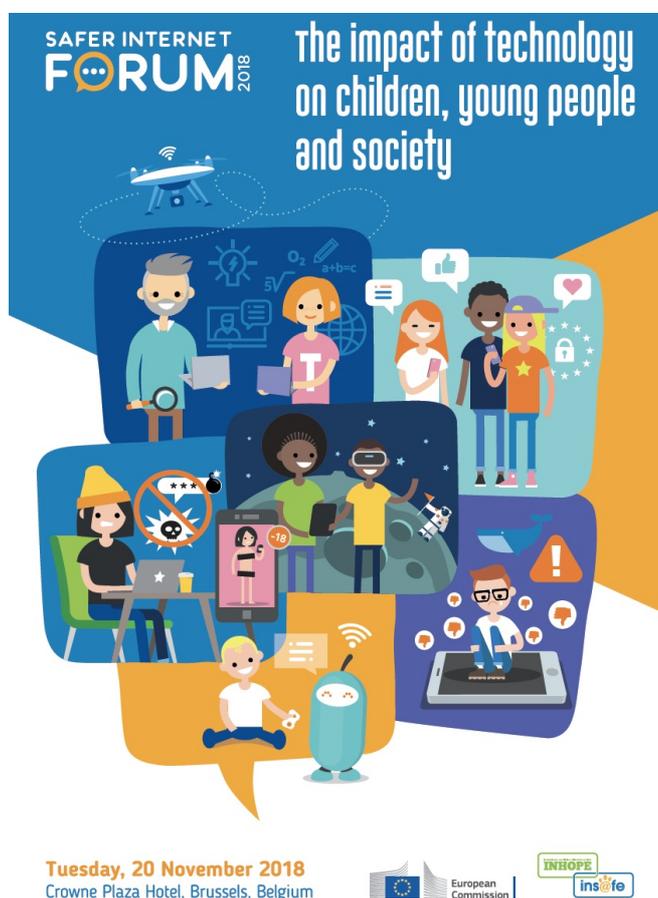


# Report on the proceedings of the Safer Internet Forum 2018

Tuesday, 20 November 2018  
Brussels, Belgium

*(including annexes on the preceding BIK Youth Panel and the participation of the Teachers' Future Classroom Lab (FCL) course)*



Further information from the Forum, including the full agenda, conference brochure with speaker biographies, presentations and image galleries can be found at [www.betterinternetforkids.eu/sif2018](http://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/sif2018).

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## Introduction

Building on the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children, the Safer Internet Forum (SIF) is an annual international conference delivered under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF). Bringing together young people, parent and teacher representatives, industry and government policy makers, technological and awareness-raising experts, and political, educational and social leaders from Europe and beyond, this one-day event took a multi-stakeholder approach to considering the impact of technology on individuals and society.

The 15th edition of the Safer Internet Forum took place in Brussels, Belgium on Tuesday, 20 November 2018 with a theme of "**The impact of technology on children, young people and society**". More than 250 stakeholders from approximately 40 countries worldwide were in attendance to discuss the latest trends, risks and solutions related to youth online safety and empowerment.

The Forum opened with a keynote address focusing on the **impact of technology on self-identity and personal relationships**. **Dr Linda Papadopoulos**, an internationally revered psychologist, examined how digital technologies are transforming the perception of ourselves and our relationships with others. There is an increasing awareness and acknowledgement that many of the platforms, apps and services we use have not been designed to express ourselves but rather to make money by keeping us hooked. This session focused on the impact this has on children's and young people's personal development and the relationships they form with their peers and family. It also considered alternative models and design standards to better protect and empower consumers.

Following on from the opening keynote, **Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society**, gave a high-level address, while also presenting the **#SaferInternet4EU Awards**: one of several actions which the European Commission has been supporting throughout 2018 to promote online safety, media literacy and cyber hygiene. This session showcased and rewarded some of the best practices in the three competition categories of youth, teachers, and professional organisations, and also highlighted some of the work of a growing network of #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors throughout Europe.

The afternoon was given over to a series of highly interactive "deep dive" sessions. Through detailed discussion, debate and practical exercises, Forum attendees had the opportunity to explore issues around **sexting, data privacy** and **deep fakes**, learn more about **online challenges** and **youth-led initiatives**, and understand more about the **reporting mechanisms for child sexual abuse material (CSAM)**.

The closing session considered the **impact of technology on society**, focusing on how individuals, policy makers, industry and other stakeholders can address the challenges. **Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga**, from the University of Vienna, focused on how technology is shaping democratic processes, examining especially how social media can aid the political and civic engagement of young people. **Noa Jansma**, a youth activist, shared her personal experiences of using technology in a positive way to combat sexual harassment in the street, and the legacy she has created through her work.

Find out more, including photo galleries and other outputs from the day, at [www.betterinternetforkids.eu/sif2018](http://www.betterinternetforkids.eu/sif2018).

# The impact of technology on self-identity and personal relationships

**Keynote speaker:** Dr Linda Papadopoulos

**Chair:** Marjolijn Bonthuis, Dutch Safer Internet Centre

**Panellists:**

- Geert Reynders, T.I.M. Foundation
- Emma Collins, Instagram



*Dr Linda Papadopoulos delivering the keynote session at Safer Internet Forum 2018*

Dr Linda Papadopoulos opened her presentation on parenting kids in a digital world with a compelling figure: by the age 4, 87 per cent of children have access to portable devices. What is more, the digital habits of children constitute a dynamic, ever-changing landscape: young people are migrating from Facebook and the likes to more visual apps, such as Snapchat, Instagram, and so on. Just like their parents when they were young, today's children play with their peers and build relationships. But the fundamental difference for this generation is that some of these interactions can take place entirely online. This is a fact that many parents struggle to admit.

To understand how children's self-identity and personal relationships evolve, we need to understand how the online platforms they spend time on measure success: it all comes down to the time spent on the platform. And when the metric for success of an app/game is "time spent", behavioural scientists aren't trying to answer the question "how do we ensure ultimate wellbeing?" but rather "how do we ensure optimal engagement?".

Designers are tasked with making websites as engaging as possible, by rewarding users for their time spent on the platform to ensure that they keep coming back. Of course, psychology has always been used to motivate behaviours, but the difference today is that the information we have is much bigger than at any point in history before. The problem is that, when tasked with getting people to stay online, designers do not worry about ensuring the ultimate wellbeing of users, but instead focus keeping them engaged and online.



To achieve such an engaging environment, designers will typically:

- create a digital environment that satisfies the basic human drives: the need to be liked, the need to master a skill (through levels, rewards and badges), the need to be acknowledged or to be part of a group (by having “friends” and “followers”).
- ensure that these apps and platforms are very easy to use so that users can upload information as easily as possible. Indeed, today, 62 per cent of 4 year olds have already uploaded content online.
- create incentives and reminders for users, by giving them the urge to check their notifications immediately, or the fear of missing a reward, and so on.

The fact is that the things that children and young people need so that they feel like they are accomplishing something, that make them feel valued and feel connected, are now being played out online. Platforms are becoming so good at doing this that, for the young people using them, they may feel more satisfying than the real world alternatives. Therefore, telling a child to turn off their phone is not as easy as it sounds.

### Games

Gaming is an integral part of children's development. They learn about their surroundings, they improve their motor skills, they get to grips with how to talk with friends, apply rules and resolve conflict. It also gives them a sense of mastery, which boys in particular have biologically evolved to seek. And indeed, biology rewards you both online and offline. Dopamine is not just about feeling good; it actually helps with building habits. Therefore, up until recently, when people worried about children's compulsivity in playing games, it was a mere side effect, and not an intentional element of the game's design. The big difference is that today, if the success of a game is about time spent rather than time spent well, then creating these compulsion loops seems inevitable.

### Socialisation

A child's socialisation is a key part of their development. They learn how to be part of a group, how to avoid rejection, they get to understand sub-groups, in-groups and so on. The need to seek out social acceptance is still the same, but because of the way that we access social groups online, it looks different. Teenagers are naturally eager for peer validation and this kicks in precisely at the age when they begin to use the social tools that provide it.

Just as with gaming, a lot of psychology goes into keeping kids on social media platforms. Dr Papadopoulos emphasised the important difference there is between the *self* and the *selfie* – that is to say, between what we are and what we show the world. Indeed, when it comes to

socialisation online, there is a whole set of new parameters to take into account, and an economy of attention to consider, because children have learnt that there is social currency in being seen and promoting themselves, so they never really rest from the worry of how others see them. Illustrating this, an Internet Matters study found that 46 per cent of children said they always or often post images of themselves having a great time, and 34 per cent said they spent time making their images look “perfect” before posting.

## **Bullying**

The big question is whether bullying and cyberbullying are two different phenomena, or whether they simply conform to the same logics. The most commonly accepted idea is that bullying is the same whether it is done online or offline. In many ways, it is, but there are some fundamental differences with cyberbullying. Because it happens online, it can happen anywhere: victims cannot escape from it, there is no safe place away from it, and victims carry their fear with them everywhere they go. Moreover, the option of anonymity means that offenders feel protected, and the bullying can actually escalate faster than it would in real life. The globalised nature of the internet means that cyberbullying can be disseminated quickly and to a global audience, contrary to “classic” bullying, which generally happens in front of a limited group of people. Online, bullies do not actually see their victims, making it harder to see the effects of their actions. Additionally, things can be misconstrued online.

