OUTCOME REPORT

ITU Virtual Briefing on "Child Online Protection Guidelines- Roll out in Europe: Regional and national updates" – Draft

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

The virtual briefing on "ITU Child Online Protection Guidelines (COP)- Roll out in Europe: Regional and national updates" was held online on 25 May 2022. The briefing was organized by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Office for Europe under the framework of the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe EUR4 on "Enhancing trust and confidence in the use of information and communication technologies", adopted during WTDC-17 Buenos Aires.

The briefing drew attention to the recently released and upcoming COP materials made available by ITU to all countries and stakeholders globally in order to continue the efforts in creating a safe online space for children and the Youth, and presented the types of support that ITU can provide to assist national stakeholders in Europe Region in rolling out the COP Guidelines at the national level.

The briefing also allowed stakeholders from Albania, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Malta and North Macedonia present concrete examples of recent efforts to roll out the COP Guidelines at the national level, and exchange on challenges and good practices that can be scaled up in other countries of the Region.

The briefing's agenda covered the following:

-   Session 1 on "ITU Updates: New Child Online Protection Materials"
-   Session 2 on "National Updates: Roll-out of the COP Guidelines in the Europe Region"

The main outcomes of the briefing are outlined in this report, which structures the key points that emerged during each session of the briefing.

2. DOCUMENTATION

The briefing was held virtually. Relevant documentation, was made available in electronic form on the event's webpage. **Video recording** of the briefing, together with all **presentations** delivered, as well as this **outcome report** are also made available on the website.

3. BRIEFING SESSIONS

SESSION 1: ITU UPDATES: NEW CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION MATERIALS

Focus: ITU Office for Europe drew attention on the recently released and upcoming COP materials, and presented an overview of the type of support that ITU can provide and what activities have been implemented so far to assist countries in Europe Region in rolling out the COP Guidelines at the national level.

Speaker: Ms. Andra Mocanu, Consultant, ITU Office for Europe
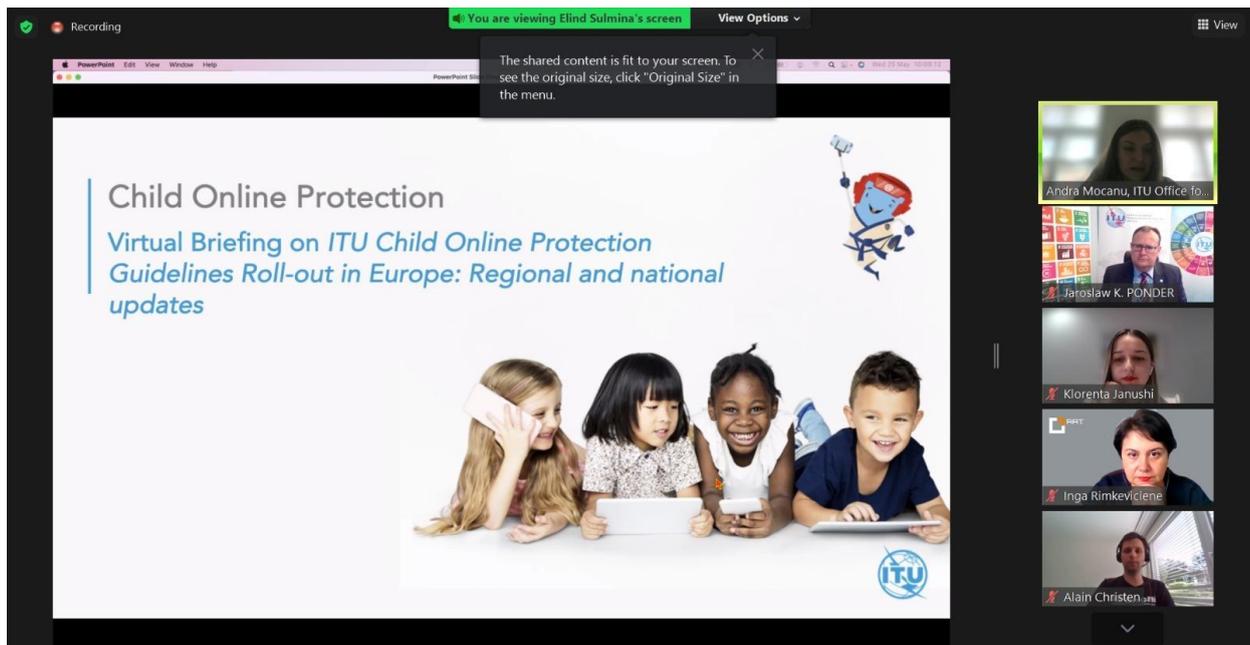
Key Points:

