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WORK PROGRAMME 2011

Safer Internet

**A multi-annual Community programme on protecting children using the
Internet and other communication technologies**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 2011 Safer Internet Work Programme sets out the priorities for activities to be funded under the Safer Internet programme¹. In particular, the Work Programme describes the kinds of activities the 2011 call for proposals will cover, what its objectives are, the criteria for funding, the expected results, and the indicative budget, and provides information about events that the European Commission will organise in collaboration with the organisations funded.

This Work Programme also takes into account and implements policies laid down in the:

- Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity and the right of reply²
- Communication on the rights of the child³
- Communication on cybercrime⁴
- Audiovisual Media Services Directive⁵
- Communication on future networks and the internet⁶
- European Digital Agenda⁷
- Action Plan Implementing the Stockholm Programme⁸
- Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, repealing Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA COM(2010)94⁹.

¹ Decision No 1351/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing a multiannual Community programme on protecting children using the Internet and other communication technologies, OJ 348, 24.12.2008 p. 118.

² Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the protection of minors and human dignity and the right of reply in relation to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and information services industry (2006/952/EC), OJ L 378, 27.12.2006, pp. 72-77.

³ Commission communication ‘Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child’, COM(2006) 367 final.

⁴ Commission communication ‘Towards a General Policy on the Fight against Cyber Crime’, COM(2007) 267 final.

⁵ Directive 2007/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 December 2007 amending Council Directive 89/552/EEC, OJ L332, 18.12.2007, p. 27.

⁶ Commission Communication COM(2008) 594 final.

⁷ Commission Communication COM (2010) 245 of 19.05.2010

⁸ Commission Communication COM(2010) 171 final

⁹ Final of 29.03.2010 http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/news/intro/doc/com_2010_94_en.pdf

2. OBJECTIVES AND OVERALL APPROACH

2.1. Safer Internet programme, the overall aim

The overall aim of the Safer Internet programme ('the Programme') is to promote safer use of Internet and other communication technologies, to educate users — particularly children, parents and carers — in this regard, and to fight against illegal content and harmful conduct online.

The Programme runs for the five years 2009 to 2013. It has a budget of EUR 55 million, to be spent on four areas of action:

- a) ensuring public awareness
- b) fighting against illegal content and tackling harmful conduct online
- c) promoting a safer online environment
- d) establishing a knowledge base.

It is implemented through annual Work Programmes.

In 2011, actions in all these areas will be implemented through a call for proposals, through public procurement actions and through the organisation by the Commission of a number of activities to bring together relevant stakeholders, such as organising awareness-raising and coordination activities both at the European level (Safer Internet Day, Safer Internet Forum etc) and at the international level.

In 2011 there will be an enhanced focus on children at risk¹⁰. A pilot project will be launched aiming at developing a specific approach to training professionals working with children at risk (social workers) and measuring the impact. Social workers will also be added to the target group of awareness centres.

In 2011 the results of the mid-term evaluation of the Programme will be published and the impact assessment on future activities in the area of safer internet will be launched.

The Commission will put in place benchmarking of safer internet policies and actions across Europe including an analysis of the current resources used for these activities and their breakdown between the Commission on one hand and Member States, the private sector and the voluntary sector on the other hand, and assess the scope for increasing the latter. The results will feed into the implementation of the Programme and into the above mentioned impact assessment.

¹⁰ For further information on the definition of children at risk see section 5.1

2.2. Illegal vs harmful content, contact and conduct online

The main form of illegal content covered by this Work Programme is child abuse material. Another is racism and xenophobia. Europe-wide standards exist to combat both¹¹.

For the purposes of this Work Programme, harmful contact refers to contact preparatory to committing a sexual offence against a child by contacting them online, sometimes referred to as ‘grooming’¹².

Harmful conduct refers to bullying and harassment in the online environment, so-called cyberbullying.

Harmful content is content which parents, carers, teachers and other adults responsible for children consider to be harmful to them. The concept of what is harmful also varies across countries and cultures. A variety of means exist to deal with harmful content, all of which need to be used in combination to increase their effectiveness: self-regulation and technical tools, awareness-raising and education, and enforcement of legal provisions, where they exist. Some harmful content may also be illegal whatever the age of the user who has access to it (such as racist and xenophobic content).

Dealing with illegal content, harmful content, harmful contact and harmful conduct may require different methods, strategies and tools. However, some tools such as awareness-raising can be used for all categories.

