

The Safer Internet Forum

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Workshop 2 Report: Awareness Raising

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About 44 experts from 26 countries participated in workshop 2. Participants came from national awareness nodes, non-governmental organisations, academic institutions, industry and governments from EU Member States and Non-EU countries.

The workshop was chaired and opened by introductory remarks from Manuela Martra from the European Commission service in charge of Safer Internet plus programme (DG Information Society/Unit E6)..

The State of Research: Sonja Livingstone

The key note speech was delivered by Professor Sonja Livingstone from the London School of Economics (LSE). She gave a detailed overview about the actual research on the issue of the Safer Internet and in particular on the related problems for children using the Internet. For Livingstone, children are the most vulnerable users in the Internet. Her findings, which are summarized and published in the Report “**EU:Kids Online**” (See Annex I) were based on an analysis of 235 research projects in 18 countries.

According to Livingstone there is a substantial number of good quantitative researches available with a lot of valuable data which allow us to base our conclusions and policy recommendations on a proofed reality check. However, there is still **too little qualitative research** which prevents us to go deeper into the issue. Furthermore, the majority of the research is done on a national basis, mainly funded by governmental institutions. There is little comparative research and also only little academic analysis about the issue. Risk analysis is mainly concentrated on illegal and harmful content and underestimates other related risk factors. There is also little research about communication processes among children, teachers and parents, in particular about mediation of parents and how children react to it. More qualitative and comparative research is needed so that we can get a full knowledge about what is really happening and where the differences are among EU member states.

Nevertheless the existing research data constitute a good starting basis to understand the very nature of the challenges, to draw some conclusions and to develop policy recommendations for further actions.

Livingstone made clear in the beginning that the use of the Internet by children produces both opportunities and threats. **There is no risk free Internet.** It would be naive to hope that technological solutions or political regulation could create an Internet for children, which is safe and secure. And with further progress of technological development, in particular with the introduction of new generations of mobile end devices for all kind of communication – text, audio, video - providing also mobile broadband Internet access, and the emergence of new technologies supporting new global forms of social networking - MySpace, Facebook, StudieVZ, You Tube, Flickr, Second Life, Wikis etc.- the risks and threats will grow as the opportunities for creativity and innovation are growing.

Moving into the information society, which is also named “knowledge society”, Livingstone recommended to look first towards the opportunities, **to strengthen the capacity of children to be creative and innovative** and to discover the new territory of the cyberspace in a productive and constructive way by taking into account the risks and threats of the virtual world and enable them to deal with its negative aspects in a self confident and responsible way.

One key conclusion from this is that the first priority to improve safety on the Internet for children is **to improve education and awareness raising** with regards to the “dark sides of

the internet”: the risks and threats, the opportunities for misuse and bad use of new communication technology devices. Such educational and awareness raising actions hast to be targeted both towards the children themselves as well as towards parents and teachers. But they have include also institutions – schools, libraries, the media, youth organisations, industry and regulators etc. – dealing directly or indirectly with children and having special responsibilities for the creation of frameworks under which children are using the Internet.

The level of media education and in particular Internet literacy as well as the level of awareness about the threats and risk linked to the usage of the internet, are different from country to country in Europe. But regardless of some progress which has been reached, inter alia in the Northern countries, more efforts are needed to improve the situation substantially.

Looking deeper into the role of the children Livingstone presented a table which categorized the **different roles of children in Internet usage** and the different threats linked to this

*Table I:
Online Risk for Children in their Specific Roles*

Children as	Commercial	Aggressive	Sexual Values
Recipient (Content)	Adverts, Spam, Sponsorship, Personal Infor	Violence, Hateful Content	Bias, Racist, Misleading Infos and Advice
Participant (Contact)	Tracking, Harvesting, Personal Info	Being Bullied, Harassed or Stalked	Selfharm, Unwelcome Persuasion
Actor (Conduct)	Illegal, Downloading, Hacking	Bullying or Harassing another child	Providing misleading Information and Advice

The presentation of the table provoked a very detailed discussion in particular around the role of children as “Actor” and here in particular with regard to **bullying, harassment and grooming**. The growing phenomenon creates serious problems and needs to be understood better.

Some participants argued that bullying in the offline world is an already long known phenomenon and its appearance in the online world is nothing new. Other argued that online bullying is different from offline bullying, in particular with regard to the special circumstances under which the victim is bullied. A bullying message – SMS or e-Mail - sent out in the morning will be probably received only in the evening just before going to bed and can have disastrous consequences for the child.