In light of this information, what can we do? How do we ensure a safe journey for our children as they navigate a new digital world that we never had to? Dr Papadopoulos laid out a set of recommendations for parents, as follows:

- Encourage your children to **think critically**.
- **Discuss digital identity** (that is, the difference between the self and the selfie). Ask your child to reflect on whether they are presenting something expected of them or trying to figure out who they really are. Make them think about whether strangers online should have a say in who they are and how they present themselves.
- **Get children to curate their consciousness**; let them understand that they have the power to decide what they engage with. Just like what you put in your body affects your physical health, the type of content you consume affects your mental health.
- **Be prescriptive when setting rules**.
- Explain that **you get that their tech is important**; assure your children that it will not be taken away from them if they report a problem, but that you need to be made aware of what is going on, so that you can define a strategy together on how to use digital devices in the best way.

On a larger scale, it is also essential to work with industry and policy makers to ensure that our behavioural instincts are not used against us. There is no such thing as an agenda to harm, but digital and social media companies find themselves in a digital arms race in which renouncing to use users' data means that they will not be able to compete in the marketplace. This data could, instead, be used for good purposes: to encourage people to exercise more, to remind them to take their medication, to send users positive messages, and so on. There is no going back in this sense, but we can definitely act more ethically.

Children's world online and offline becomes an easier place to navigate when they have an understanding of how things work. The basics are the same, but they are being played out on a stage which has the capacity to manipulate their behaviour – socially, emotionally and biochemically. It is a big challenge, and therefore it is critical that we understand what

children are up against when trying to regulate their own behaviour and give them both the understanding and tools so that, ultimately, their path through childhood is the same as ours was; full of bumps and unexpected twists and turns, but one which ends in a good place - a happy and healthy young person, equipped with the tools to navigate the adult world.

### Panel discussion

The keynote presentation was followed by a panel discussion between Dr Linda Papadopoulos, Geert Reynders and Emma Collins, chaired by Marjolijn Bonthuis, of the Dutch Safer Internet Centre (SIC).

Geert Reynders is the father of Tim, a young man who lost his life to an online challenge on 6 May 2017. Geert has subsequently started a foundation called T.I.M. (*Tegen Internet Misstanden*, meaning “against internet abuses” in Dutch). He stated that the theme of SIF is very relevant to him, because he realised how much his son’s personality online differed from the person he was in real life.



T.I.M. pursues a triple objective: to put in place a professional international platform, to facilitate research and transparency on the topic of online challenges, and to promote structural education via schools.

Marjolijn Bonthuis asked Dr Papadopoulos for her thoughts on Geert Reynders’ remark, about children having different personalities online and offline. She replied that online validation shapes young people’s online behaviour very quickly. The online world represents a space where introverts like Tim can express themselves easily. The fact that he was a teenager also matters, since it is a period where young people develop more impulsive and risk-taking character traits.

The moderator then asked the panel about how parents and teachers can identify such “abnormal” behaviours in children and young people. Dr Papadopoulos admitted that it is not an easy task because, sometimes, the child struggling the most is the quiet one that looks perfectly healthy. There are some specific signs that teachers and parents should look out for to which might suggest risk, such as sleeping patterns. Geert Reynders echoed this remark, saying that, in hindsight, he realised that his son’s behaviour had shifted in the weeks leading up to his accident, and that there were warning signs, hence the importance of being informed about these signs, and how they might be connected to these issues.

## Q&A session

Dr Papadopoulos was asked about her thoughts on young people meeting potential significant others via online dating apps. On this issue, she recalled a conversation she had with the founder of eHarmony in which he told her that, according to statistics, people meeting through the dating algorithm stay together more than real-life romantic encounters. She reflected on the fact that we are not always the best at deciding what is best for us, we tend to fall for people near us that we find attractive, and the longer-term relationship is a lot harder to get a hold over. She also mentioned a phenomenon on Tinder, where young people say the immense choice the app gives them makes it really hard to find anyone to commit to.

Dr Papadopoulos was asked to comment on how she feels about parents preventing self-harming online by having good contacts with peers of children. She replied that it is relevant since the challenges in the online world evolve so fast, in an environment which is not so age-segregated. Therefore, we need platforms to raise awareness among children, but also to give advice to parents and teachers. Most of the time, the children encountering an online problem fear punishment from their parents, so it is vital that this channel of communication remains open. Geert Reynders added that it is also one of the aims of T.I.M. - setting up a platform for parents, so that they get informed if there is a dangerous online challenge coming up, in a simple and accessible way.

A member of the BIK Youth Panel asked the panellists what they thought the right approach to take with children is, to avoid the danger of not being taken seriously. Dr Papadopoulos replied that there are two ways of speaking: talking about content, or talking about process. Often, parents do not have the language to talk about online issues with their children because they do not understand, for example, why "snapstreaks" matter, or why getting cropped out of a picture hurts. The more a parent talks about it with their children, and the more they keep these channels of communication open, the better.

A SIC representative asked Dr Papadopoulos whether the invasion of mobile devices has changed the way we interact. She replied that it makes us more connected than ever, but it has also been shown that levels of depression among young people are higher than ever (although no formal link has been demonstrated). She mentioned the concept of "ultimate penetration", showing that it was as low as 35 days for the game Angry Birds to take hold on society, which clearly illustrates, in her opinion, that society is playing catch-up with technology. Emma Collins added that a lot of research is being done on the behaviours people are displaying online and the impact that it has: when people use technology to keep in touch with close ones, there is a sense of wellbeing but, on the contrary, something like mindless scrolling has been shown to be bad for everyone. Therefore, the question is: how do we design and facilitate the good things, while at the same time mitigating the harmful side?

## High-level address by Mariya Gabriel, European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society – #SaferInternet4EU Awards

**Moderator:** Claire Bury, Deputy Director General, DG CONNECT



**Commissioner Mariya Gabriel delivering a high-level address at Safer Internet Forum 2018**

Commissioner Gabriel opened her address by reflecting on how digital is now part of our entire life: living without technology is not an option anymore, and the internet has become a commodity, just like water and electricity. Technology can enable young people to learn and achieve great things, but it also has its dangers: a recent UNESCO report showed that 33 per cent of children found things they disliked on the internet, such as violent content. In Italy, the figures show that the number of children upset by something they have experienced on the internet has more than quadrupled since 2013. Beyond harmful content, the impact of excessive mobile use on children's attention levels is also a source of concern: millennials check their devices at least 150 times a day. Therefore, technology can be seen as empowering, but it can also be considered addictive.

The #SaferInternet4EU campaign is based on three pillars: online safety, media literacy and cyber hygiene. Launched on Safer Internet Day 2018, the campaign covers a wide range of topics, including:

- critical thinking, media literacy and digital skills necessary to identify and combat fake news and seek trusted sources of information.
- cyber hygiene.
- the risks brought by emerging online technologies (virtual/augmented reality) and connected devices such as smart toys.

The campaign has included a number of initiatives:

- The #SaferInternet4EU Awards to reward high-quality resources and inspiring initiatives on safer and better internet from organisations, teachers and youth. Over 600 entries were submitted, and more than 7,000 people voted for their favourites.
- A MOOC with resources and activities on fake news, cyberbullying and radicalisation had participants from more than 65 countries, while an online learning event on cyber-hygiene during European Cyber Security Month (ECSM) in 22 Member States.

- To date, more than 15 million EU citizens have benefited from more than 1,300 new resources covering topics such as fake news, cyberbullying, privacy concerns about connected toys, grooming, exposure to harmful or disturbing content, and cyber-hygiene.

Commissioner Gabriel said she had been inspired by many initiatives taken by Safer Internet Centres (SICs). They have been a driving force behind the campaign, and she is incredibly proud of their work. Equally, the youth panel present at SIF is a perfect example on how to include young people in discussions on a better internet. With the support of the *Alliance to better protect minors online*, Commissioner Gabriel has managed to create a network of #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors, consisting of MEPs, industry representatives, young people and experts in the field of online safety, all supporting the campaign across Europe.

The Commissioner then thanked the #SaferInternet4EU Awards participants for their commitment, their enthusiasm and hard work, as well as the jury members for fulfilling a difficult task in selecting the finalists of the contest. She encouraged parents not to feel overwhelmed by new technologies, but instead to talk to their children, to set rules guaranteeing their online safety, and to ensure that they have a life outside of the digital space. She also called upon teachers to create new ways of learning, to inform their students of the dangers found online, and to equip them with critical thinking skills. As for the young people present, they should not be afraid to speak up during this day of the Forum; to talk about what they want, what they need, and what they fear. We must all work with one aim: to create a digital Europe based on mutual respect, solidarity, inclusion and freedom. We have more work ahead of us.

