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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOLS
KA2 ACTION, ERASMUS+ PROGRAM
THE VIRTUAL UNIVERSE WE WANT
PROJECT NO: 2016-1-RO01-KA219-024515**

LATVIA

Laws against cyberbullying

- The term "cyberbullying" refers to the use of Internet and/or mobile technology to harass, intimidate, or cause harm to another.

- **Cyberbullying** can be addressed under **civil law** or **criminal law**, based on the situation.

- A cyberbully may be engaged in defamation. This is when the bully causes harm to someone's reputation by spreading false information about that person. In general, defamation that appears temporarily (as unrecorded speech or in a live broadcast) is called slander, and defamation that appears permanently (in a book or on a Web site) is called libel.

- To be libellous a statement must: do harm to someone's reputation, have a clear and obvious target, and be seen by people other than the person making the statement and the target.
- In libel cases, the target can lay a suit against the person making the statement. If the suit is successful, the person making the statement will have to pay damages (money) to the target.
- A person accused of libel may defend himself or herself by saying that the statement was true, that it was a fair comment (a genuine criticism, not a personal attack), or that he or she innocently reproduced the statement without knowing what it was.

- A perpetrator may be creating an unsafe environment by making the target feel that she or he cannot go to school without facing violence, teasing or exclusion. Schools and workplaces are required to provide a safe environment for their students or employees, and must take any appropriate action to do so. A school, therefore, might punish a student for online behaviour that is making it hard for other students to learn in a safe environment.

- A school or workplace that does not do everything it can to provide a safe environment can be sued by the target(s). Even if a statement is not libellous, spreading it around might still create an unsafe environment.

- Finally, a person is responsible for any consequences that he or she might reasonably have guessed would happen. Therefore, a perpetrator who suggests that a depressed student should kill herself would be liable if the student actually did kill herself, as long as the perpetrator had reason to believe it was a likely result.

This is the main cybersafety bureau
in Latvia