- ITU developed its very first set of COP Guidelines in 2009. Since then, the Internet has evolved immensely. Upon request of the Member States, the COP Guidelines have been updated and launched officially in June 2020 in all six UN official languages;
- The updated guidelines aim at raising awareness on the scope of child online protection, and provide resources and actual tools that support children and their families in the development of digital skills and digital literacy, and support Industry and government stakeholders in the development of corporate and national COP policies and strategies. The 2020 COP guidelines include reflections on the special situation of children and young people with vulnerabilities (i.e., migrant children, children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and children with disabilities) and issues around new technological developments;
- In collaboration with the National Cybersecurity Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, ITU initiated in August 2021 the Global Programme on "Creating a Safe and Prosperous Cyberspace for Children", with the aim to implement the 2020 ITU COP Guidelines at the global level through digital skills development and policy support;
- ITU is constantly updating and releasing new COP related materials to address the need to adapt to continuously changing digital world: **(i)** ITU Policy Brief on COP which provides clear step-by-step guidance for policy-makers on the development of a comprehensive national strategy on COP; **(ii)** Online Safety with Sango course, an education tool for children aiming at addressing child online safety through different lessons on key topics such as "Smartphones and Tablets", "Personal Information", "Apps", "Social Networks", and "YouTube". A translation package has been developed and enables the translation and localization of the videos into national languages; **(iii)** an online self-paced training for parents and educators which will become available on ITU Academy portal; **(iv)** a Training of Trainers module which will become available in the third quarter of 2022;
- At the moment, the COP guidelines are available in 14 languages of the Europe region (i.e., Albanian, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Croatian, English, French, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Romanian, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, Ukrainian) and are currently being translated into Finnish and Polish languages;
- Launching events of the translated materials have been held in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary and Ukraine;

- Awareness raising campaigns such as communication campaigns, as well as e-trainings and webinars mostly targeting parents and educators have been held in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Hungary and Ukraine. A training of trainers module will be held in Malta;
- So far, ITU has assisted Malta, Moldova and North Macedonia in the elaboration or revision of assessments of national approaches towards COP.

SESSION 2: NATIONAL UPDATES: ROLL-OUT OF THE COP GUIDELINES IN EUROPE REGION

Focus: National stakeholders to present latest developments and initiatives at national level to ensure the safety of children and young people online, and to exchange on challenges and best practices that can be scaled up in other countries in the Region.

Moderator: Ms. Andra Mocanu, Consultant, ITU Office for Europe

Speakers: Ms. Klorenta Janushi, Head of the Communication and Information Dissemination Unit at the Directorate of Electronic Certification and Cyber Security, Council of Ministers in Albania; **Ms. Anelia Dimova**, Information Policy Society Expert at the Ministry of e-Government of Bulgaria; **Ms. Daniela Pesheva**, State Expert at the Ministry of e-Government of Bulgaria; **Ms. Inga Rimkeviciene**, Head of International and Public Relations at the Communications Regulatory Authority (RRT) of the Republic of Lithuania and Chair of Com-ITU PT WTDC-21, **Ms. Emilija Georgieva Gjoshevski**, Advisor at the Ministry of Information Society and Administration in North Macedonia and **Ms. Antonella Gatt**, Director International Relations and Programme Implementation at the Ministry for Education, Youth, Sports and Research and Innovation in Malta, and Project Coordinator of a Child Online Protection project within the Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society (MFWS).

Key Points

Albania, Ms. Klorenta Janushi

- The National Authority for Electronic Certification and Cybersecurity (NAECCS) of Albania raised the hand to become the first pilot country worldwide to roll-out the ITU COP Global Project "Creating a Safe and Prosperous Cyberspace for Children". The project started in September 2021 and will last until March 2023;
- As part of the roll-out of the Global Project, a series of activities have been developed and implemented. A series of promotional videos in Albanian language, targeting children and the youth, parents and educators and industry stakeholders have been developed and disseminated in five most visited online media channels. The aim of the videos is to **(i)** raise awareness about the importance of cybersecurity and child online safety; **(ii)** raise awareness about the existing threats and harms children might face online; **(iii)** teach children about potential risks online and how to avoid them;
- NAECCS is in the process of concluding a partnership with the biggest media platform in Albania to facilitate the publication of the videos on their channels;
- A child friendly manual and a Training of Trainers manual have been developed and are used in workshops that are currently being conducted with children, parents and educators, and industry representatives;

- Up to this point: **250 secondary school students, 320 parents and educators and ≈ 50 industry representatives** have been trained during the workshops conducted in April-May; **more than 4500 persons** reached through online and social media campaign;
- Challenges encountered at the beginning of the implementation included **(i)** slow feedback from stakeholders involved in the process of policy development and online safety mechanisms; **(ii)** limited engagement from interested parties due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Bulgaria, Ms. Anelia Dimova and Ms. Daniela Pesheva