Participants agreed that we do not yet fully understand the **relationship between the offline world and the online world**. What is more worrying: The bullying e-Mail or the bad man in the bus? In particular for children it is very often difficult to make a difference and to separate the real from the virtual world. There is a need to analyze more in depth the similarities and differences between the online and offline world and to research more in detail the interrelationship between the two worlds.

If you ask parents and children how they react to illegal or harmful content on the Internet, you get very often rather different answers. Parents have often no knowledge about how their

kids are reacting to Internet risks. Parents are more concerned on illegal and harmful content, children are worrying more about spam and bullying. And there are substantial differences within Europe from country to country. Risks are higher in countries where the Internet is seen as rather new, like Bulgaria or Poland. And there are also cultural differences. For instance there is a higher effort by parents in Germany and France to control the kids than it is in Denmark and Sweden where parents have a higher degree of trust into their children. On the average children in advanced Internet countries have about 75 online friends and 40 regular mobile contacts.

From the debate a number of questions for **further research** were formulated, inter alia

- Which risks to focus on as a matter of priority for further research?
- How to identify the most vulnerable target groups?
- When we move from risks to harm, what are the harmful consequences in detail?
- How important is the broader context for the consequences of online communication
- How to research communication patters among children themselves and among children and adults, in particular parents and teachers?
- How to measure the level of trust in trans-generational communication?
- What are the most urgent research gaps?

Participants more or less agreed that there should be no panic with regard to research findings. The glass is “half full” but more research and action is needed.

INSAFE 2006 & Childnet International

The other two key note speakers were **Janis Richardson**, coordinator of INSAFE, the European network of Safer Internet Awareness Nodes co-funded by the Safer Internet programme and **Stephen Carrick-Davies**, CEO of Childnet International, a London based NGO established in 1995.

Richardson presented the INSAFE Annual Report 2006 (see Annex II). Meanwhile 23 national Safer Internet awareness nodes in 21 countries of the EU in Iceland and Norway work together in the INSAFE network under the Safer Internet Plus Programme. There are also associated nodes in Argentina, Australia and the United States.

Richardson stressed the need for fine grained analysis in particular with regard to differences between age groups, level of dangers, differences between what users do and what they say they do etc. She stressed the special responsibility of teachers who can reach children in class and can combine the education of the use of the Internet with promoting the understanding of its risks.

She proposed **5 steps towards awareness raising**:

- Knowledge, (be aware)
- Approval (support for new behaviour)
- Intention (convince target for new behaviour)
- Practice (put new behaviour into practice)
- Advocacy (encourage other to do the same)

She underlined the special importance of the **Safer Internet Day** which gives everybody a great opportunity to organize events, training workshops, producing material, presenting surveys, exchange best practices, approaching the media etc. The Safer Internet Day gives a high visibility. In 2007, with events in 34 countries, the media covered widely the issues. More than 1000 articles from the press, radio and TV has been published. Awareness nodes

noticed an explosive growth of website clicks during the days around the Safer Internet day. Innovative forms like competition, ratings, blogathons etc. were developed and made the day rather attractive also for a broader public. Such events give the awareness nodes a greater lobbying power. The next Safer Internet Day is planned for the 12th of February 2008.

Carrick-Davies underlined that it is important **to learn from children** and to learn from each other in a multistakeholder environment. Adults have to understand, what new mobile communication technology makes it sexy for children. It is always on, it is to a high degree anonymous, it gives access the world, it offers active use not only passive reception, it is away from supervision, it offers the feeling of being accepted in his/her identity and status and it gives children a voice: For a child taking away the mobile phone would be taking away a part its identity.

He said that we have the opportunity to make a difference. One way would be to use the tools the children use themselves. User generated content networks allows to let young people be the spokespersons. Things should go upstream, more integrated into the culture of the young people and their natural new environment.

He stressed that we need to improve our **understanding of the Web 2.0** opportunities and the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0.

Table 2: Differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
Downloading	Uploading
Consuming	Creating
Corporate	Personal
Separate Media	Converging Media
Static	Interactive

With regard to the offline-online debate Carrick Davies argued that what starts offline will be soon also online. With higher speed in technology development he sees a widening **gap between parents, teachers and children**. To counter such a negative trend he proposed

- for teachers:
 - Improve training,
 - Every teacher needs to be a teacher in technology:
 - Curricula has to be redrafted.
 - We need a wider interpretation of health, not only the lack of disease, but also full physical, mental and social well-being,
- for parents
 - engagement and communication skills
 - greater sensitivity of children's ideas, needs and aspirations
 - help late adopters

He also discussed the changing role of young people in such communication networks. It should be **more peer-to-peer communication**, networks should give everybody a voice, there should be more stimulation for creativity and innovation, learn to work with alternatives and options, the role of the so-called by-standers (in particular with regard to bullying) should be further examined.

