

Recommendations for the Informal Meeting of EU Family Ministers

Discussion on “Protecting Children on the Internet”

Paris, 18th September, 2008

The European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online (eNACSO) warmly welcomes the initiative of the French EU Presidency to hold a discussion of EU Family Ministers on how best to protect Europe’s children on the internet.

The EU can justly claim, in particular through its Safer Internet Programme, to be the world leader in this key area of public policy. Yet for all the excellent work undertaken by the EU, there remains a pressing need for high level engagement and action by Member States.

Convergence of new technologies

- The ways in which the internet can be accessed are multiplying at an astonishing rate. Industry and relevant regulators for the different technologies and uses need to consider how to ensure there is a high degree of congruence between their respective child protection regimes and policies.

Parental monitoring

- Develop the impact of the EU’s Safer Internet Programme at national level
 - Increase resources for the EU-wide public awareness activity on Safer Internet Day as an important vehicle for reaching out to parents, teachers and children
- Monitor the national implementation of EU-wide codes of practice
 - A code of practice on the use of mobile phones by children and young people is already in place. A code on social networking sites is in preparation
- Encourage industry to promote greater awareness of safety issues:
 - Particularly at the point of sale or sign up and on a broader, on-going basis to promote greater awareness of the technical tools available to address child safety and network security more generally
 - Industry should cooperate with child rights based NGO’s, parents’ organisations and other child protection agencies on developing these tools

Child pornography (Child abuse images)

- Expand the national membership of the Virtual Global Taskforce
 - From the EU, so far only the UK and Italy have joined this important new police agency

- Where appropriate, harmonize national laws and police procedures
 - Dismantle the practical barriers to co-operation across jurisdictions, and in particular promote a common database of illegal images to facilitate police investigations and network level blocking in all Member States
 - Agree and implement new EU legislation to update Council Framework Decision 2003/577/JHA on child sexual exploitation and child pornography
 - Ratify and implement the Council of Europe Convention on protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Encourage the spread of network-level blocking of known child pornography sites
 - Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden and the UK already do this. More need to undertake similar actions.
- Press the United States of America to act decisively against child pornography
 - The USA remains the world's largest source of child sex abuse images. Russia was until recently also a host of many images but has taken action in this respect.
- Make representations to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
 - ICANN should be asked to create a new global rule requiring all known child pornography web sites to be deregistered
- Develop a new international resource centre
 - A great deal of knowledge and expertise has been accumulated about how to tackle the production, distribution and collection of images depicting child sexual abuse, but it is fragmented or locked within institutional boundaries. A new agency could play an important role in bringing all the different elements together to forge new, co-operative arrangements reaching out to EU Member States, other European countries and also developing countries. It should also improve international action and methods of for identifying children who are abused for the production of child abuse images, in coordination with Interpol and other law enforcement agencies

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About the European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online (eNACSO)

eNACSO is a new coalition of children's rights NGOs from European Union Member States working to promote online child safety. eNACSO's objective is to engage with governments, industry and other stakeholders at European and international level in order to promote a safer online environment for children and combat internet-related child abuse and exploitation.

Members: Save the Children Denmark; National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), UK; Nobody's Children Foundation, Poland; Protegeles, Spain; Save the Children Italy; Action Innocence France; Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC); ECPAT Netherlands; Save the Children Finland; Kék Vonal, Hungary; ECPAT Austria; Our Child Foundation, Czech Republic; Action Innocence Belgium

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