|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Document CWG-COP-21/INF/3-E** |
| **16 September 2024** |
| **Original: English** |
|  |  |
| Contribution by the State of Israel |
| THE STATE OF ISRAEL’S INITIATIVES AND BEST PRACTICES ON CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION |
| **Purpose**The purpose of this document is to share the State of Israel’s initiatives and best practices in child online protection to Member States and Sector Members in line with Resolution 179 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022).**Action required**This document is transmitted to the Council Working Group on child online protection **for information**. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References** [*Resolution 179*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-179-E.pdf) *(Rev. Bucharest, 2022) - ITU's role in child online protection* |

Introduction

Child online protection (COP) is a critical issue in today’s digital age, as children are increasingly exposed to potential risks such as harmful content, cyberbullying, and online exploitation. In Israel, COP is a national priority, with dedicated entities leading comprehensive efforts to safeguard children in the digital sphere.

The Ministry of Communications and the Child Online Protection Bureau (COPB) play a central role. The Ministry of Communications is enforcing content filtering, and raising public awareness, while the COPB, which is part of the Israeli Police, focuses on preventing and investigating online crimes against children through monitoring, investigations, and educational programs.

In addition to these core authorities, Israel has implemented other initiatives and best practices, such as online safety education, national awareness campaigns, and partnerships with the tech sector, creating a multi-layered approach to child online safety.

# Initiatives and best practices of the State of Israel on child online protection

Key authorities and enforcement agencies

Ministry of Communications

The Ministry of Communications is at the forefront of Israel’s child online protection efforts, responsible for the regulation of telecommunications services, internet infrastructure, and digital content delivery to safeguard children from harmful online content. The Ministry’s work is focused on enforcing content filtering, fostering public awareness, and advancing online safety policies.

In July 2024, an Inter-Ministerial team, led by the Director General of the Ministry of Communications, published a report and recommendations for improving child online protection:

1 Establishing an updated minimum filtering standard for content filtering and parental control tools.

2 Re-examining our legal definitions of "harmful content".

3 Creating a dedicated government website to make information on content filtering tools more accessible.

4 Launching a national public awareness campaign.

5 Increasing the education system's involvement in teaching digital literacy and online safety.

6 Expanding online safety education to informal educational frameworks.

7 Incorporating online safety awareness into healthcare settings.

8 Strengthening our national authority for protecting children online.

Other key roles and activities of the Ministry of Communications

– ISP regulation – Ensures ISPs offer default parental control and content filtering tools, protecting children from harmful content like pornography, violence, and extremism.

– Content monitoring – Collaborates with telecom companies to quickly remove or restrict harmful materials on platforms used by minors.

– Public advocacy – Promotes corporate responsibility for safer online environments, encouraging age-appropriate design and strong privacy settings.

– Awareness campaigns – Runs national campaigns to educate parents, educators, and children about online risks, such as cyberbullying and online predators.

– Telecom collaboration – Works with ISPs and telecom companies to develop AI-based solutions for faster detection and removal of harmful content.

Child Online Protection Bureau

The Child Online Protection Bureau (COPB) is a specialized unit within the Israeli Police dedicated to combating crimes against children online. The COPB monitors and investigates crimes such as cyberbullying, sexual exploitation, and the distribution of harmful content, collaborating with both local and international bodies to protect children.

Key activities of the Child Online Protection Bureau

– Real-time online monitoring – Uses sophisticated tools to monitor websites, social media, and online forums for harmful activities that target children, such as grooming and cyberbullying.

– Cyber investigations – Conducts thorough investigations of online crimes involving children, including illegal content distribution and sexual exploitation. They work closely with global law enforcement bodies like INTERPOL and Europol to combat international crimes against children.

– Public reporting platforms – Provides 24/7 hotlines and an online reporting system, allowing the public to report suspicious or harmful online activities.

– Educational initiatives – Works with schools and communities to educate children and parents about online dangers, offering resources on cyber hygiene, the dangers of interacting with strangers online, and recognizing predatory behavior.

National initiatives and programs

In addition to the efforts of the Ministry of Communications and the COPB, Israel has implemented a variety of initiatives to enhance child online protection:

– Online Safety Education Program – Through the Ministry of Education, schools across Israel provide online safety programs. The programs covers topics such as cyberbullying, harmful content, and how to navigate the digital world safely.

– Safe Internet Day – Israel participates in the global Safe Internet Day initiative, with the aim to raise awareness about online safety and responsible internet use.

– NetSafe (Tzarich.Net) – A national helpline offering resources and guidance for parents, children, and educators to seek advice on dealing with online threats such as cyberbullying and inappropriate content.

Conclusion

Israel’s approach to child online protection, spearheaded by the Ministry of Communications and the COPB, is both proactive and comprehensive. Through the regulation of ISPs, educational initiatives, international cooperation, and advanced monitoring tools, Israel is creating a safer digital environment for children.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_