For Carrick-Davies key is the cooperation among school, parents and children. However, children are children and rather similar from country to country and so are the parents and teachers.

It is also important that awareness nodes work together with mobile phone operators, build on lessons, avoid duplication of efforts and confusion of the audience. Industry knows the patterns we have to know about the communication routes. Both sides can learn from each other and help each other

National Cases and Best Practices

In the afternoon sessions some case studies and a number of best practices were presented with the purpose of showing examples of effective co-operation among relevant stakeholders in awareness-raising.

Sandrine Gobert from the communication agency Ligaris presented the EU-wide anti-tobacco "Help campaign". Launched in March 2005 by the European Commission, this is one of the largest public health awareness raising initiatives ever organised in the world. This case study was useful for understanding how to reach the youth and measure the impact of a big central awareness campaign.

Johnny Lidqvist from Frieds.se presented the actions carried out in Sweden since 1997 to help schools to set up plans against bullying and cyberbullying. His presentation was supported by interesting video clips involving young people.

Thereafter some awareness nodes took the floor:, **Joachim Kind** from klicksafe.de (together with **Egbert Melten** from Ogilvy), **Peter Behrends** from klicksafe.de and **Tanja Sterk**, representing SAFI-SI, the awareness node from Slovenia.

Kind and Melten presented a **TV Clip** which was produced by a professional Public Relations agency, Ogilvy. The very successful clip "**Wo ist Klaus?**" raises awareness in a professional and surprising PR form Risks, which are known in the virtual world, are re-translated into the risks in the real world and its consequences are demonstrated in a shocking way in four categories: Hatespeech, sexual contacts, violence and child misuse. The clip ends with the message: "In the real life you would protect your children. So why not protect them on the Internet?" The clip was produced with the sponsorship of a private industry partner (Ogilvy) It was shown for free over a period of three months in all main German TV channels. The clip was then translated into 15 languages and broadcasted in some European countries. It won a special Price during the AME Award the New York 2007.

For Behrens it is important to **identify very carefully actors and actions**, to focus and to look into experiences of other European partners to avoid the reinvention of the wheel. There is no need go into competition with other already existing stakeholders, there is a need to work in partnerships. More actors bring more opportunities, media coverage and public awareness. Joint actions are good

It is also good to have close **relationship between hotlines and awareness nodes**. Advisory board, composed by many stakeholders, can be very helpful in identifying issues, developing projects and building partnerships including solving financial problems.

Klicksafe sees itself as a moderator not a teacher, not a chief executer. It is an offer for a discussion platform for complex communication on the national level.

The Safer Internet Day stimulates activities. Klicksafe produced 1 500 DVDs, 1000 teacher handbooks, 25 000 folders and it got hundreds of thousand clicks on its website. Among the success stories are the brochure “Chatting without risks”, the consumer protection publications “Golden rules for travel booking on the internet” and so.-called “Day Tours” into various cities of the country.

It is needed to create a brand recognition for the awareness node and a label which makes it attractive for others to join with us. Partnerships has to be win-win-combinations by keeping the own profile and values untouched.

Tanja Sterk from the University of Ljubljana in **Slovenia** reported about the enthusiasm of young people in Slovenia with regard to the Internet and its new opportunities. 58 percent have Internet access, 90 percent a mobile phone.

Youngsters in Slovenia are often **unaware on risks online**. 54 percent of parents expressed concerns about using the Internet. It is a challenge and the responsibility of schools, parents, state institutions, the media and awareness nodes to educate. by their children. The produced material has to be clear and easy to understand. Right channels has to be found to reach the right special target groups. Organisation of events also at schools are important as well as the ensuring of broad media involvement. A good example was the competition supported by Microsoft: “**Net generation – That’s also me**”. This included arts projects and other projects related to the Information society with a lot of creative work and a virtual exhibition of poems, posters, video clips. In total there has been 60 arts projects

In Slovenia there is a good coordinated approach with the hotline. There are joint advisory bodies and close cooperation. Interactive seminars for parents are planned for the future. Another big national event is in preparation for 2008, again in cooperation with Microsoft. Such events have increased substantially the number of visits of the website.

Discussion

Each of the presentations both in the morning and the afternoon sessions were followed by a detailed and vivid discussion with more than 40 speakers taking the floor.