2.3. Participation in the Safer Internet programme

Participation in all actions of the 2011 call for proposals is open to legal entities established in the Member States. Legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties to the EEA Agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) may also take part.

Legal entities established in other countries may take part under the conditions set out in Article 2 of the Decision setting up the Programme¹³, provided that the country signs a bilateral agreement to join the Programme.

In addition, under Article 2(2) and Paragraph 3 of Annex III of the Decision setting up the Programme, Russia is established as a priority for international co-operation¹⁴.

¹¹ Council Decision of 29 May 2000 to combat child pornography on the Internet (2000/375/JHA), Council Framework Decision of 20 January 2004 on combating the sexual exploitation of children and child pornography (2004/68/JHA) and Council Framework Decision on combating racism and xenophobia (COM/2001/0664).

¹² This is the process by which abusers target children through the relative privacy of the Internet and mobile phones by sometimes pretending to be children themselves and by befriending vulnerable children online.

¹³ Decision No 1351/2008/EC of 16 December 2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council, OJ 348, 24.12.2008, p. 118.

¹⁴ See special conditions for participation of Russian legal entities in the network of Safer Internet Centres footnote 26. Russian entities may also take part in thematic networks and knowledge enhancement projects under the same conditions as entities established in Member States (but not as project co-ordinators).

Legal entities established in non-EU countries other than those referred to above and international organisations may take part in any project at their own expense.

Up-to-date information about the countries currently taking part in the Safer Internet programme is available on the Programme web site at <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>.

2.4. International scope of the Safer Internet programme

The issues covered by the Safer Internet programme are global and need national, European and international solutions. This is particularly true for illegal content. Material depicting child sexual abuse may be produced in one country, hosted in a second, and accessed and downloaded all over the world. Commercial payment systems operating worldwide may be used to fund the sale and purchase of the images.

Digital technologies offer an unprecedented means of facilitating freedom of expression and communication around the globe. As Internet access and mobile phone use become more widespread in Europe and in the rest of the world, children are increasingly becoming active users of the technology. Working with non-European countries may provide useful insights into the way in which children are using the technology and new ideas on how to equip them and their parents, carers and teachers with the necessary knowledge.

In 2011, international cooperation will focus on the following actions:

- involvement of as many third countries as possible in Safer Internet Day;
- participation of other European neighbouring countries at regional or international events organised by Safer Internet Centres;
- participation in international events such as the Internet Governance Forum and the ITU Child Online Protection (COP) initiative and co-ordination with relevant activities of International Organisations;
- invitation to experts from countries outside the EU to Safer Internet events (e.g. Safer Internet Forum, European network meetings);
- exchange of best practices in fighting illegal content and awareness raising, including exchange schemes for experts or organisations from countries outside the EU;
- the Programme will seek to coordinate with other Commission activities in the field of international co-operation, particularly regarding co-operation with Russia¹⁵ and USA.

2.5. Children's empowerment and participation in the Safer Internet programme

Children are active and enthusiastic users of the internet and other online technologies such as mobile phones. The work of the Safer Internet programme will be based on knowledge of how children use these technologies.

¹⁵ See section 2.3 and footnotes 14 and 26

Safer Internet Centres are required to involve children and young people in their work by setting up youth panels where young people can express their views and pool their knowledge and experience of using online technologies. Pan-European Youth Forums were organised together with the INSAFE network in conjunction with the Safer Internet Forum in 2009 and in 2010. A pan-European Youth Forum may be held again in 2011.

3. ACTIONS 1 & 2¹⁶ EUROPEAN NETWORK OF SAFER INTERNET CENTRES

The Safer Internet programme will continue to fund the European network of Safer Internet Centres. Each Centre is national and Europe-wide networking between them is coordinated. The purpose of the network is to coordinate activities and bring together a variety of stakeholders to act and help transfer knowledge locally, regionally and throughout Europe. The project type of Safer Internet Centres and their coordinator described below is "Integrated network".

3.1. Action 1.1 Safer Internet Centres

Safer Internet Centres currently exist in all Member States, consisting of an awareness centre, a hotline for reporting illegal content and in most cases a helpline aimed at providing advice and support to children and parents on online safety and concerns. In order to make best use of the available budget and to allow continued full coverage, funding will be made available in 2011 only for those countries where the current grant agreement expires on or before March 2012^{17, 18}. It is intended to make funding available for the remaining EU countries in 2012.