#### #SaferInternet4EU Awards winners

After this introduction, Claire Bury introduced the finalists of the #SaferInternet4EU Awards, showing a [compilation video of all of the finalists' projects](#), before announcing the winners in all three categories:

- In the **youth** category, the [students of the high school of Tichero](#), in Greece, won the contest. They have developed a quiz app called "Stay Safe Online", available in Greek, English, German and French, targeted at students aged 10 and above, which aims to encourage critical thinking, positive online behaviour and online safety. The jury commended their work and, in particular, the multilingual feature. As category winner, the students will receive a mentoring/training opportunity to develop the best practice at national or regional level, working with experts in the online safety field.
- In the **teachers** category, Slovenian teacher [Nina Jelen](#) won first prize for her "Travelling Around the Virtual World" project, which consisted of turning her classroom into a virtual world. She used creativity and games to promote positive online behaviours among elementary school pupils and to raise awareness about the risks of inappropriately using the internet. The jury congratulated her on her creativity and the use of a wide range of resources. As category winner, Nina will receive a professional development opportunity, delivered within the framework of the Future Classroom Lab (FCL) course programme for 2018/2019.
- In the **organisations** category, Belgian organisations [Gezinsbond and Child Focus](#) won first place for their "Safely Online" programme, a set of tools and trainings developed to educate parents about the safe use of new media, to protect their children from harmful digital behaviour. This programme targets, in particular, socially disadvantaged parents and, through their programme, they have reached over 5,000 parents to date. The judges commended the two organisations on their excellent collaboration, and on their commitment to provide accessible, practical information

for parents, helping them to address a wide range of risks in creative and inventive ways. As category winner, they will receive a financial incentive of up to 10,000 EUR to scale up the best practice (in the form of translation/localisation/dissemination support or similar).



**Winners of the #SaferInternet4EU Awards**  
(from left to right: Students of the High School of Tichero – Nina Jelen – Gezinsbond and Child Focus)

The other finalists were then invited on stage to receive a token of congratulations for their work from the Commissioner, as follows:

Youth category:

- 2nd place: Lili LeiBer, [Cyber-Bullying Game](#)
- 3rd place: Lorcan Tuohy, [My Digital Citizen Pledge](#)

Teacher category:

- 2nd place: Rose-Marie Farinella, [False Information Hunters from the age of ten](#)
- 3rd place: Marta Turlinska and Eduard Ivinski, [Robot SID](#)

Organisation category:

- 2nd place: Deutsche Telekom, [Teachtoday](#)
- 3rd place: The Diana Award, [Be Strong Online](#)

#### Q&A session with #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors



**Commissioner Mariya Gabriel with the #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors**  
(from left to right: Andrey Novakov, Harry McCann, Commissioner Gabriel, Anna Maria Corazza Bildt and Professor Sonia Livingstone)

Following on from the awards ceremony, Commissioner Gabriel was joined on stage by four #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors:

- Anna Maria Corazza Bildt, MEP
- Andrey Novakov, MEP
- Harry McCanna, young Irish entrepreneur
- Professor Sonia Livingstone, London School of Economics and Political Science

Commissioner Gabriel opened the Q&A session by thanking the #SaferInternet4EU Ambassadors for being there, and reaffirming her strong commitment to work together in order to achieve safer and better online experiences for children and young people. She emphasised the important role of the Ambassador as communicators, allowing the campaign to reach even more citizens, at all levels – local, national, regional and European.

The first question she asked the panellists was about the biggest challenge they've encountered in creating a safer and better online environment.

Andrey Novakov recalled how, in the online world, everything is on a large scale: there are no small countries or small cities anymore, no remote areas, and no more boundaries... indeed, the only boundaries which exist now are in our minds. As a new father, he cares about creating a better internet and believes adults have a great responsibility to ensure that this happens. In his opinion, we cannot prevent the publication of harmful content online; it will always be there. What we can do, however, is to educate the younger generations on how to protect themselves. In his opinion, the biggest challenge is that the harmful phenomena taking place online are not new, they existed before – things such as bullying and harassment, but the way in which they are spread are new.

Professor Sonia Livingstone's biggest challenge as an Ambassador is that of ensuring that, in this field, evidence informs policy and practice. As many online issues can create some kind of panic, research-based arguments can calm the discussion around these, and guarantee proportionate and contextually-relevant policy and practice. We need to maximise the positive opportunities for children and young people, and minimise the harm and challenges. She also referred to the fact that the EU Kids Online network is continuing its work out in the field, collecting more data on the latest risks and challenges faced by children in Europe including questions of cyber hate, extremism, privacy, data protection, and the Internet of Things (IoT). She called upon stakeholders present to follow up with the research teams in their respective countries. Professor Livingstone also commented on the challenges of the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation), and the importance of getting the evidence and children's voice from the very start of any process.

According to Harry McCann, the challenge of a safer internet is important, since one third of the people online are young people and unfortunately, they are often left out of the discussion. Technology is not going anywhere, and this fact should not be denied or ignored any longer. Education is key in this process.

The second question the Commissioner asked the Ambassadors was more action-oriented: faced with these challenges, what can or should we do?

Andrey Novakov responded that the issue is on the agenda at the European Parliament, and positive steps are being taken every day. He mentioned, in particular, the harsh consequences of fake news, and believes that the people who work every day to debunk false pieces of information should communicate more visibly to systematically explain things, with particular reference to the workings of the European Union. If not, this could create a vacuum where people can give their own interpretations of objective facts and those that shout loudest are heard most, regardless of the veracity of what they are saying. The Commissioner echoed him by remarking that critical thinking concepts were well represented

the #SaferInternet4EU Awards entries, and also mentioned the first European Media Literacy Week, which will take place in March 2019.

Anna Maria Corazza Bildt commented on the fact that the day also marked the celebration of Universal Children's Day. As part of the day, Eurochild and UNICEF had conducted a large-scale survey to determine the Europe young people want, which received 38,000 responses. On the question on what were the main concerns for children, a frequent response was violence and, especially, violence on the net. The European Commission has been looking closely on issues around cyberbullying, mobbing, grooming, fake news, and sextortion. As such, the EC has been working with the internet community to say this is illegal, and that industry has a responsibility to invest in the most innovative ways and means to identify, report, remove and - where not possible to remove - to block. The technologies exist, and industry must do more in this respect.

Professor Livingstone commented on the fact that we need to mainstream children's rights in all the organisations which are producing the regulations, and in the businesses which are designing the technologies. She referred also to the Council of Europe's recent recommendation with [guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment](#).

Harry McCann called upon industry to play a greater role in designing solutions to protect young people online, but equally all stakeholders must be involved in online safety. He insisted that parents must be equipped with the right tools and the right information to parent in the 21st century.

In summing up, Commissioner Gabriel asked the four #Saferinternet4EU Ambassadors to give a final piece of advice on how to stay safe and empowered online.

Andrey Novakov commented that #SaferInternet4EU today means a better world for our kids tomorrow. Funding is available but the EC now needs ideas from all stakeholders; working together is the key to overcome the problems.

Anna Maria Corazza Bildt stated that the challenge, as policy makers, is to find the right balance between internet freedom, internet security and internet privacy.... we are not there yet, but together we can make it. We also need to empower young people to protect themselves online.

Professor Livingstone commented that there is a huge diversity online and we should respect that, and empower people to feel confident in their own decisions.

Harry McCann commented that education is key for every stakeholder to ensure that they can be safe and responsible online, and that they need to be provided with the information and tools to help them achieve this.

## Deep dive sessions

The first part of the afternoon was given over to a series of highly interactive "deep dive" sessions. Through detailed discussion, debate and practical exercises, Forum attendees had the opportunity to explore issues around sexting, data privacy and deep fakes, learn more about online challenges and youth-led initiatives, and understand more about the reporting mechanisms for child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Forum participants were able to attend two of six sessions. The essence of some of the discussion emerging from these sessions is captured in the summary reports below.

### Sexting

**Workshop leaders:** Nel Broothaerts, Child Focus/Belgian Safer Internet Centre and Mattias De Paep, Theater O'Kontreir



*Deep dive session on sexting*

In this deep dive session, Nel Broothaerts of Child Focus (the Belgian Safer Internet Centre (SIC)) presented the [sexting.be project](#), which seeks to raise awareness among young people about the risks associated with sexting. As this topic is quite difficult to address with an audience of teenagers, as part of a suite of resources, the Belgian SIC has developed a theatre play in collaboration with Theater O'Kontreir. Entitled "[Sex thing](#)", the key message is not to tell young people that sending sexual pictures and texts is bad, but is rather to raise awareness of keeping any pictures received confidential, thus aiming to combat the phenomena sometimes referred to as "secondary sexting".

The project was launched two years ago, reaching 70 schools in Flanders this year alone. Performed in Dutch, the play has been translated to French, and the team is hoping to translate it to other languages in the future. It replicates young people's ways of seeing and talking, and has a confrontational, "in-your-face" style, causing young people to laugh at in the beginning, before reactions gradually shift as the play unfolds.

Following this initial scene setting, there then followed a performance of five extracts from the play, with English subtitles displayed on screen behind the actors. The basic premise is that, Anna, the play's main character, shows up uninvited to a high school reunion to challenge her peers' views on, and engagement in, secondary sexting by recounting her own personal experience. Through spoken word and music, the story unfolds to reveal that, following a

playground bet between a group of male friends, Anna is befriended by one and develops an intense emotional attachment with a boy over text. As her feelings grow, and she thought she knew and could trust the boy, she sends him a topless photograph of herself. When this photograph is subsequently shared, Anna's world falls apart as she is tormented by her peers as she walks the school hallways, always questioning who has seen it. When her neighbour tells her parents what has happened in a doorstep conversation, her suffering becomes greater still, leading her to stop eating in an attempt to become invisible, and ultimately leading to her contemplating suicide. The concluding scene shows Anna confronting those who contributed to her situation with a photo of her naked breasts, as she regains control within the situation with the powerful words:

*I have the right to show them.  
Where, when and to whom I want.  
You do not. You do not. You do not.  
But I do.*

The play is extremely hard-hitting and the language is shocking at times, while the performance aspects encourage the audience to contribute to Anna's torment and goading before realisation of the true impact of such situations sets in.