One discussant said that schools have been done mainly a good job so far, but the **education authorities**, in particular the ministries, could be more active. Ministries are mainly occupied with access and technical security and less with the educational and awareness issue.

Another discussant stressed that the real problem is the home and the broader public. He said “Airbagged in school does not help too much if there is wildwest outside school”

It was also stressed that there is a need to develop **different strategies for different age groups**. The proposed grouping was 6 - 10 years (newbies which discover the Internet and need also a lot of technical advice on how to chat, to voip, to navigate), 10 – 14 years (which are becoming more independent in their communication behaviour and need specific knowledge about values, borderlines, risks and threats) and 14 – 18 years (experienced users who have to be made aware about the consequences of their dealing with technology and

where more debate among the children themselves about the positive and negative experiences has to be stimulated)

A number of best practices were presented.

The **Italian** awareness node reported about the organization of public online and offline events, the production of videoclips, prepared by teachers and pupils, 20 minutes discussion on the subject in classroom with teachers and its continuation in a virtual classrooms, Wikis were seen as a good instrument to stimulate debate among the youngsters themselves in a protected environment.

The **Spanish Helpline** reported about good experiences with an ombudsman to stimulate communication and reporting both among children and parents. There is a need for better intermediation where also new innovative forms are needed which create trust and mutual understanding. Industry should be involved as well.

A discussant from **Sweden** referred to offline and online cyberbullying: and our limited knowledge. There is not only a need to protect children against attacks there is also a need to prevent that children themselves are becoming actors and do harm to others. Panic media reports about misbehaviour at schools would not be so helpful. More fact based awareness raising with recommendation how to prevent and how to react would be much better.

A discussant from the **United Kingdom** underlined the need to create spaces where the children can report about the experiences and discuss with their peers. If parents and teachers want to do something, they have not to establish their own agenda but they have to go where the children are, to listen to them, to talk to them in their language and to discuss together what to do. Very often children have more knowledge as their parents and teachers. To do and not to do lists, produced by adults, are very often not helpful and can be counterproductive. It is important to get the children's perspective. A children agenda is always better than the adult agenda.

To get more detailed knowledge about the new phenomenon is dependent to a high degree from the readiness of the children to respond (also to questionnaires of research projects). Children will respond fair and honest only if they trust the interviewer. Trust building is an important element. It makes also a difference whether children use personal computers or share computers at schools or at Internet cafes. Schools can be the main source to get more detailed statistical information, but quantitative surveys are not enough to get the full and complex picture, more qualitative analysis is needed. ((Russia))

A speaker from **Italy** called for a better feedback from children and young people with regard to the measures undertaken in the EU program. What are their comments? Do we know how to evaluate our projects?

In **Norway** activities at school to educate on online behaviour and risks in the virtual world start already with four graders and include also movies and online games.

In **Iceland** relevant campaigns has been designed by incorporation of young people into the production of websites, videoclips and brochures. The 342 second TV clip which was produced with the help of children got recognition of 80 percent among the Icelandic TV viewers.

Also a speaker from **Latvia** argued that the best way to get public attraction is a video clip shown in national Television.

A discussant from **Bulgaria** informed that in Bulgaria there is the first awareness node in the making. A good experience was the organization of computer games tournaments, reaching children via fun activities and entertainment

A speaker from **Portugal** proposed to develop further an age based rating system for special content, in particular with regards to films, videos and games.

In **Poland** there are activities with filtering technologies in Polish language. The Safer Internet Day in 2007 saw more than 400 local initiatives. Because the issue is not in the schools curricula this day is a good opportunity and for many a first step to get engaged. It is important to continue with such initiatives, not only around the Safer Internet Day but over the whole year.

This was echoed by a discussant from **Greece** who supported the need for an ongoing chain of events to raise awareness on the risks of the Internet. She also supported to need for filter technology but qualified this as an additional instrument which would be best placed in the hands of parents.

A speaker from **Russia**

Informed that Russia is filtering in four categories of illegal and harmful content according to Russia law, in schools it are the schools themselves which make the decisions. The problem is that under medical sites you have also categories falling into pornography, which under history sites you have also racism.

A speaker from **Denmark** argued in favour of a more fact based practical approach. She said that we have not enough concrete data about child abuse and related problems, linked to the Internet.

An **industry** speaker from Spain said that the industry is aware about its responsibilities but expect that other stakeholders are also aware about their specific roles so that a good cooperation based on a division of labour can be developed. He also said that it is not enough to analyze the European situation. The cyberspace is borderless and we need also the experiences from the Non-European world.