3.1.1. Common tasks:

The three components of the Safer Internet Centre will be expected to cooperate by:

- setting up a single Advisory Board with local stakeholders;
- setting up a Youth Panel;
- exchanging information about their respective activities;
- agreeing common positions on safer internet issues for submission to policy-makers and the media;
- running joint awareness raising activities/campaigns;
- contributing to the visibility of Safer Internet Day.

¹⁶ Action 1 of the Decision No 1351/2008/EC is "ensuring public awareness", action 2 is "fighting against illegal content and harmful contact and conduct online"

¹⁷ Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Germany, Spain, Finland, Hungary, Ireland, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania and Slovenia

¹⁸ The call for proposals may also be opened for countries which have signed a bilateral agreement or where negotiations have been opened, and Russia.

3.1.2. *Common requirements*

All Safer Internet Centres will perform awareness-raising activities. In addition they should include (a) hotlines to which the public can report illegal content and/or (b) helplines where parents and children can obtain advice on how to deal with uncomfortable or scary experiences of using online technologies.

It is essential that a Safer Internet Centre exists in a country where a hotline or helpline is set up, to assist in ensuring visibility. No stand-alone hotline or helpline will be funded under the Programme.

In order to achieve maximum efficiency and impact, each component of the Safer Internet Centre (awareness-raising, hotline, helpline) should preferably consist of a single organisation. The same organisation can apply for more than one component. Where a consortium applies, the division of labour between the partners should be clear and logical. The recommended maximum size of a consortium for a Safer Internet Centre is up to four partners if a hotline and a helpline are included. If the consortium is larger, the Commission may require it to be cut down in size or offer a lower rate of funding. However, the Commission may approve additional strategic partners, not requesting funding, committed to specific project activities.

Only one Safer Internet Centre will be funded within a given country. A single grant will be given for a Safer Internet Centre.

Proposals must:

- clearly describe the current situation in the country regarding issues related to safer use of the internet and other online technologies and demonstrate the value that the proposed Safer Internet Centre expects to add in this context;
- explain what support the project would receive from national authorities, industry, NGOs or childcare organisations and provide supporting letters from such organisations stating what kind of support they will give the project;
- show how the proposed Safer Internet Centre will cooperate with other organisations.

3.1.3. *Awareness-raising*

Since 2004, the Safer Internet programme has been promoting awareness in a co-ordinated way across the European Union through the European network of awareness centres. The awareness centres' main aim is to develop awareness raising material, organize campaigns and information sessions for children and young people, parents, carers, social workers and teachers to enable children and young people to make responsible use of on-line technologies.

Safer Internet centres promote public awareness by conveying a positive message about the opportunities of a wider and more intensive use of information and communication technologies while providing adequate information about risks and ways to deal with them.

The awareness actions address issues related to harmful content, contact and conduct. They also address the opportunities and risks of services using new distribution forms, such as peer-to-peer services, broadband video, instant messaging, chat-rooms, social networking sites and access to content and interactive information and communication brought about by the rapid

take-up of internet, mobile phones and game consoles by children. They take into account the related issues of protection of privacy and personal data, consumer protection, information, and network security (viruses/spam).

Tasks for awareness-raising:

Safer Internet Centres will coordinate and carry out awareness actions and programmes in close cooperation with all relevant actors at European, regional and local levels.

- devise inventive, attention-grabbing and informative awareness campaigns using the most appropriate media, taking into account best practice and experience in other countries, which may involve the participation of children and young people;
- promote awareness of parents and children on online positive content and experience and pay particular attention to awareness raising actions towards young children and children at risk¹⁹;
- take into account the results of research and knowledge-enhancement projects funded by the Safer Internet programme;
- inform the intended target groups about other activities funded by the Safer Internet programme²⁰;
- use cost-effective means of distribution of information to large numbers of users (multiplier organisations, electronic dissemination channels, mass media, information material distributed to schools and to internet cafés);
- evaluate the impact of the awareness campaigns on the target groups and provide qualitative and quantitative feedback at European level on the national achievements to improve the impact and effectiveness of the European network;
- establish and maintain formal or informal partnerships and promote dialogue and exchange of information with key players (government agencies, press and media groups, ISP associations, user organisations, education stakeholders) and actions in their country on to safer use of the internet and other online technologies;
- actively cooperate with other Safer Internet Centres in the European network by exchanging information about best practices, participating in meetings and designing and implementing a European approach;
- take an active part in European-level events and in the organisation of regional and local events for Safer Internet Day;
- where appropriate, support preparations for the Safer Internet Forum by holding national events on the topics to be discussed there;
- where appropriate, cooperate with other actions under the Safer Internet programme;

¹⁹ For further information on the definition of children at risk see section 5.1

²⁰ Including hotlines, helplines, self-regulation schemes and the SIP BENCH II study on benchmarking the effectiveness of parental control software and services

- where considered appropriate by the European Commission, cooperate with non-EU countries by exchanging information about best practices, sharing awareness tools, participating in international meetings, and hosting visits.

