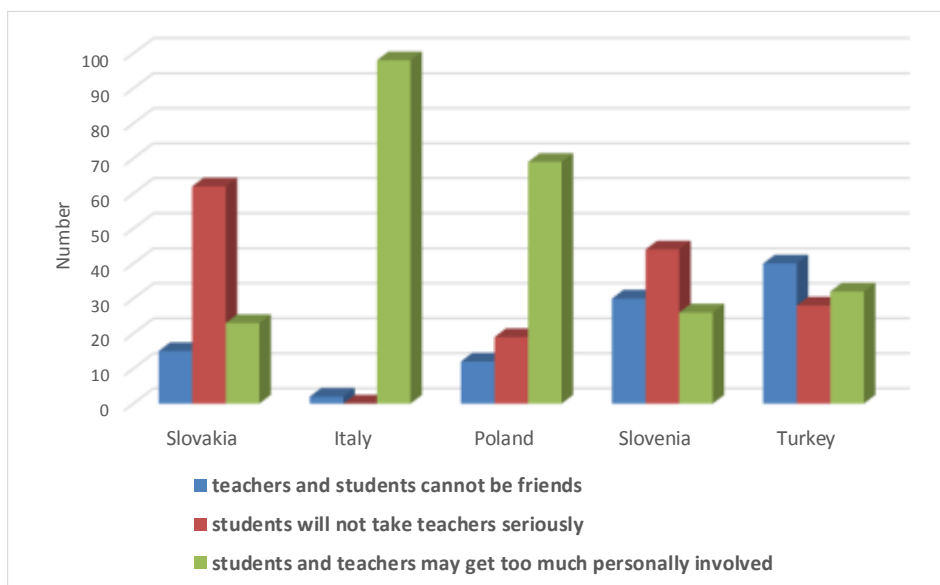
On the other hand, they are not so sure they could achieve better results if Social Media was integrated into lessons. With the slight exception of the students from the Slovakian and Turkish school, most of the students from other schools stated (when asked about achieving better results) either *maybe* or *no*.

Do you think that you will achieve better results if Social Media is integrated into lessons?



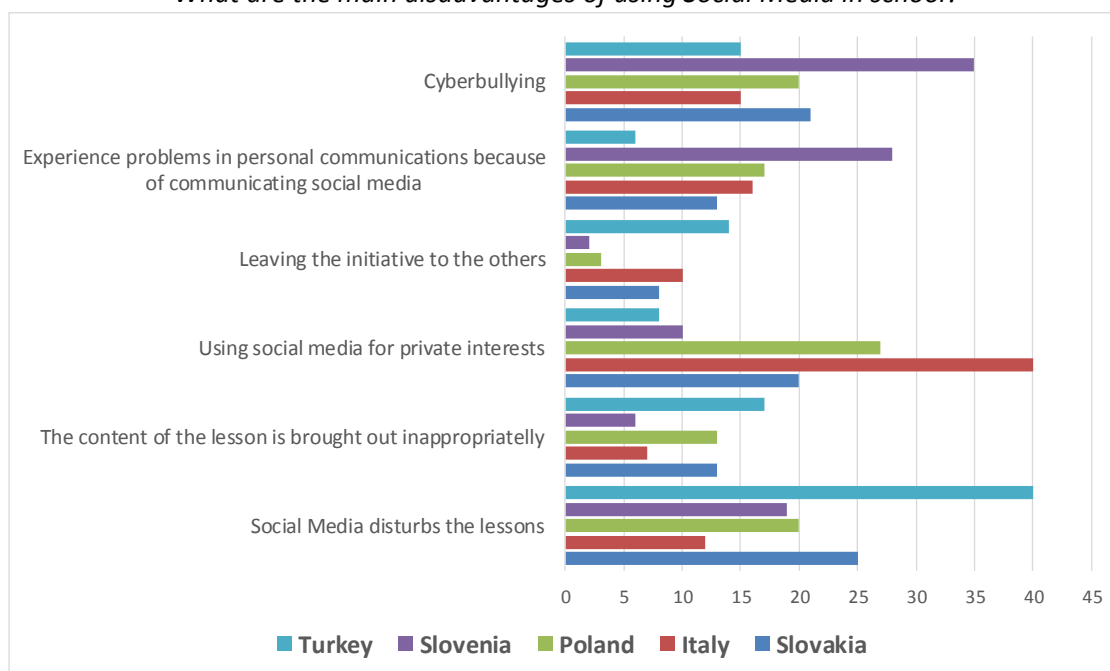
Students are not so sure Social Media is the best way for teachers to stay in touch with students, mainly because they think they may get too much personally involved. One third of the students is worried that teachers' authority would diminish in case they would use Social Media to communicate with students.