One important point was raised by a discussant from **France** who stressed the need to go beyond pedagogical and public relations aspects and to include also psychologists and physicians in developing strategies to protect children online. Our knowledge about the different categories of vulnerability of children is rather low. We do not really understand what online bullying means for the mental health of children. The most vulnerable children are the isolated, unhappy and lonely kids who are trying to represent themselves and making friends in the virtual world to get recognized. On the other hand, kids who are in the real life very active and risk taker, are also very vulnerable by ignoring natural barriers in online communication and testing out the limits which can have disastrous consequences.

This was supported, inter alia, by a speaker from **Spain** where a website of the helpline is run by a psychologist.

Other discussants argued in favour of a broader approach taking into account the convergence of media and the different forms of use at different stages of interpersonal communication.

Very often the first contact is made by e-mail, followed by SMS messaging which leads finally to F2F communication and meetings in real places.

Conclusions

The conclusion of the discussion can be summarized in brief as follows:

1. **There is no risk free Internet**, Children like all other Internet users have to learn how to deal with the risks and threats of the virtual world. While technological solutions (like filtering) and political actions (like regulation) are and will remain important components of a broader strategy, training, education and awareness raising are the key factors in making the internet safer and secure in particular for children.
2. **More awareness raising actions and campaigns are needed** but they have to be very specific in particular with regard to the target groups. There is no one size or method fits all. There is need to have **special strategies for different age groups of children** (6 to 10, 10 to 14 and 14 to 18). There are special campaigns needed for parents (in particular for the late starters with regard to Internet use) and teachers (in particular for teachers not specialized in informatics or related fields). And there is also a need to strengthen awareness among the different institutional players in the broader environment like schools, libraries, public authorities, non-governmental organisations and private industry. **It is in particular important to raise awareness on the issues in the media.** The mass media are a key factor in reaching out to a mass audience. Without the involvement of the press, radio and in particular television awareness campaign will not be as successful as needed. On the other hand, media should avoid sensational reporting and the creation of a panic atmosphere when dealing with risks on the Internet
3. **There has to be more innovative methods** in developing awareness campaigns towards a safer Internet; in particular for children. While the traditional pedagogical methods will remain important first of all at schools, there is a need to use for campaigns more public relations and marketing experiences. Professional TV clips and other instruments can be combined with innovative methods developed in the Web 2.0 environment with Wikis, Blogs and Second Life performances. Brochures and traditional DVDs will not disappear and will remain important but **the developers of awareness materials have to go to the real places and virtual spaces where the kids are** and have to use its languages to reach them. It is necessary to stimulate more interaction among the kids themselves by providing spaces for discussion of best and worst experiences. And it is also important to improve the quality and quantity of direct communication among children and adults by developing jointly agendas how to live with the risks and threats of the borderless cyberspace.
4. To move forward with successful and attractive campaigns **more partnerships are needed.** Awareness Nodes need partners from all stakeholder groups – civil society, private industry and government. Multistakeholder partnerships can be build around concrete projects or specific campaigns. It is in particular important today to include also the industry and here first of all the producers of mobile communication technology and the providers of new interactive services. On the other hand it was stressed that awareness nodes should not be misused to become marketing vehicles of the industry to advertise products and services. Any cooperation with the industry has

to respect the editorial independence of the awareness nodes. But there are a lot of opportunities for win-win-situations where both sides keep their independence but do things together to the benefit of all.

Recommendations

Among the various recommendations which has been made (and are partly already incorporated in the report above), the following main recommendations for further actions can be singled out

1. **Further research** on the safer Internet should be more qualitative and compare more in depth the different experiences and situations in the member states of the EU and other associated members of INSAFE.
2. Awareness strategies should reflect the “**children's agenda**” and not follow the “agenda of the adults”
3. Awareness campaigns and programs have to developed in a specific way with regard to **specific target groups** (different age groups of children, parents, teachers etc.)
4. The role of the **public media** is crucial and awareness nodes should be encouraged to build closer relationships with the press, radio and television
5. The role of the **Safer Internet Day** is crucial and should be used to organize public visible events and produce awareness materials and tools.
6. There is a need to improve the understanding of the relationship between the **online and offline world** if it comes to the risk of the Internet
7. There is a need to improve our understanding of the implications and consequences of the **Web 2.0**
8. There is a need to build more and **broader partnerships** and a multi-stakeholder basis, integrating also industry be keeping the independence and ethics of awareness nodes untouched

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