Following the performance, the two actors, Mattias De Paep and Nel Broothaerts hosted a Q&A session with the audience, during which the following points were raised,

The play has been presented predominantly in schools, but also in other settings, such as football clubs and other venues where young people gather. Before writing the play, the Belgian SIC had carried out some research, and Theater O'Kontreir worked alongside the SIC for a significant time to get an in-depth understanding of the issues, and the best ways of addressing them with a young audience.

The target age for the play is approximately 13-14 years and upwards, as evidence shows that this seems to be the age when most of these cases happen. It can be more difficult to deliver the play to younger audience because of the harsh language and fast pace of the play.

The reactions from the audience are all different, depending on factors such as whether they are in the city or the countryside, age, ethnicity, religion, and so on. The play has frequently been delivered to single-sex audiences, and also been adapted and delivered to young people with special educational needs.

Sometimes adults (teachers and parents) are initially concerned about the delivery of the play, particularly because of the strong language used. However, they soon realise that it is a good way to deliver messages to children, in a way which will resonate with them.

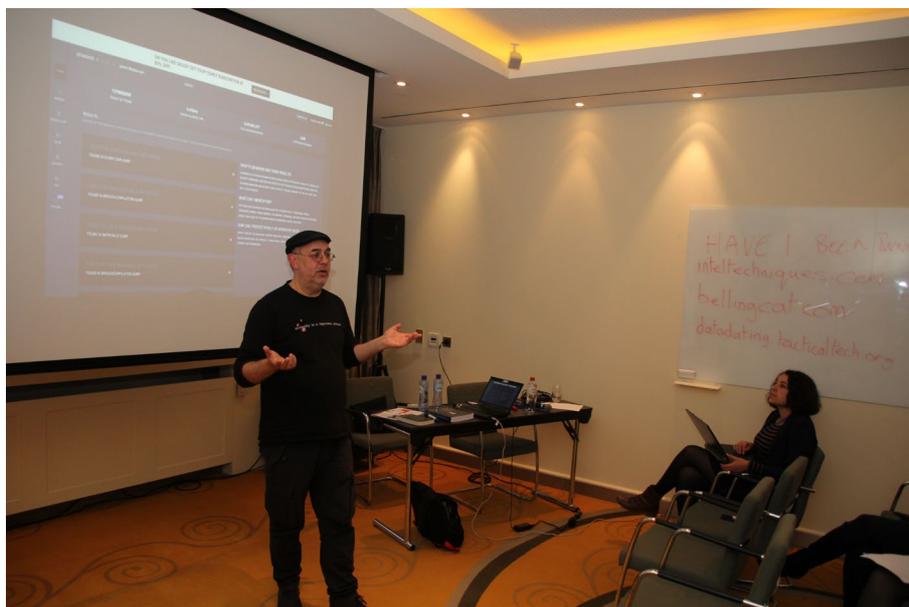
Some teachers recognised that, after the delivery of the play, they learnt about different sexting situations which had occurred within the school community that they were previously completely ignorant of. The idea is that, following the play, teachers are the ones that engage in follow-up discussions as they know their students and are therefore better able to communicate the message to them. The Belgian SIC aims to support them in this process, helping teachers to know how to better address these issues, and helping schools to be more conscious about which policies they have in place in case a similar incident happens. Educational resources on sexting are also provided. The success of the project seems to be as a result of the relevance and frequency of this phenomenon in schools. Sometimes, the team gets feedback on the follow-up conversations between teachers and students. In other cases, the Belgian SIC tries to follow up and support parents and schools on how to work on these issues at different levels, which is extremely important.

Asked if the play could have a “re-victimisation” effect, the panel said it is something which they have talked about, but they have also heard of victims recognising themselves in this play and feeling empowered by it.

Asked about male cases of sexting, the panel responded that they are quite common as well, and they feel like the play adapts to both genders. The writer explained that, when conducting research for the play, he frequently found that the blame is placed on the girl for sharing the pictures in the first place, and not so much on the boys or crowd that shares it. The culture of “victim shaming” therefore needs to be addressed also.

## Data privacy

**Workshop leader:** Chris Pinchen, The Privacy Agency



**Deep dive session on data privacy**

In this deep dive session on data privacy, Chris Pinchen, founder of The Privacy Agency and expert on surveillance, censorship and privacy issues, introduced the participants to different Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) tools with which they can assess the safety of their personal data online. Following their expression of interest in attending this deep dive session as part of the Safer Internet Forum registration process, Chris had asked the participants' permission to research them online. The stated purpose was to discuss the findings during the session, in order to raise awareness for the issue of data privacy and, as Chris revealed during the session, to see whether the feeling of possibly being observed would change the participants' online behaviour. The session itself, however, did not focus on the results of Chris' search, but instead was designed to enable participants to research their own information online, using OSINT tools.

For this, Chris provided specific tools, such as the website [www.haveibeenpwned.com](http://www.haveibeenpwned.com) where participants could check if their email address had been affected by any data breaches or dumps, [www.pipl.com](http://www.pipl.com) to find their own or other peoples' personal profiles online, or [www.tinfoleak.com](http://www.tinfoleak.com) which provides extensive profiles of Twitter users. These are just a few tools that can be used to access data which is public, but usually difficult to access and bundle, even without having advanced ICT or programming knowledge. More resources and information on this can be found in the book "Open Source Intelligence Technique" written by International Privacy Consultant and former FBI Cyber Crimes Task Force member Michael Bazzell, and recommended by Chris.

To exemplify how personal data can be gathered online, Chris performed a data search on himself, to illustrate how the participants could carry out their own search at home.

Furthermore, to outline the implications of such searches, he introduced the example of [Bellingcat](http://Bellingcat.com). This online investigation team discovered that the people who poisoned Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury, UK, in March 2018, were Russian spies, by only using information that, while not necessarily easy to find, is freely available on the web.

Similarly, Doxxing, the practice of finding and purposefully exposing sensitive personal information of specific individuals publicly, can have severe implications for peoples' lives. For

example, this practice led to the exposure of telephone numbers, home addresses, and other information during the #GamerGate harassment campaign against female gamers or, in the case of Christine Blasey Ford, as a reaction to her testimony against then US Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, eventually forcing her out of her home and work place.

Moreover, Chris illustrated the dangers of data trafficking and underlined the difference between publicly available data and the personal data that is held by data brokers, often without the explicit knowledge of the internet user. Specifically, he used the example of the project "[The Data Brokers](#)" by the Tactical Technology Collective. In this project, data profiles of real people who signed up for different dating websites were auctioned to the public. The Tactical Technology Collective purchased this data from a data broker that sells dating websites, including real user profiles and their data. This is possible since users who sign up for such websites, by accepting the terms and conditions, often (unknowingly) agree that, in case the platform they sign up for is sold, their data is sold along with it. In addition, websites that use plugins, such as for Google Maps, also pass on the personal data of the users to these websites.

After this introduction to the use of Open Source Intelligence and the possible misuse of private data online, participants were eager to know how they can protect themselves against the abuse of their personal data. Chris provided answers to this, which were, on the one hand, related to our personal online behaviour, and on the other hand to systemic circumstances.

Regarding personal behaviour, it was suggested to use VPNs (virtual private networks) whenever possible, to keep social media accounts private, or to create false accounts for platforms where data breaches or brokering seem likely, and to not log into websites or apps by linking your social media accounts to them. These decisions, however, are always a result of the personal weighing up of risks and benefits, based on the individual's own assessment, which, in the best case, should be based on thorough research, and reading and understanding of, for example, the terms and conditions of websites.

However, Chris also pointed out that the former assumption that the human is the weakest link in the data protection chain does not hold true any longer as, for example, data hacks at root level show which data can be directly extracted from secure platforms. In times where data is a currency, these risks can hardly be mitigated without changing the business model of the internet. If a data breach has occurred or a user simply wants their data removed from the web, it is currently necessary to contact each service individually and ask for removal. The GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) might help with simplifying this process within Europe, however, in cases of companies outside of Europe, or where consent for the usage and brokerage of data has been given, the regulation is irrelevant.

Finally, participants wondered how all of the concerns they had voiced regarding data privacy and the protection of personal data online could be communicated to children and young people, in order to create awareness. This, it was agreed, can only be done through education about the issues. Accordingly, training programmes are currently being developed by the likes of Bellingcat as well as by Chris himself, in collaboration with schools.

In conclusion, the deep dive session on data privacy provided participants with a plethora of examples on how OSINT can be used to access personal information, raising awareness of the potential risks that come with internet use. At the same time, the session provided useful tools to analyse one's own personal data profile online. By allowing the participants to change their perspective and take on the role and mindset of online investigators and data exploiters, the session enabled participants to reflect on their own privacy behaviour online.