I think that Social Media is not best way for teachers to stay in touch with students because:



The main disadvantages of using Social Media in schools is the possibility of disturbing the lessons, mainly because they would enable students to use Social Media for private communication. Students are also aware of the danger of Cyberbullying.

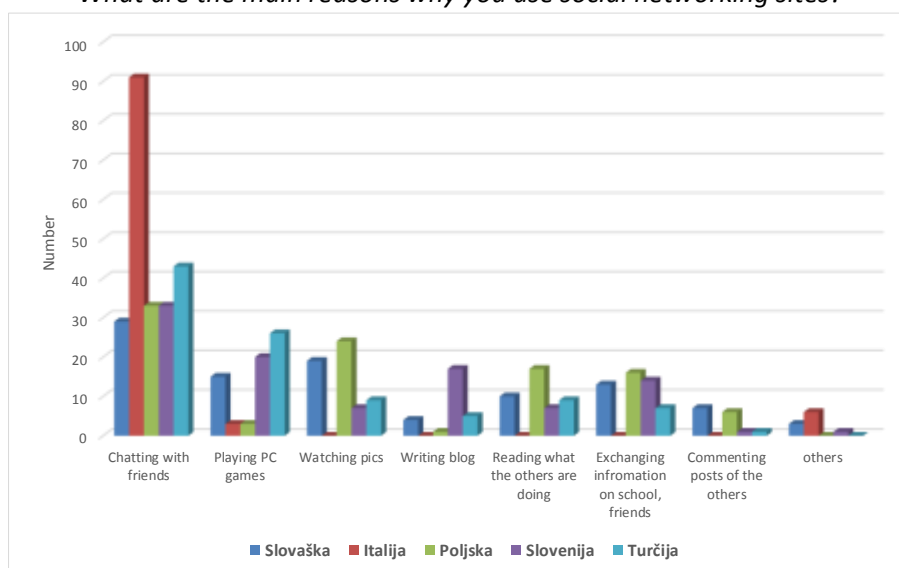
What are the main disadvantages of using Social Media in school?



Students' attitudes towards Social Media

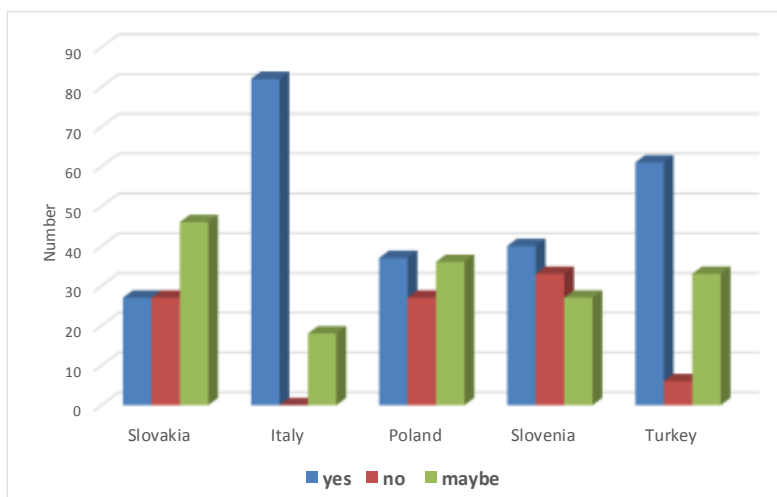
Our survey showed students use social networking websites mostly for chatting (communicating) with friends, playing PC games, and watching pics. Some of them (but less than 20 %) also use Social Media for exchanging information on school and friends. Except in Slovakia, there is no real interest of writing blog. Only a few students spend their time on commenting posts of the others.