Conditions for awareness-raising:

Bodies seeking to carry out awareness-raising tasks as Safer Internet Centres need to show that they have strong support from national authorities. They should have a clear mandate to educate the public in safer use of the internet and other online technologies or in media and information literacy.

3.1.4. Hotlines

Hotlines allow members of the public to report illegal content and pass the reports on to the appropriate body for action (Internet Service Provider (ISP), the police or a corresponding hotline). Hotlines do not investigate offences or arrest or prosecute offenders. They may represent centres of expertise regarding illegal material and sexual abuse of children in digital media, providing guidance to ISPs and other stakeholders as to what content might be illegal in a country. Close cooperation with the national law enforcement agencies is an important element of the hotline operation.

As an alternative to establishing or running a hotline as part of the Safer Internet Centre, the Centres may enter into an agreement with a national alert platform to publicise that platform and include a link to it on their web pages.

Tasks for hotlines:

- establish and/or operate a hotline to receive information from the public relating to illegal content²¹;
- draw up a manual of procedures in cooperation with law enforcement authorities and in accordance with best practice guidelines;
- actively inform users of the hotline's remit and how to contact it;
- deal rapidly with complaints received;
- undertake a preliminary assessment of the legality of the content reported and trace its origin;
- forward the report to the appropriate body for action (police, ISP, correspondent hotline);
- conduct systematic notice to the host service provider of content assessed as illegal child abuse material, in accordance with the manual of procedures, and to monitor the time span needed to take down such content;
- contribute to the European URL database run by the network co-ordinator and provide statistics required for measuring the impact and effectiveness of the European network;

²¹ Funding of hotlines under this Work Programme is exclusively for work assessing reports dealing with child abuse images or racism and xenophobia.

- participate actively in networking with other local stakeholders;
- take part in cross-border discussions and exchange of best practice with other co-funded hotlines, and with other stakeholders as part of the network.

Conditions for hotlines:

The hotline may be either public or private or a public-private partnership. A public hotline may be run by the police or by another public body, provided that it is prepared to cooperate with other hotlines which are part of the network, whatever their status.

The hotline must certify that it is able to cover the full range of hotline tasks.²²

The hotline should show that it has the necessary support for its activities from national authorities and law enforcement agencies and that its activities will be in accordance with national law, including data protection rules.

The work of the hotline should support and be integrated in the system set up in accordance with the Council conclusions of 24 October 2008 on setting up national alert platforms and a European alert platform for reporting offences noted on the Internet²³.

3.1.5. Helplines

Safer Internet Centres should establish or cooperate with helplines from which parents and children can obtain advice on how to deal with harmful contact (grooming), harmful conduct (cyberbullying), harmful content and uncomfortable or scary experiences of using online technologies,

The helplines may also take reports on grooming and cyberbullying and forward them to the appropriate body for action. These tasks could be carried out by two different organisations within a Safer Internet Centre

Tasks for helplines :

Helplines should carry out the following tasks:

- offer one-to-one conversations with trained helpers in real time (online and by telephone)
- answer online questions and telephone calls from children and parents related to their use of online technologies;
- design operating guidelines and a training module for the staff in compliance with national law, including data protection rules;
- have in place a system for passing reports to the relevant authority where a child appears to be in danger;

²² If a hotline cannot demonstrate that it is able to cover the full range of hotline tasks the Commission may consider to cut the funding earmarked for the hotline within the Safer Internet Centre, or to not fund the hotline at all.

²³ 2899th Justice and Home Affairs Council meeting, Luxembourg, 24 October 2008.

- actively inform the users of the helpline’s remit and how to contact it;
- draw up safety tips after consulting stakeholders and researchers;
- disseminate the results by providing statistics on the number of calls/contacts received and the issues raised;
- discuss the results of its activities within the Safer Internet Centre and give input to awareness raising strategies;
- participate in networking at European level and contribute to cross-border discussions and exchange of best practices.

Conditions for helplines:

Setting up a helpline should be done in conjunction with organisations with the necessary experience and infrastructure, such as organisations currently running helplines dealing with calls/contacts from children.