## The journey of a report of child sexual abuse material (CSAM)

**Workshop leaders:** Fred Langford (IWF) and Peter-Paul Urlaub (eco) on behalf of INHOPE (the International Association of Internet Hotlines)



*Deep dive session on the journey of a report of child sexual abuse material*

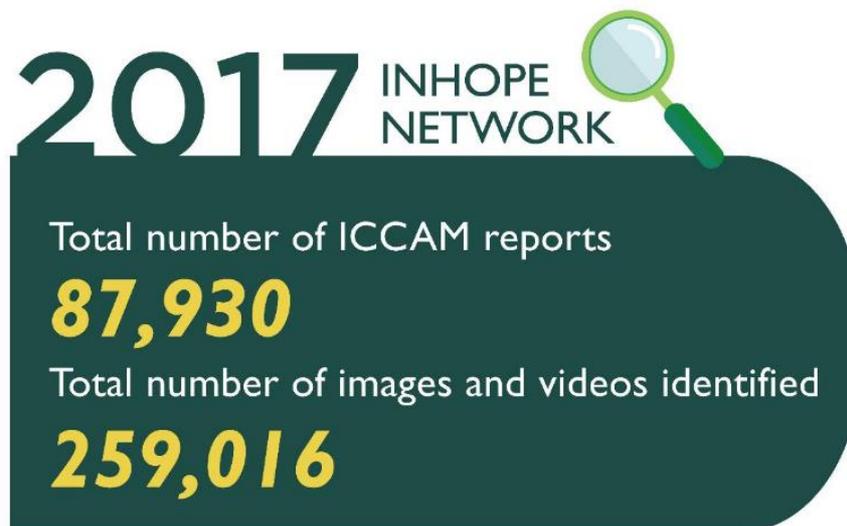
INHOPE and its extensive network of member hotlines work to eliminate online Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM). It is critical to the work of the hotlines that members of the public who stumble upon illegal content report it and not ignore it. The consequence of not reporting illegal content are numerous and impact victims: CSAM remains on the internet and is not taken down. This means that every time that this material is viewed by anyone anywhere in the world, the victim depicted is re-victimised. Indeed survivors of recorded child sexual abuse say that knowing it is online for anyone to see continues to impact their lives for many years after the abuse has stopped. The significance of reporting illegal content is vital in helping survivors of child sexual abuse reducing the repeated trauma they could suffer, as well as keeping the internet safe for all legitimate users. This deep dive session therefore looked at the journey of a report of child sexual abuse material.



The public can make a report to a hotline in the country of their residence or visit the INHOPE website for a list of hotlines to which they can submit a report. *“Most of the hotlines have standardised questions that are asked whilst reporting illegal content. When a report is submitted to eco (German Hotline), the reporter needs to provide only the location of the content, for example, a URL. Additionally it helps if they can provide generic information like a description of what they saw, the reason for reporting it and of course how they came across the content. This information is vital for the analysts at each hotline”* said Peter-Paul Urlaub, a consultant at eco’s complaints office and INHOPE Board Member.

Once a hotline receives a report, there are several steps to be followed before the CSAM is removed from the internet. The hotline assesses the report received and identifies the country of hosting. The hotline then informs the national Law Enforcement Agency (LEA) and Internet Service Provider (ISP). This information is also entered into ICCAM. ICCAM (I see Child Abuse Material) is a secure software solution to collect, exchange and categorise reports on child sexual abuse material. ICCAM is used by INHOPE hotline members and INTERPOL. Within ICCAM, hotlines need to assess CSAM within several parameters including age and gender. In case the material is hosted in a different country to that in which it was reported, the report is transferred to the hosting country for assessment via ICCAM. The hotline in the hosting country takes the appropriate action and notifies the LEA and the relevant ISP accordingly.

In 2017, the INHOPE network of hotlines identified over 259,000 images and video. This alarming and growing number calls for more robust actions from stakeholders across the world. Hotlines in Canada (Cybertip.ca) and the UK (Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)) have deployed web crawlers to scour the internet for CSAM based on hashing technology. Large companies like Facebook, Google and Twitter also use their own hashing technology to combat illegal content within their networks.



*“The internet is continually changing and it is important to stay ahead of the curve. Web crawling has been implemented to quickly rid the web of known illegal content however, something new is always going to come around the corner and we need to adapt quickly to continue the fight against illegal content being distributed. In 2017, 82 per cent of the content identified by the INHOPE network depicted girls and the victims are getting younger”* said Fred Langford, Deputy CEO of the IWF and President of INHOPE.

Combatting CSAM requires action from everyone – including the general public. Therefore report it, don’t ignore it!

## Online challenges

**Workshop leader:** Will Gardner, Childnet International (part of the UK Safer Internet Centre)

**Invited speaker:** Geert Reynders, T.I.M. Foundation



**Deep dive session on online challenges**

Will Gardner introduced the session by highlighting the need to equip children with the skills they need to be able to manage online challenges. He mentioned some challenges that are positive in nature, such as the no make-up selfie challenge and the ice bucket challenge, and then asked the audience whether they knew of any challenges. Answers included the beer challenge (NekNominate), the Blue Whale challenge, the choking game, online pain challenges, Momo and the Tidepod challenge. A [BBC3 video](#) was then shown which depicted three young YouTubers being made aware of the impact of what they post online, after being confronted by the mother of a child who died as a result of the pass-out challenge.

After the video, Will reflected on the importance of raising awareness about the dangers associated with these challenges, but he also emphasised that a big question remains - namely, how to talk about these challenges? The problem being that, by raising awareness about their dangers, you may also involuntarily create interest in them. He also added that even though raising awareness is important, teaching children how to respond to these types of challenges is also necessary.

Geert Reynders then introduced T.I.M., which stands for *Tegen Internet Misstanden* (Against Internet Abuses), and is also the name of Geert Reynders' son, who lost his life playing the choking game in May 2017 (see also the [keynote session](#)). Geert referred to the current and future plans of the Foundation and its drive to educate parents about the potential dangers of online challenges and to raise awareness about them. He mentioned an important problem, namely that talking about online challenges remains "a big taboo". He also referred to the personal experiences of his family and he said that they "still have lots of questions" about what happened to their son, Tim: "We still don't know why he did it or why he filmed it. Did he want to share it?"

The Foundation has been doing some research about the types of online challenges out there. In its opinion, most are funny and probably harmless, but still none of the videos encouraging children to take part in the challenges explain or show what can go wrong.

New challenges come out, while others remain popular, but one common characteristic of all of these challenges is that they always make children go a bit further. Peer pressure plays an important role here.

As regards the Foundation, Geert mentioned that in several countries around the world there are similar initiatives, usually launched by parents who have lost their children because of online challenges. As a result, Geert believes that more attention is being given to the topic and new supportive websites and resources are being created. These websites usually contain general information about the latest challenges, information targeting parents (how to warn children, how to talk to them) and warning them about dangerous challenges; information targeted at children including warning messages (Watch out! These sites can be dangerous). These websites also usually include informative materials to download, such as leaflets, while some of the materials also target educators. Apart from offering information via their websites, some organisations also organise sessions in their country, go in to schools to spread the word, and so on. According to Geert, most of these organisations contain scientific-based and medical information because they work closely with professionals in science and health. Some organisations and websites also keep track of the victims around the world. In summary, there are lots of similarities among these organisations, their initiatives and even their websites.

Geert mentioned that, when informing parents, it is very important to limit the amount of information that is presented, so as not to overwhelm them. The aim is that, within a couple of minutes, parents get basic material that can help them to get relevant information and teach them how to cope, how to react, and so on. But, for deeper or more specific information, they should be redirected to other sections, websites or articles. Too much information, especially if it contains technical or difficult jargon, may discourage parents from staying on a website. From Geert's point of view, even terms such as "grooming" and "sexting" are difficult for parents to grasp sometimes.

The T.I.M. Foundation is currently developing a video targeted at parents because they have noticed that people read less and less, and through audiovisual media they may be able to engage more people. Lastly, Geert mentioned that the T.I.M. website was launched the day before SIF, and will be translated into English soon. Geert made a special call to better register severe and fatal accidents caused by challenges. He thinks that it is likely that some cases registered as "suicide victims" are not really victims of suicide, but instead are victims of online challenges and games. It is therefore important that the statistics reflect this.

Questions and comments were then invited from the audience:

#### ***How do children come in contact with online challenges?***

Geert mentioned that they knew about YouTube, but they are not sure how Tim became interested in online challenges. He wonders how children are given these ideas, and thinks that challenges are probably being shared within communities which young people frequent. Geert also wonders what will trigger children to listen and think twice.

#### ***What do you think motivates children to get involved in these challenges?***

Children get involved either because they want to try new things, or it could also be because of the impact of smartphones and peer pressure. Nowadays, it is possible for children to film what they do and, in that way, show others that they are brave. In a way, they feel that they need to share these challenges with peers. Adolescents want to give a good impression to their friends, and that is a main driver for experimenting with online challenges. Another explanation is the fact that, nowadays, information is far more accessible and easy to find. In the case of the choking game, Geert believes that the motivations are rather different to other challenges. This "game" existed before the internet, and because of the sensations it causes, people can get addicted to it. If children play in groups, the risks may somehow be

lower but, if they try it on their own, things can go wrong, as in the case of Tim. It is important to differentiate between hype, a popular challenge, and the ones where people can get addicted, such as the choking game. Some challenges can be dangerous, but not all.

#### **What is the role of industry in tackling these problems?**

Geert thinks that the industry is starting to “pick it up” on their responsibilities, although more is needed from them. For instance, the Foundation has reported between 600-700 videos to YouTube containing the choking game, but only a third of them have been removed so far. He commented: “I think that the industry is taking it relatively seriously. This is something, but you have to report it”.