What are the main reasons why you use social networking sites?



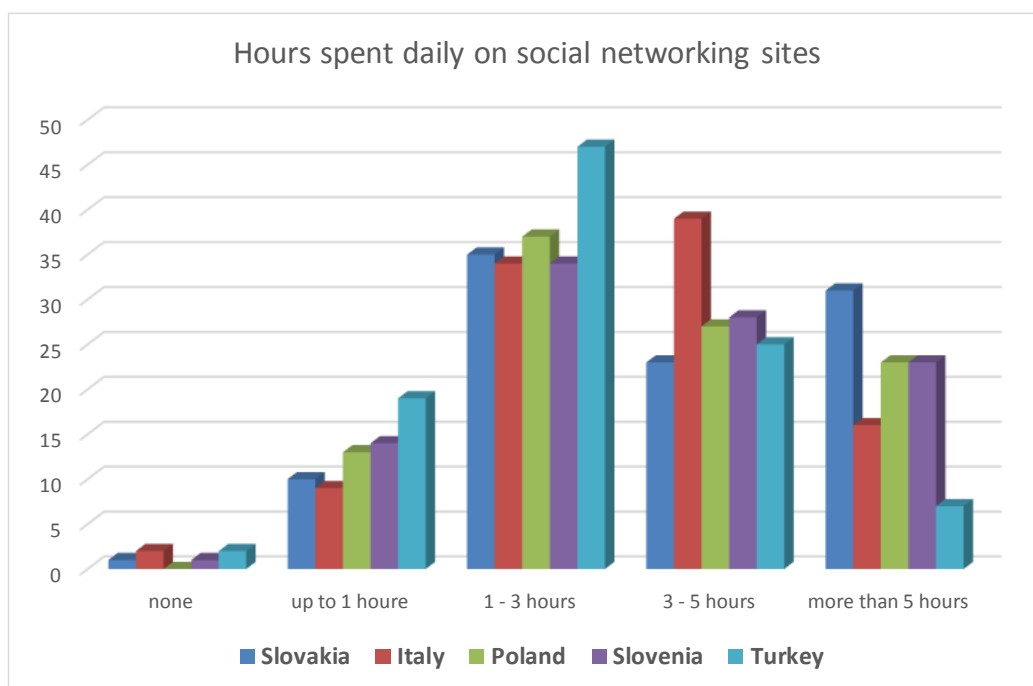
They also claim to be aware of the potential abuse of Social Media by other students, especially the Italian and the Turkish students, while the others waver between *maybe*, *yes* and *no*, with *yes* and *maybe* prevailing over *no*.

Are you worried about the potential abuse of Social Media by students?