3.1.6. Funding:

Safer Internet Centres will receive up to 50% of eligible costs (which may be increased up to 75% for public bodies, SMEs and non-profit organisations)²⁴.

3.2. Action 1.2 European coordination of Safer Internet Centres

A network coordinator will be selected to carry out overall co-ordination of Safer Internet Centres as well as coordination specific to each component of awareness activities, helplines and hotlines (see 3.1.3, 3.1.4 and 3.1.5). Overall coordination and the specific coordination tasks will be covered by a single grant agreement.

Overall coordination tasks:

- provide a single, comprehensive web portal to provide visibility for awareness activities, helplines and hotlines with a collection of relevant information and resources with content such as news services, articles, and a monthly newsletter;
- disseminate statistics and information about the awareness, helpline and hotline activities and the results of the network across Europe;
- develop a governance structure for the network;
- provide European coordination of Safer Internet Centres’ Youth Panels and organise a pan-European meeting of members of the Safer Internet Centres’ Youth Panels;
- coordinate the organisation of regional meetings by Safer Internet Centres;

²⁴ If a Safer Internet Centre is selected for Russia, in the absence of a bilateral agreement, the funding will be limited to 100% of direct eligible costs of taking part in the networking activities of Safer Internet Centres.

- coordinate the exchange schemes for experts or organisations from countries outside the EU in agreement with the European Commission;
- ensure and maintain a close working relationship with the awareness, hotline and helpline coordinators to ensure consistency and effectiveness of overall programme operations;
- take part in meetings organised by the Commission, the Safer Internet Forum and other relevant events, coordinating input/feedback from awareness centres, hotlines and helplines; ensure synergy between the integrated network, thematic networks and other funded projects by participating in the network Coordination Group (see Section 4.5).

3.2.1. Awareness-raising coordination tasks:

- provide effective communication and exchange of information and best practices about awareness-raising between Safer Internet Centres;
- provide training in safer use of the internet and new technologies for staff of Safer Internet Centres dealing with awareness-raising;
- provide expertise and technical assistance to candidates wishing to set up Safer Internet Centres and to start up Safer Internet Centres;
- provide input for news services, articles, and monthly newsletters;
- collate statistics and results about the awareness activities and provide quality check on the data provided by the awareness centres;
- draw up and/or update best practice guidelines for awareness raising;
- organise an annual Safer Internet Day throughout Europe and beyond;
- contribute to public awareness of the hotlines and helplines;
- maintain a close working relationship with the hotline and helpline coordinators to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of overall programme operations and to increase public awareness of the hotlines.

3.2.2. Hotline co-ordination tasks

- promote the integration of hotlines into the system of national alert platforms and a European alert platform, in close liaison with Europol and the relevant Commission departments;
- hold regular exchanges of information and experiences between hotlines;
- draw up and/or update best practice guidelines for hotlines and adapt them to new technology;
- provide a pool of expertise for advice, a coaching process for start-up hotlines, and incentives for potential new hotlines;

- collate statistics and provide quality checks on the data provided by the hotlines and perform trend analysis based on this information to measure and report on the volume of illegal content on the internet;
- develop and maintain a European URL database for the use of hotlines, to reduce duplication of reports to law enforcement agencies and to allow accurate assessment of illegal content, in particular child abuse; and ensure its connection with Europol;
- international outreach: ensure liaison with hotlines in non-EU countries, particularly member countries of the Council of Europe, where illegal content is hosted and produced, and ensure transfer of know-how and best practice²⁵;
- participate in meetings held by the Commission, the Safer Internet Forum and other relevant events;
- maintain a close working relationship with the awareness and helpline coordinators to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of overall programme operations and to increase public awareness of the hotlines.

3.2.3. *Helpline coordination tasks*

- set up a standing Working Party for helplines to exchange experiences;
- draw up and/or update best practice guidelines for helplines;
- provide effective communication and exchange of information and best practice between helplines;
- provide training in safer use of the internet and new technologies for staff of Safer Internet Centres dealing with helplines;
- provide expertise and technical assistance to candidates wishing to set up helplines and to start up helplines;
- collate statistics and ensure comparability of the data provided by the helplines and provide statistics and information about the helplines' activities;
- maintain a close working relationship with the awareness and hotline coordinators to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of overall programme operations and to increase public awareness of the hotlines.

