

Experience: Adapting Estonian Digital Safety Games for Maltese Students

BECID

November 7, 2024 · At the end of October, Inger Klesment, a media literacy specialist at the Baltic Engagement Centre for Combating Information Disorders (BECID)), packed her suitcase with digital safety games and flew to Malta to play digital safety games with Maltese students and train local teachers. Inger was invited to Malta by Dr Kenneth Vella, Principal of St Joseph Mater Boni Consilii School Paola and Maltese Ambassador to Estonia. Read Inger's impressions of the Maltese children's media room!



Kenneth Vella and Inger Klesment.

“It turned out that children in Estonia and Malta use the same social media apps and play the same online games. Therefore, they are exposed to the same risks. As there were no differences in children’s internet usage, the educational and playful activities developed in Estonia worked just as well as in Estonia, and children were very open about what they like to do online. Local teachers attended all the lessons, and afterward they got a **link** where they could read the tutorials for other games in English and download materials to continue using Estonian games in their teaching.

Although the games were almost the same as in Estonia, doing a direct translation when using Estonian resources is not wise. For example, local children’s names had to be used in the games, and when talking about home address and the usual school-home trajectory, there’s no point in saying that you shouldn’t take a picture under the apple tree in front of your house. All examples should be put in a local context. Also, local examples should be given as much as possible. For example:

- influencers,
- plants,
- weather (e.g., when talking about the digital footprint, it is not helpful to speak of footprints in the snow when explaining the digital footprint in Malta, instead the example of a footprint left by stepping in the sand should be given),
- everyday activities,
- rules (e.g., whether children in this country are allowed to go outdoors on their own, how old they are when they get a smartphone),
- peculiarities of the school (e.g., the first school was a girls’ school), etc.

The more relatable the examples and games are, the more deeply children engage and are more likely to take something meaningful away from the activities.



During my stay in Malta, I discussed the possibilities for further cooperation with Dr Kenneth Vella. We plan to organise a digital media literacy conference for teachers in Malta, with media literacy experts from the BECID project as trainers. In addition, according to Dr Vella other Maltese schools are also looking forward to meeting me. All this means that our cooperation has had a fruitful start and promises to continue in the future.”

Where?

St Joseph Mater Boni Consilii School Paola (a church school) – Inger conducted five digital media literacy training sessions there, as well as two training sessions for teachers from the same school. She presented games developed in Estonia and discussed the online problems children in Estonia and Malta face and what is done to prevent them.

St Michael's School (private school) – Inger conducted five lessons there.

San Ġorg Preca College Marsa Primary (state school) – Inger conducted three lessons there.

She was very positively welcomed at each school. The school staff was very kind and friendly, and the children were polite and enthusiastic about participating!