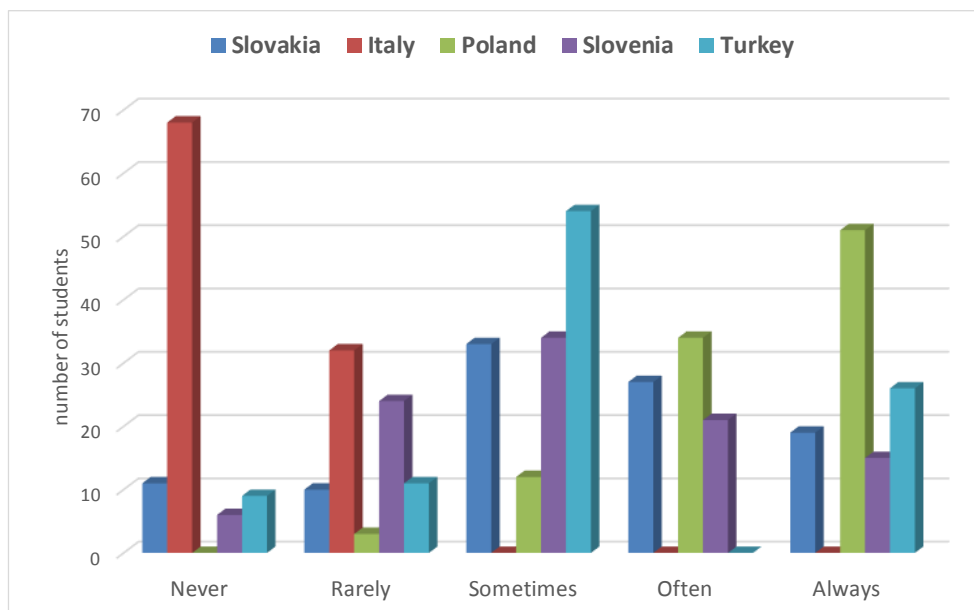


Students' behaviour towards Social Media in classroom

Our survey revealed a lot of our students (37, 4 %) spend 1 – 3 hours on social networking sites daily. A considerable (48,4 %) number of students spend even more, leaving only 14,2 % who spend less than one hour.



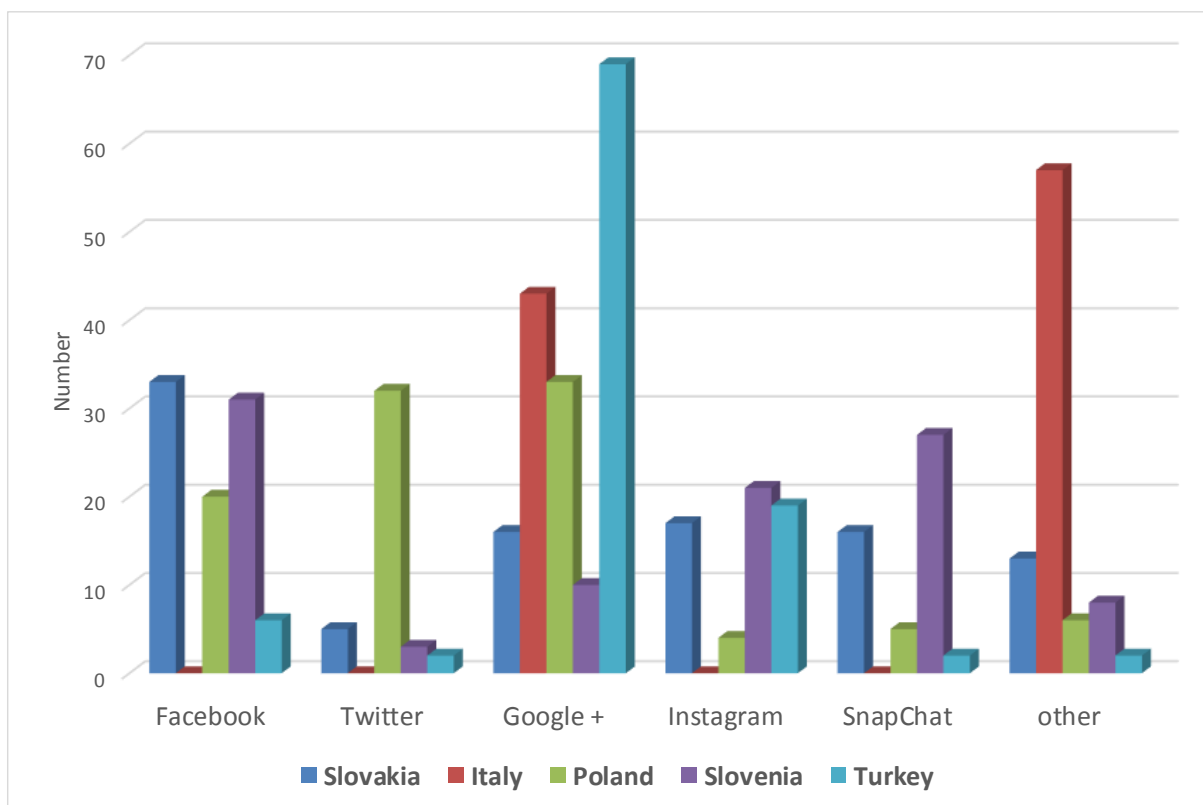
Majority of our students (81,2 %) communicate with their teachers and classmates at school while every fifth student doesn't do it.