#### **How are others reacting to your initiatives? What has been the response of parents when you talk to them about these issues?**

Geert said that parents are reacting positively, and they seem thankful. They comment that the internet is like a blackbox for them. For them, it is important to get this type of information, but there are still many parents who do not make the effort to find it: they think it only happens to others. They feel the need for it, but they do not spend (much) time searching or consulting information on such issues. Maybe they don't have the time, or the information is too difficult for them to grasp. In general, the Foundation has observed some resistance to talk about these issues openly in schools. Some schools, like Tim's school, have reacted positively, but others have reacted less positively, sometimes out of fear of making children aware of these challenges or giving children ideas that could be dangerous. Will Gardner commented that it is, indeed, a big challenge to find the right balance between giving enough information and protecting children from these types of risks. He reflected on the fact that you want to combat something, but you do not want to mention its name. How do we do it? Geert had a strong opinion about this and he and his family are convinced that they should talk about it openly.

#### **How many people have taken dangerous online challenges?**

Geert mentioned that evidence suggests that 12 per cent of young people aged 10-16 have participated in dangerous online challenges.

#### **At what age should we start talking to young people?**

Geert replied that he is aware of a nine-year-old child who died because of an online challenge. As such, he thinks that we should start talking to children about the issues at the age of 9 or 10. He mentioned that the Foundation is currently designing an animation campaign to reach this younger target group. When asked if anything else is needed, Geert responded that more research in this area is essential.

#### **Is anyone sponsoring these ideas? Which kinds of companies could promote these videos and campaigns?**

Geert explained that this hasn't been a priority for the Foundation yet, but this is certainly an aspect they are starting to consider. A key issue is that parents are very difficult to reach through the educational system – although they are invited in for talks, attendance is typically very low. Targeting parents as employees of companies may prove more successful.

#### **Group discussion**

The deep dive session concluded with a short time for group discussion. Will Gardner asked the audience to reflect, for five minutes, on the following question: If we are talking with young people about online challenges, what are the key messages you would want to give? And how should we do it? Responses included teaching children to say no or to listen to their gut feeling; acknowledging that children need to take risks as part of the natural development process, but making them aware of possible consequences; and using popular social influencers to raise awareness. The BIK Youth Panel also gave their input, which can be summarised as follows:

- Raising awareness is a good idea but we should not ban online challenges because otherwise it may become “the next cool thing”. It would have the opposite effect.
- We need to explain that there are both positive and negative aspects, and you need to explain how dangerous this can be.
- What can work is sharing personal experiences about the challenges in order for kids to understand the consequences.
- It is alright to have your own opinion; you do not need to do something in order to be cool. *“I personally have done challenges in the past just to be cool.”* An idea would be to work with the witnesses. *“They should not be pretending it's funny, because usually they are pretty stupid”.* It is important to mobilise young people who may be witnessing this.
- Ask young people to give messages to other young people. It is better to come out with messages less focused on the risks and negative aspects, but also to discuss your own experiences. Speak to other young people in their own way.

## Deepfakes

**Workshop leader:** Boris Radanović, South West Grid for Learning (SWGfL) (part of the UK Safer Internet Centre)



**Deep dive session on deepfakes**

Boris Radanović opened his deep dive session on deepfakes with a quote by American writer James Patterson: “Assume nothing, question everything”. And indeed, the presentation and videos that ensued were to explain why. Imagine a world in which your face, voice and body can be manipulated on video, just like a puppet – and think about all the ethical implications that come with it.

Deepfake is a combination of “deep learning” and “fake”, and it refers to an artificial intelligence-based image synthesis technique consisting of the combination and superimposition of existing images and videos onto source images or videos. Although deep learning networks are not new (they have been developing for the last 20 years or so), deepfakes have only been in the mainstream since November 2017 when a Reddit user named “deepfakeapp” made the code available freely. In January 2018, the mobile app FakeApp was released, allowing users to create deepfakes more easily still.

Deepfakes are mostly known for being used in creating fake pornographic videos using the faces and voices of female actresses. It is also used in revenge porn. Therefore, it is easy to see how dangerous the implications of this technique can be, which is why pornographic content containing deepfakes has been forbidden by Reddit, Twitter, Pornhub and others, and the Reddit deepfakeapp user has been suspended. Yet, new networks and forums constantly emerge, despite the repetitive crackdowns.

As it is deep learning, the machine needs training: it needs to learn how to combine face A and face B. As it learns, it gets better and better. This process can last from 48 hours to a couple of weeks, depending on the quality of the initial material. The computer uses thousands of images from both faces, and then makes a third where it combines the imagery. The user then picks the good ones apart from the bad ones.

There is also another process whereby the user no longer creates a fake video using a target person, but rather uses the mouse button to control the character's movements and facial expressions. This technique was used for the widely known [fake speech of Barack Obama](#), created by Jonah Peretti and Jordan Peele, which took ten days to make.

Of course, deepfakes do not perfectly mimic reality (yet). But, as Boris put it, *“do not notice how bad it is; imagine how good it can be”*. Because with the constant progress of technology, it is easy to imagine that these little flaws that alert us that what we are watching is not real, will soon be fixed.

Another mind-boggling [video of Princess Leia](#) was shown, where the screen is split in two: the top clip is the original footage from *Rogue One*, where “classic” computer-generated imagery was used to recreate young Princess Leia’s face (as such, it took a lot of time and money). The bottom clip shows another Princess Leia, this time made using the deepfake method, which is a faster, easier and cheaper process. As the creator put it, *“despite the possible drop in quality, keep in mind this fake was done on a standard desktop PC and completed in the time it takes to watch an episode of the Simpsons”*. It is easy to imagine the levels of realism that we could reach using the right resources and by investing more time. More and more studios are investing heavily in deep learning technology to scan actors and use them in movies.

Although, most of the time, deepfakes are used to permute faces, the same thing can be done with body movements, as shown in this [“Everybody Dance Now”](#) video. You might think that the last authentic and unique thing we have left is our voice, but this part too is now subject to manipulation. In 2016, Adobe announced Voco, software with which you record a sentence of your voice, and then use a “Photoshop-like tool” to make it say anything you like. However, Adobe has not gone public with the app: did it kill the programme, or did it go somewhere else? No one knows but, as always on the internet, someone else found similar tools to do the same thing. Boris made the audience listen to a series of sentences pronounced by famous people, especially political leaders. He insisted that it does not consist in a mere combination of sentences already pronounced, like we can sometimes see on social media, but rather the software scans the original voice and then uses it to pronounce anything. Thanks to deep learning, the voice goes up and down, like a real human voice.

Besides the technical achievements, the ethical implications of deepfakes are definitely a cause for concern: when the man who initiated the spread of deepfakes in the mainstream was asked why he did it, he replied that it is so stupidly easy that it would be wrong not to share it with the world. Therefore, a reasonable hypothesis would be that this person was not the first to create deepfakes, but he was the first to make them public. If this assumption is true, could deepfakes be developed in a much more sophisticated way by governments and companies?

Many organisations are taking steps to try to prevent the rise of deepfakes: the American government has invested \$68 million in that sense, and many people are working on deepfake-detecting apps... but it seems that this won't be enough to counter the spread of this phenomenon. The consequence is that, “to see is not to believe anymore”. Deepfakes are the continuation of fake news: they will create confusion, people will be able to discredit some videos proving they did something wrong by saying that it's deepfakes, and so on.

A member of the audience asked about the responsibility of apps and platforms in containing the spread of deepfakes. Boris replied that it is not a question for social media platforms or governments only, but a question for society in general. There will always be someone willing to do it, just because they can.

Another question concerned whether we can still trust videos, which, up until today, were often considered to be the ultimate proof. Boris answered that he questions everything he sees online, even governmental material, since everybody working on deepfakes believes that many organisations can do it bigger and better.

Boris was also asked about the artificial intelligence (AI) tools developed to identify and counter deepfakes. He responded that the real question here is whether we should let AI fight AI? There is no right answer at this point, but even if it was possible to develop a tool to differentiate between what is real and what is not, we would be confronted with the same psychological limitations as we currently see with fake news. For example, if someone shows you a video of a politician you hate, doing something damaging to their reputation which subsequently turns out to be fake, would you be inclined to accept the fact that it is a fake?

Another member of the audience asked about legal provisions on this matter. Here, the problem is that legislating on new technology-related matters is always a challenge, since the law you pass tomorrow may already be obsolete in the near future.

## Youth

**Workshop leaders:** Barbara Buchegger, ÖIAT/Saferinternet.at/Austrian Safer Internet Centre and the BIK youth panellists



**Youth deep dive session**

Following a series of online webinars during October and November 2018, and the face-to-face BIK Youth Panel that took place on the day preceding SIF at the Google premises in Brussels (see also [Annex 1](#)), 18 young participants prepared a content-rich deep dive session which attracted a great deal of attention from SIF 2018 participants. The deep dive session ran twice, for one hour each, with the same general structure. The venue was divided into six topical sections for the participants to form discussion groups, each moderated by the youth participants.