- The Bulgarian Safer Internet Center has been established in 2005 and has been co-funded by the European programs Safer Internet and Better Internet for Kids. The Center is coordinated by the Applied Research and Communications Foundation in partnership with the Parents Association and DeConi Advertising Agency;
- The main activities of the Center include **(i)** developing and conducting trainings for children and young people, educators and other professionals; **(ii)** elaboration of various materials aimed at raising public awareness on the risks and harms children can encounter online, and on how to get in contact with relevant institutions/ organizations and seek help;
- The National Program Digital Bulgaria 2025 aims at achieving one of its goals to ensure the rights of children in the digital environment through: **(i)** information campaigns on the risks encountered and responsible behavior of children in the online environment; **(ii)** cooperation among Academia with the aim to develop and introduce digital literacy and trainings in media; **(iii)** information events and campaigns organized by the members of Children's Council of the State Agency for Child Protection, aiming to promote digital competence, protection of children's rights in the online environment and combating children sexual exploitation and abuse through computer systems;
- The ITU COP Guidelines for Policy-makers have been translated into Bulgarian language and will be distributed among government institutions, municipalities, libraries and community centers. An event is planned to take place with the aim to distribute the COP Guidelines among all relevant stakeholders.

Lithuania, Ms. Inga Rimkeviciene

- A Hotline was established in 2007 under the coordination of the Communications Regulatory Authority (RRT). During the first quarter of 2022, there were 330 notifications received through the hotline in regards to possible illegal content on the Internet;
- RRT recently participated in the GovStack lab initiative where public administrations were invited to collaborate with national startups to elaborate useful tools for different activities. In partnership with the startup Oxylab, RRT developed an AI based tool that will be used to identify illegal content published on the Internet;
- Under a national law on education, the RRT has the right to give mandatory orders to Hosting Service providers (HSP) in regards to removing all illegal content from the websites found under their supervision, and make the HSP accountable from the moment they become aware of existing illegal content. This law constitutes the basis for collaboration between RRT and HSP;
- Challenges encountered within this collaboration include **(i)** lack of communication from HSP's side; **(ii)** disaffirming the existence of illegal content; **(iii)** false declarations related to actions taken to remove illegal content;
- In 2020 the RRT proposed a Memorandum on clean Internet environment which so far has been joined by ten (10) biggest HSP in the country. Some principles of collaboration include education

of HSP and sharing good practices towards ensuring child online protection. The RRT translated the ITU COP Guidelines for Industry and will use them to achieve these principles;

- Further actions include: **(i)** dissemination and promotion of ITU COP Guidelines among Industry stakeholders; **(ii)** an annual meeting to be held with the HSP in June/ July 2022, with the participation of ITU; **(iii)** provision of legal and expert guidance on the implementation of ITU COP Guidelines recommendations to strengthen COP at the national level.

North Macedonia, Ms. Emilija Georgieva Gjoshevski

- The ITU Office for Europe, in close collaboration with the Ministry of Information Society and Administration (MISA) elaborated a Child Online Protection National Assessment report to evaluate the current situation around child online safety in North Macedonia. The report presents the strengths and weaknesses of the system and will be published and officially launched in July;
- A Memorandum of Cooperation will be signed between MISA, the Ministry of Education and the Bureau of Curriculum Development with the aim to raise awareness on the threats and challenges children and young people are exposed to on the Internet;
- The aim is to raise awareness among children and young people and increase responsibility among parents and educators, media and social work centers, as well as enhance cooperation among all relevant stakeholders;
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Education, the primary goal is to provide education on cybersecurity;
- Certain activities have been implemented in the last years to ensure online safety for both children and adults, including: **(i)** regular communication; **(ii)** trainings organized by Internet Hotline Provider in North Macedonia; **(iii)** participation in events and conferences organized by INSAFE and Safer Internet Centers in Poland and Germany; **(iv)** participation for the first time at the WeProtect Global Alliance Summit 2022;
- There has been a challenge in the establishment of the first Safer Internet Center. The project is in its incipient phase and meetings are being held between Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education and Ministry of Information Society and Administration to establish future basic steps for action.

Malta, Ms. Antonella Gatt

- The Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society is rolling-out a project (O.S.C.A.R.) which aims to implement the ITU COP Guidelines; Project partners include **(i)** government entities; **(ii)** various departments within the University of Malta; **(iii)** Police; **(iv)** main three Internet Service Providers**; (iv)** main IT agency. The group of partners is divided into sub-groups focusing on different streams (e.g., IT; trauma; communication; training);
- A pilot ITU Training of Trainers targeting parents and educators will be implemented within 2 state colleges in the Southern and Northern part of the country having a total of 9500 students. The project will be implemented in two stages, through an online self-paced training and a training of trainers module, and aims at training counsellors and psychotherapists within the 2 colleges;
- A communication strategy is currently being developed to raise awareness and communicate on the policy measures and initiatives that will be implemented;
- ITU provided assistance in the elaboration of a National Assessment to evaluate the strategy around child online protection in Malta. A statistical exercise is currently being carried out to

better understand the current situation and gather data on child online abuse, as there is no data available at the moment on this issue in Malta;

- A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been recently established to advocate for victims' rights and support in the promotion and delivery of training in the field of victim support.