As seen from the graph above, the exception are the Italian students, who rarely (32%) or never (68 %) communicate with their teachers and classmates at school. This is due to the Italian school's restrictive rules on using mobile phones at school.

The most common Social Media platform to use in the classroom are Google+ and Facebook, while Twitter, Instagram and Snap Chat are a little less popular. There is a considerable number of students (57%) from Italy who spend a lot of time using other platforms (i.e. Myspace, LinkedIn, Ask, Pinterest, and other).

Which of the following Social Media platforms do you use in the classroom?

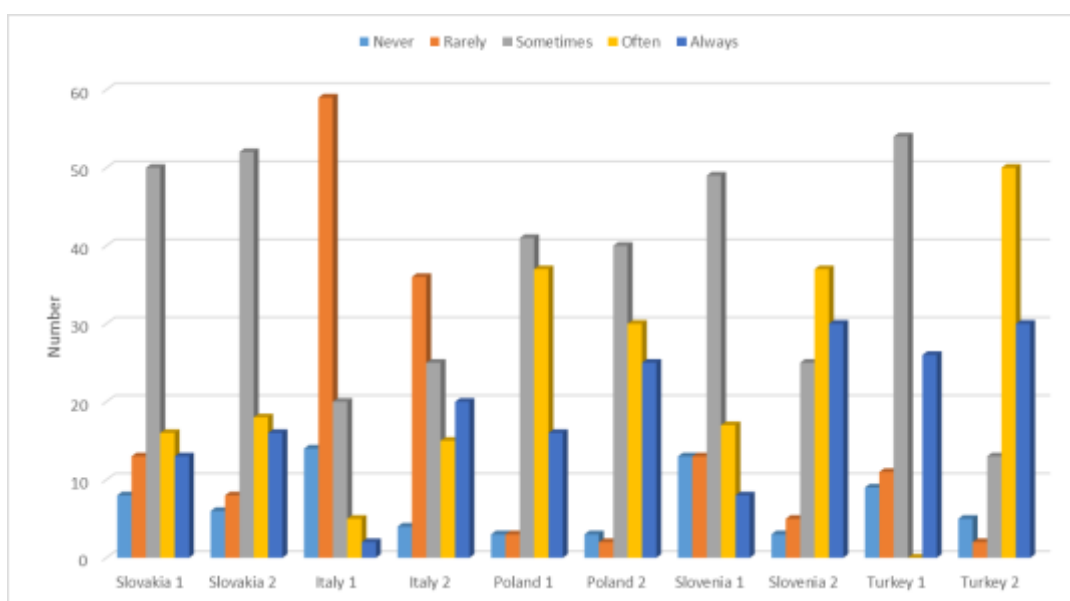


Comparison between the first (i.e. 2016/2017) and the second (i.e. 2017/2018) year of the project

After a year we asked the students to fill in the same questionnaire again to compare the results with the previous year's results. The comparison has shown the differences regarding:

- the use of the Social Media at school,
- students achieving better results,

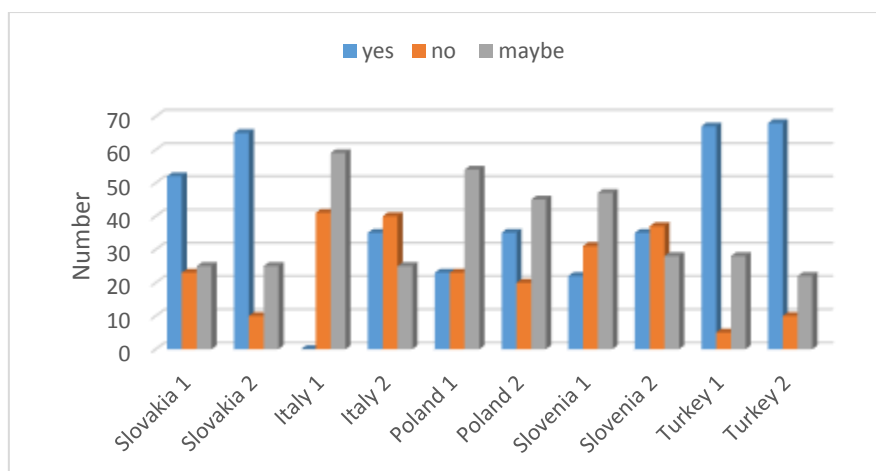
- students – teachers communication, and
- disadvantages of the use of Social Media in school as seen by our students.



Do you think that the teachers should use Social Media such as YouTube videos/blogs/FB/Instagram in the classroom teaching activities?

*Number 1 besides the name of the country means the first year of the project and number 2 the second

As seen from the graph after a year in all the participating schools more students believe teachers should use Social Media in the classroom more often. More students also believe (see graph below) they will achieve better results if Social Media is integrated into lessons.

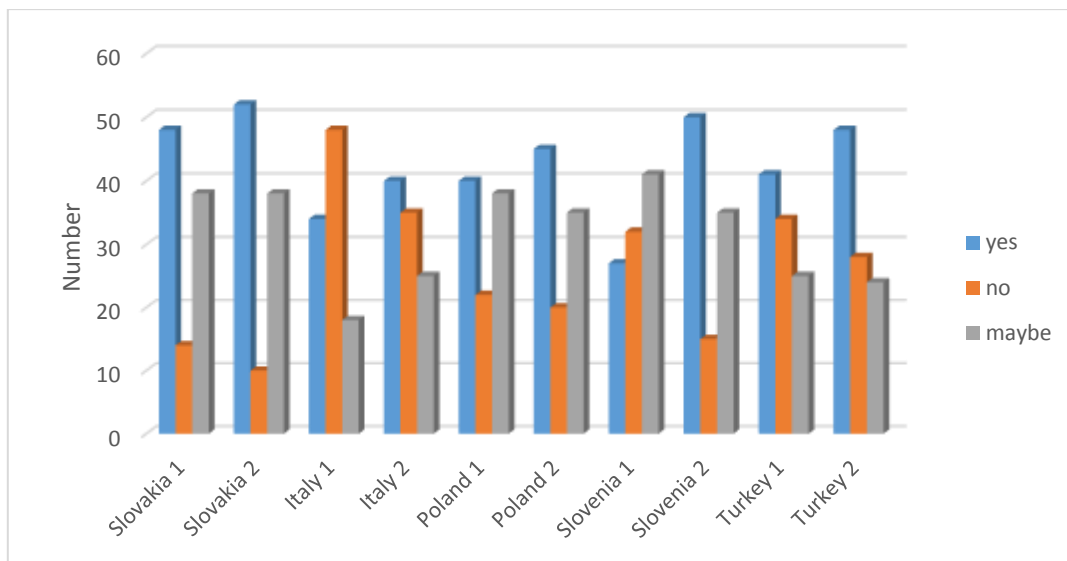


Do you think that you will achieve better results if Social Media is integrated into lessons?

*Number 1 besides the name of the country means the first year of the project and number 2 the second

There has been a considerable shift of the students' beliefs about Social Media being the best way for teachers to stay in touch with students. During the first year of the project there were approx.

