



Safer Internet Programme

Empowering and Protecting Children Online

Most European children are online starting with the age of 6. Almost all teenagers have a mobile phone. The Safer Internet Programme aims at empowering and protecting them online by supporting awareness raising initiatives and by fighting illegal and harmful online content and conduct.

The Safer Internet Programme was set up in 1999 and has evolved over the years, taking into account the latest technological developments and their impact on young people's lives.

To empower and protect children online, the Safer Internet Programme:

- finances a great variety of projects, all aimed at creating a safer online environment for young people;
- supports Safer Internet Day;
- organizes the Safer Internet Forum;
- promotes and supports industry self-regulation;
- co-operates at international level with other relevant organizations

The 2009-2013 Safer Internet Programme, which has a budget of €55 million, is addressing new challenges:

- the raise of web 2.0 and its fast take-up by young people;
- mobile technologies;
- harmful conduct like grooming or cyber-bullying;
- the need for a knowledge base, with children's Internet use and risks they may face online

A. Running projects funded by the Safer Internet Programme

The Safer Internet Programme is mainly implemented through projects funded at national or pan-European level, all aiming at creating a safer online environment for children and young people. The Safer Internet Programme has funded a large number of projects over the years, aimed at raising awareness, fighting illegal content, filtering and content labelling, involving the civil society in child online safety issues, creating a solid database of information related to the use of new technologies by young people. Below you will find more information about the running projects funded by the Safer Internet Programme.

1. Safer Internet Centres

Safer Internet Centres are responsible for promoting safe and responsible use of the Internet and mobile devices by young people. Safer Internet Centres are now present in 27 European countries all with an awareness centre, and most including a helpline and a hotline (see map).



B. International co-operation

1 INHOPE's international membership

In addition to its European members, INHOPE, the network of hotlines, also includes members from Australia, Canada, Taiwan, Japan, Russia, South Africa, South Korea and the US. They all contribute to fighting against illegal content on a global scale.

2 Russia

On 12-13 November 2009, a conference on Safer Internet for Children took place in Moscow. It represented a milestone in EU-Russia co-operation in the field of child safety online, and was attended by 180 participants from all over the EU and Russia, gathering stakeholders from government, industry, child protection experts, researchers and child welfare workers. The conference was also attended by high representatives from the Russian Duma.

Co-operation with Russian stakeholders will continue with the establishment of a Russian Safer Internet Centre.

C. Events

Safer Internet Forum

The Safer Internet Forum has been organized by the Safer Internet Programme as an annual conference on online safety issues since 2004. It brings together representatives of industry, researchers, law enforcement authorities, child welfare organizations and policy makers from Europe and beyond.

Each year, the Safer Internet Forum has a different main topic. Over the years, the topics have ranged from child safety and mobile phones, to fighting against illegal content and conduct, awareness-raising mechanisms, age verification and social networking, children and online safety education.

The 2010 edition of the Safer Internet Forum will take place on 21-22 October, in Luxembourg.

Safer Internet Day

Safer Internet Day, organised by INSAFE, has been celebrated since 2004 in more than 50 countries. Held every second Tuesday in February, it is part of a global drive to empower young people and to rally a wide range of online safety stakeholders to the cause.

The Safer Internet Programme supports the local initiatives and organizes a central event to increase the visibility of Safer Internet Day.



The 2010 edition of Safer Internet Day, which took place on 9 February, promoted the slogan "Think before you post!", aimed at helping children and young people make informed choices on the personal information they post online and informing them on potential consequences of their online actions.

D. Self-regulation

The Internet and mobile technologies are areas that develop at a fast pace. In order to react quickly to new developments in terms of children's use and emerging risks, the Commission supports industry self-regulation, with an aim to ensuring a safer environment for children and young people.

Two self-regulation initiatives have been taken by the industry at European level with the support of the European Commission.

1 European Framework for Safer Mobile Use by Young Teenagers and Children

In February 2007, leading mobile operators and content providers signed a *European Framework for Safer Mobile Use by Younger Teenagers and Children*.

The Framework describes principles and measures that the signatories committed to implementing on the national level throughout Europe.

Implementation reports published by GSMA Europe in March 2008 and April 2009 show that most European countries adopted national codes of conduct in order to ensure safer mobile use by young people. These apply 90% of the European code.

2 Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU

In February 2009, major social networks active in Europe signed the *Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU*, a self-regulatory document regarding the online safety of under 18s.

The signatories to the Principles have provided the Commission with publicly available self-declarations on how they implement this agreement in their safety policies. In February 2010, the Commission published the results of an independent assessment of the implementation of this agreement.

Further information on the Safer Internet Programme, as well as contact details of the running projects can be found online at

<http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>