The youth panellists opened the floor with an introduction to their overall theme and stated that they would utilise methods of critical thinking to help adult participants “*conceptualise and understand the mindset of a teenager.*” An energiser activity followed the short introduction, where everyone in the room was asked to make personal statements regarding social media use, then the other participants stood up to show their agreement. This activity shed some light on very striking facts regarding social media usage trends. To the question “*Are you on social media every day?*”, the vast majority of the room stood up to show their agreement while the statement “*I act differently in real life than I do online*” received only a few agreement reactions from the adults. Other statements such as “*I use social media platforms to educate myself and get in touch with groups I am interested in*” or “*I am aware of all my privacy settings on all my social media accounts*” were able to raise less than half of the participants. This activity also revealed that Snapchat use is more prevalent than Facebook use (especially among younger people), and most participants do not even know the exact number of followers they have on their social media accounts.

Following the energiser activity, participants were invited to watch a [short video](#) prepared the previous day by the BIK youth panellists to show that they are in control of how they portray themselves and the content they put online. The video was very well received by the participants.

The second half of the deep dive session was dedicated to discussion groups, with participants rotating every ten minutes:

- The discussion group on “How digital devices impact young people's lives” touched upon the negative aspects of technological advancements and the problems faced by younger generations.
- The “Safety” group discussed the state of education on online safety and how it could be improved.
- The group discussing “Article 13 (Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market)” talked about how changes in legislation might impact upon the social media industry in the future.
- The “Fake news” group identified five criteria to determine whether a piece of news is real or fake.
- The “GDPR and children's rights” group concluded that the legislation is too complex for young people to understand, and mitigation of this situation requires a simplification of the legislation.
- The “Creators” group talked about influencers (Instagrammers, YouTubers, and so on) and acknowledged that while they are entertaining, they may also make youngsters feel bad about themselves for not having the “perfect life” which many portray through their online presence.

A short conclusion speech brought the session to a close, with the youth reiterating their messages with the statement “...stop presenting a life that is not yours and start living.”

## The impact of technology on society

### Speakers:

- Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga, University of Vienna
- Noa Jansma, @dearcatcallers

**Chair:** Debbie Plein, Luxembourg Safer Internet Centre

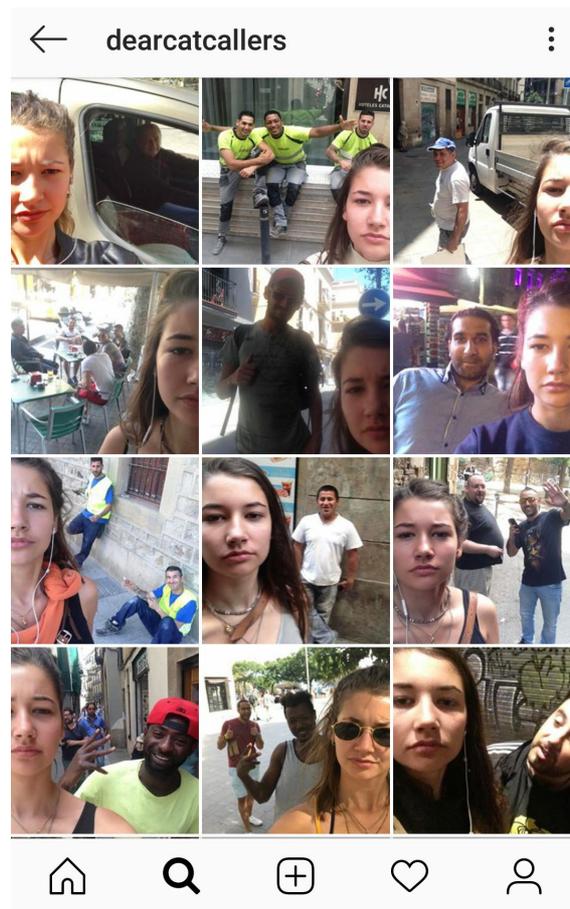


*Noa Jansma presented the @dearcatcallers project, placing a focus on street harassment*

The closing session was dedicated to the impact of technology on society. Two speakers gave their insights in this regard: Noa Jansma, creator of the @dearcatcallers Instagram account denouncing street harassment, and Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga of the University of Vienna, who explained the concept of second screening.

Noa Jansma explained that she has been a victim of street harassment ever since she was 12. She has always struggled with it, and realised that when it comes to catcalling, there is a strange power ratio because the men yelling at a woman can say anything they like, but not the woman being harassed. Like many women, this made her feel like an object. She started talking about it with friends: all of her female friends were dealing with the same thing, but she noticed that she was still getting questions concerning the situation, the time of day, what she was wearing, and so on. She also realised that her male friends, because they had never been confronted with this phenomenon, had real difficulty in understanding the issues. So she decided to show them. The problem is, as a woman, if you walk down the street with a male friend, the harassment suddenly stops. Therefore, the only way to show men what street harassment feels like was through pictures.

One day, as Noa was on the train, some men began shouting things at her, while broadcasting it on Snapchat. That is when she decided to respond in the same way, to fight two sides of the problem: her personal reaction towards it, and her friends' ignorance. Since they had invaded her privacy, she was going to occupy theirs. The main difference being, however, is that she has always asked for the men's consent before taking their pictures (although, according to her, the men never asked why she would take a selfie, and would instead stand proud in the picture). She chose to post them on Instagram, as it is an app widely used among females, and as it gives a good perception of time.



**A screenshot from the @dearcattcallers Instagram account**

The @dearcattcallers account went viral and the comments section became a platform for different groups. Noa said it was moving to see all the stories shared via this platform, and to see that people felt so strongly connected to this issue. One segment of the profile's visitors really identified with her, while the other segment learned about the challenges and prevalence of street harassment, discovering an issue which they previously had no idea about (or at least had only perceived through words). Noa was faced with a crucial question: how would she moderate the discussion? Indeed, although she felt able to moderate she realised that, although everyone has an equal voice, some people have a microphone, and indeed she had a microphone via the platform. As a result, she decided not to delete any comments.

Since its launch, the project has received much international attention and discussion, while the Instagram account gained around 350,000 followers, tens of millions of views, multiple international exhibitions, and is now being used in various teaching programmes.

Additionally, as a result of Noa's work, governments in multiple countries are now discussing how to treat street harassment more seriously, so demonstrating that technology can be a crucial enabler for societal change.

A member of the audience commented that Noa's campaign is very powerful, and asked her how she intends to carry on, and how it can be made more sustainable. Noa responded that she will keep this collection of images on Instagram, to keep the timeframe. For a while, she hoped to be able to hand over the account to other girls so they can tell their own stories of street harassment, but in the end she did not feel comfortable doing so. Equally, when she realised awareness of it had gone global, she also realised that it would be very difficult to let every girl speak. There were also concerns over the veracity truth of everything posted by others (having received obviously fake testimonials and staged pictures), which she feared

would detract from the important messaging of the project. Hence, Noa decided to keep control over her own page, and keep the project running through the hashtag [#dearcatcallers](#).



**Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga addressing the Safer Internet Forum 2018 audience**

Next, Professor Homero Gil de Zúñiga took to the stage to talk about two concepts that are key to understanding the impact of technology on society nowadays: second screening and the “News-Find-Me Perception”.

Second screening is a concept explaining how citizens engage politically on social media nowadays. His study [“\*Second screening politics in the social media sphere: Advancing research on dual screen use in political communication with evidence from 20 countries\*”](#) aims to demonstrate how many citizens today consume live content on TV, or any other screen, while enriching that experience with a second “screen” to interact with that content. Indeed, the results show that 75.4 per cent of the subjects dual screen when watching TV news or political content. Second screening refers to *“a process in which individuals watching television use an additional electronic device or ‘screen’ to access the internet or social network sites to obtain more information about the programme or event they are watching or to discuss it in real time.”* He and his team found that people second screen to expand their knowledge about an issue covered on television, but also to discuss those issues with others on social media. Dual screening news content is a positive predictor of both online and offline political activities: high second screeners have higher levels of political participation and political expression. Younger people second screen more than older people. But, at the same time, people who dual screen tend to change their mind about political and public affairs more often.

Then, Professor Gil de Zúñiga moved on to what he coined the “News-Find-Me Perception” (NFMP), a notion he has developed in the study [“\*Effects of the News-Finds-Me Perception in communication: Social media use implications for news seeking and learning about politics\*”](#). In this, he refers to *“the extent to which individuals believe they can indirectly stay informed about public affairs despite not actively following the news – through general internet use, information received from peers, and connections within online social networks”*.

Indeed, recent research suggests that people have a tendency to turn away from actively seeking information on politics and public affairs on dedicated news platforms, and rather stay informed by what their social circles share with them on social networks. Previous findings indicate that NFMP is associated with lower political knowledge, less consumption of

traditional news overall, and is said to have a compounding effect on voting. The results indicate that more than half of the respondents have the perception that they do not have to actively follow the news to stay informed, a belief that younger people are more likely to hold than older people. People scoring high on the NFMP use social media for news more often than people scoring lower on the NFMP. People scoring low on the NFMP have a stronger interest in politics, a better political knowledge, and vote more frequently than people scoring high on the NFMP.

For Professor Gil de Zúñiga, these issues are examples that can help us reflect on the different levels of how the use of technology and social media can actually have an impact on society, similarly to Noa's activism. In this sense, reading the news, looking for news, and engaging with current topics is a good thing, because it helps us to express ourselves politically, and to check the information. There are also potential issues, however, such as a detachment from politics.