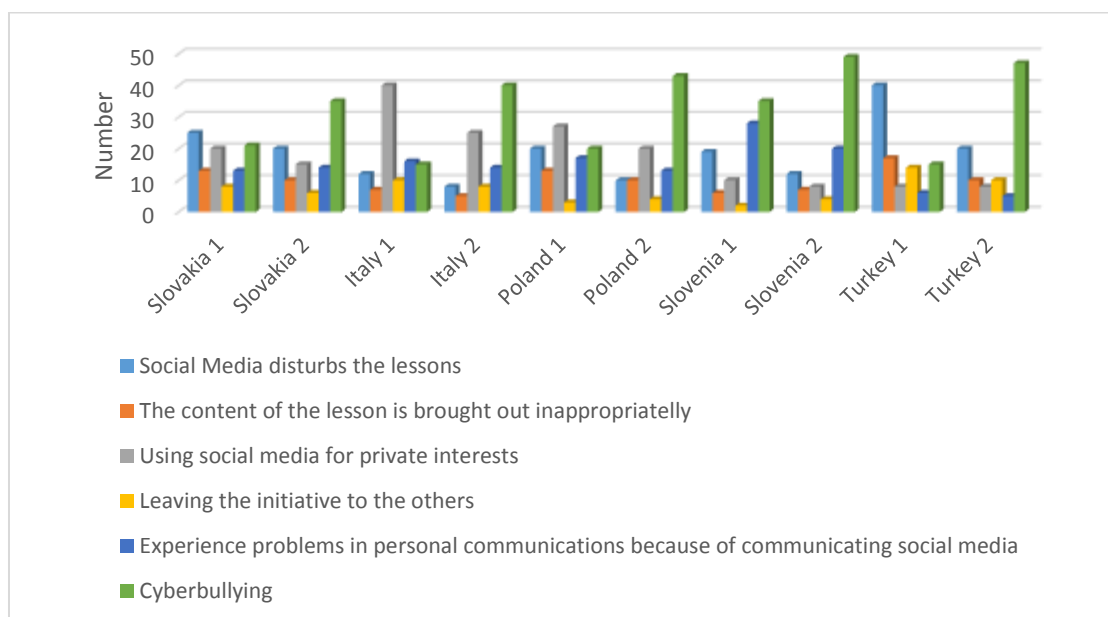
75 % of students who didn't believe Social Media to be a good way of communication between students and teachers. However, in the second year the number went down to approx. 50 %.



Do you think that Social Media is the best way for teachers to stay in touch with students?

*Number 1 besides the name of the country means the first year of the project and number 2 the second

In the second year not as many students as in the first one believe that Social Media disturbs the lessons as well as that the content of the lessons is brought out inappropriately (see graph below).



What do you consider to be the main disadvantages of the use of Social Media in school?

*Number 1 besides the name of the country means the first year of the project and number 2 the second



Conclusion

The questionnaire on Social Media was prepared by the teachers from the schools participating in the Erasmus+ project, titled ***Social Media in Formal Education***, with the aim of getting to know more about the behaviour and performance of our students on Social Media platforms. Besides that, we wanted to see if the students are familiar with the use of Social Media at school as a part of the learning process. Furthermore, we wanted to know how much students are aware of possible dangers related to Social Media.

Our assumption that students spend a lot of time using Social Media has been confirmed. Almost half of the students spend **more than three hours** on social network sites daily. Since the survey also reveals what most of students' time spent on social networks is devoted to, one of the conclusions is that **every second student spends more than three hours a day chatting with friends, playing PC games or watching pics.**

Regarding our assumption that students aren't aware of the dangers related to Social Media, the survey showed that this is not entirely the case. They listed Cyberbullying as one of the biggest disadvantages of using Social Media platforms, and they also claim to be aware of the potential abuse of Social Media.

The survey also proves that students use Social Media more for their **private social interaction than for educational purposes**. However, most of the students expect teachers **to use Social Media in the classroom teaching**, which means our students are willing and ready to be taught through Social Media. The question is, to what extent teachers are willing and skilled to do it.

Comparison between the first and the second year (the time of the project activities) has proved that more students now believe **teachers should use Social Media in the classroom more often**. More students also believe **they will achieve better results if Social Media is integrated into lessons**. The number of students that do not believe that teachers and students should use Social Media to communicate has dropped from 75 % to 50 %. Besides this more students **now believe Social Media doesn't disturb the lessons and most of them find the content of the lessons brought out by Social Media appropriate**.