## Closing remarks

**Speaker:** Gail Kent, Director, Directorate Data, DG CONNECT

Gail Kent, Director of the European Commission's Data Directorate in DG CONNECT, took to the stage to reflect on the day. Commenting that the Safer Internet Forum has taken place for 15 consecutive years, she observed that this year's edition had once again been a great success. She noted that the day had been extremely interesting, and hoped that the insight gained will stay with participants long beyond the day itself, encouraging them to reflect on their own behaviours online, and the changes needed, as we transform from an analogue to a digital society. In this context of transformation, working collaboratively is paramount to keeping a safe online space, hence we need to keep the dialogue open to new knowledge.

Gail Kent remarked that she had been impressed by the BIK Youth Panel and, as such, she had every confidence that the future is in good hands. She encouraged the young people present to keep up the good work and continue to make their voices heard. She went on to state that Safer Internet Centres (SICs) have been the backbone of safer internet activities in Europe, and thanked them for their excellent work, affirming that the European Commission will continue to support them. Gail also congratulated the winners of the #SaferInternet4EU Awards, as well as everyone who took part in the contest, reflecting that they deserve admiration and respect for their work. She hopes they will stay active in addressing safer internet issues into the future.

Gail concluded by stating that the [#SaferInternet4EU campaign](#) will continue, the Better Internet for Kids (BIK) portal (at [www.betterinternetforkids.eu](http://www.betterinternetforkids.eu)) remains the one-stop shop for staying updated in the field, and with the next [Safer Internet Day](#) (taking place on Tuesday, 5 February 2019) just around the corner, it is important that all stakeholders as represented at SIF continue to join "Together for a better internet".



## Annex 1: BIK Youth Panel 2018



**The BIK Youth Panel 2018**

18 youth panellists from 15 European countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom) gathered in Brussels to attend the 2018 edition of the BIK Youth Panel and the Safer Internet Forum, taking place 19 and 20 November 2018 respectively. The youth panellists had been working together since October 2018 through a series of online webinars as part of the BIK Youth programme, whereby they had already agreed on the general theme for their deep dive session at the Safer Internet Forum, and on preparing a video to showcase their views.

The youth panellists came together on the morning of Monday, 19 November 2018 at the Google facilities in Brussels. Under the supervision of privacy expert Chris Pinchen, Austrian Safer Internet Centre representative Barbara Buchegger, and members of the BIK Youth Coordination Team, the youth panellists started by defining more precisely the theme of their campaign, thereby agreeing on #MyDigitalSelfAndI.

The discussions continued throughout the morning to fine tune the main theme of the video and its key messages. In doing so, the youth panellists considered the following themes during their discussions:

- You are not alone
- We are the internet
- Safe in digital space
- Social me isn't real me
- I don't feel comfortable posting everything online
- My problems shouldn't be your benefit

The key messages were refined into one single message to be delivered in the video: *"It is normal not wanting to share everything; therefore, you shouldn't compare yourself to others."* Following the general discussion, the participants agreed on the roles they would have in creating the video and discussed how they would divide into groups to cover the work needed. They also discussed how they would set their scene for the deep dive session.

In the afternoon, youth participants divided into two working groups: a video group and a session content group. The group working on the video started with a brainstorming session where they discussed how best to deliver their message and the structure of the video. Their activities continued with the scripting, shooting necessary footage and voice recordings, as

well as editing of the materials for the rest of the day. The content group discussed the format of the deep dive session and agreed on separating the attendees into six discussion tables, moderated by the young participants. The discussion table topics were defined as “How digital devices impact young people's lives”, “Safety”, “Article 13 (Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market)”, “Fake news”, “GDPR and children's rights” and “Creators”.

The following day, the youth participants took an active part in the full agenda of SIF, where they also hosted one of the deep dive sessions and presented the video they had produced. The #MyDigitalSelfAndI campaign received great attention. Many SIF participants showed great interest in the youth panellists' deep dive session and the video they had produced.



**BIK Youth Panel 2018 video - #MyDigitalSelfAndI**

For further information on the BIK Youth Panel, including the [youth participation scenario used in preparing the panel](#), [previous editions of the BIK Youth Panel](#), and an overview of [BIK Youth Ambassadors](#), visit the [Better Internet for Kids \(BIK\) Youth portal](#).

## Annex 2: Participation of the Teachers' Future Classroom Lab (FCL) course



**Teachers participating in the Future Classroom Lab course on digital citizenship**

As part of a training course on digital citizenship held at the Future Classroom Lab (FCL) at European Schoolnet's offices in Brussels, Belgium in the same week as the Safer Internet Forum, 25 teachers from Slovenia, Cyprus, Spain, Slovakia, Portugal, the Czech Republic, and Sweden also attended SIF. Through a number of preparatory workshops and activities, the participants were able to reflect on the topics of SIF in advance, and were also encouraged to engage with the issue using digital tools before, during, and after the Forum.

The first day of the course, 19 November 2018, provided an introduction to the topic of digital citizenship and its connection to the Forum on the following day. First, the participants discussed the vision of the digital citizen and their role as an observer, a networker, or a change-maker. On all of these levels, digital citizenship and online participation is connected to issues of online safety and, especially at a time when popularity of, and access to, online media are ever-growing, it is crucial to raise awareness of the risks and opportunities that digital engagement brings. Particularly considering the growing age range and increasing number of children that have access to smart and portable devices, schools must take an increasingly strategic role in educating the next generation, while also involving the wider community. Therefore, the key topics of the Safer Internet Forum were embedded in the Future Classroom Lab course on digital citizenship for teachers.

These topics included the overarching discussion points of SIF, namely the impact of technology on self-identity and personal relationships, as well as on society. To reflect on this, the participating teachers engaged with questions such as "What is technology?", and on how it affects individuals and their ability to live and work alongside each other. In order to debate these issues in a meaningful way, the course included a session on critical thinking and self-reflection processes, explaining how teachers can use information and analysis to become reflective practitioners in their everyday work, with the help of tools such as teaching logs or learning diaries. To put the newly gained perspectives into practice, the teachers had to complete the first of their daily "challenges", in which the theoretical content of the course was elaborated using digital tools.

The first daily challenge was to reflect on the respective topics of the two deep dive sessions that the teachers had chosen to attend the following day at SIF, using a Mentimeter (an interactive presentation tool) entitled "Waiting for SIF". This exercise showed that, on the one hand, teachers frequently encounter some topics covered at SIF, such as sexting, in their schools. On the other hand, the issue of deep fakes, in particular, was perceived as new and unfamiliar by many teachers, but at the same time was met with curiosity. This included technical aspects, but also the question of how to incorporate such upcoming trends into existing curricula and lesson plans, for example on source criticalness. In addition, it became apparent through the teachers' reflections on Mentimeter that topics such as deep fakes and sexting overlap with other deep dive session topics for many teachers, particularly with that of cyberbullying, and that they are related to the broader topic of online reputation. Finally, a big area of interest was that of data protection and safety, especially in relation to the use of personal data by companies and for targeted (political) advertisement.

Several teachers emphasised that the preparatory workshops of the first FCL course day enhanced their awareness of online safety challenges, and also of the opportunities that digital participation can bring. Finally, the prior engagement with SIF topics increased the teachers' motivation for their participation in the Forum, and several teachers hoped to be inspired on how to raise awareness in their students for many of the deep dive session topics, from sexting to online challenges.

After this successful completion of the first daily challenge, the course participants were introduced to their second challenge, which related to their SIF participation more concretely. Each participant was asked to either tweet or write a blog post about a specific panel or deep dive session that they attended. In order to build or enhance their skills and competences to master this challenge, the teachers attended a session on blogging and social media. In a rather hands-on approach, the participants learnt how digital tools can enhance collaborative work and professional development, using the example of Twitter and school or personal blogs. The former medium is perceived by a large number of teachers as the prime tool to connect with other educators, and thus was directly tested to disseminate FCL course and SIF materials, using the official handles and hashtags of the events.

On 20 November, all 25 teachers attended the Safer Internet Forum at the Crowne Plaza in Brussels. As agreed the day before, the teachers not only engaged with the panels and deep dive sessions at the event, but also shared their impressions and conclusions digitally by tweeting and blogging. This included the re-posting of information given by speakers during the panels, especially from Dr Linda Papadopoulos' keynote presentation on technology and children's development, disseminating the results of the #SaferInternet4EU Awards, and sharing key messages and quotes from the deep dive sessions. Similarly, in their blog posts, the teachers summarised the content of SIF, highlighting the issues that they perceive as most relevant to their work in schools, while also discussing the implications that technological developments can have on free, democratic societies. Moreover, many teachers shared concrete tips and materials on issues such as sexting or online challenges. One of the significant conclusions many teachers underlined was the importance of including the wider school community, and especially parents, in teaching about online safety and digital participation, and to ensure that students feel that their views are taken seriously in this important conversation.

In conclusion, Safer Internet Forum 2018 raised awareness for the challenges and the opportunities brought about by digital technologies, especially for children, who increasingly have access to online tools. For the teachers who participated in SIF as part of the Future Classroom Lab course on digital citizenship, the event provided new perspectives on how to tackle upcoming issues in the classroom, especially through their participation in the deep dive sessions. This was not only true for the technical aspects related to new trends, but the

teachers especially appreciated the bridge built between technology, behavioural sciences, and teaching. Equally, SIF provided a chance to enhance the teachers' understanding of digital citizenship and on how to incorporate it in their teaching, and raised awareness of trending issues related to online safety and wellbeing. Moreover, the event provided an opportunity to apply their own digital skills and the additional knowledge gained in the FCL course in order to share the new insights with colleagues and a wider audience.