3.2.4. *Requirements*

- Experience in coordinating projects at European level;
- Knowledge of issues related to safer use of the internet by children and raising awareness about those issues;

²⁵ Hotlines in countries outside the geographical area of the Safer Internet programme could be invited to network meetings at their own cost. Travel bursaries could be made available in justified cases under conditions laid down by the Commission.

- Knowledge of issues relating to the tasks of hotlines;
- Knowledge of issues relating to the tasks of helplines;

A joint proposal may be made by a consortium of not more than three different organisations.

3.2.5. *Funding:*

The network coordinator will receive up to 100% of direct eligible costs (as defined in the model grant agreement), excluding indirect costs (overheads)²⁶.

3.3. Action 1.3 Safer Internet Days 2011 and 2012

Safer Internet Day, initiated by the European Commission, is part of a global drive by awareness-raising partners to promote a safer internet for all users, especially young people. Celebrated under the patronage of the Commissioner for Information Society and Media, since 2005 Safer Internet Days have been organised by the European internet safety network INSAFE, co-funded by the Safer Internet plus programme, involving a broad number of organisations and countries across Europe and worldwide.

Since the first edition, participation in this event has been steadily growing, with an increase in general awareness, stronger involvement of relevant stakeholders in the field of internet safety and a high level of media interest.

In 2010, more than 60 countries all over the world participated in Safer Internet Day. The Commission organised a central event in the European Parliament in Strasbourg to increase the political visibility of the event. At the event, it presented the results of the first independent assessment of the implementation of the "Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU".

In 2011 work will continue to involve an even larger number of participants in Safer Internet Day activities in an even greater number of countries. The INSAFE network of awareness centres will develop a toolkit that would help all interested stakeholders to participate in Safer Internet Day activities. The Commission may organise a central event to promote Safer Internet Day.

Safer Internet Day 2011 may focus on virtual worlds, addressing the risks children and young people run in going virtual deliberately, such as when playing a Massively Multiplayer Online Game (MMOG) as an avatar, as well as those elicited by projecting one's real self into virtual platforms, such as when uploading videos.

Preparatory work for Safer Internet Day 2012 will start in 2011.

²⁶ If a Safer Internet Centre is selected for Russia, it will receive up to 50% of eligible costs if Russia signs a bilateral agreement to join the Programme. In the absence of such bilateral agreement, the funding will be limited to 100% of direct costs of taking part in the networking activities of Safer Internet Centres.

4. ACTION 3: PROMOTING A SAFER ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

The Safer Internet programme aims to bring stakeholders together to find ways of promoting a safer online environment and protecting children from content that parents, carers, teachers and other adults responsible for children consider harmful (see Section 2.2).

4.1. Action 3.1 Thematic network: NGO Network for Child Protection on the Internet

The internet is a global network with equally global challenges. A central civil society focal point for child protection on the internet would increase international awareness of the risks involved in children's use of online technologies and the solutions available.

Under the 2009 call, a thematic NGO network called eNACSO II was selected to continue the work of the previous eNACSO project, namely to develop a concerted approach to promoting children's rights and welfare by sharing experience and best practice, and by developing joint strategies to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account in discussions about the internet and new media in Europe and in relevant international fora. eNACSO II will run until August 2012.

The 2011 Work Programme calls for proposals to set up a **thematic network** of European non-governmental organisations after this date.

Tasks

- define the issues to be dealt with, which will be expected to include the following: fighting against online child sexual abuse material, combating online grooming and bullying, assessing the effects that developments in new technologies have on children's lives from a child rights perspective and make recommendations to the relevant stakeholders;
- deal with new issues concerning online child safety and to carry out consultations with children and young people;
- develop a concerted approach to promoting children's rights and welfare by sharing experience and best practice;
- develop joint strategies to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account in discussions about the internet and new media in Europe and in relevant international fora;
- ensure exchange of information and hold conferences, seminars, workshops or other meetings with relevant stakeholders to encourage dialogue, capacity building, awareness raising, exchange of best practices, networking, and other relevant actions;
- participate in European and international fora and develop relationships with international agencies and NGOs outside of Europe, particularly in countries close to the European Union where child abuse material is produced and stored;
- report to the European Commission and publish reports about progress and important issues raised;
- monitor the progress of the project and assess the results and the impact of the activities;
- co-operate with other actions under the Safer Internet programme.

Conditions:

- The network should consist of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in child protection on the internet in countries covered by the Safer Internet programme;
- Membership should cover the majority of EU Member States and should be open and proactive in attracting new partners;
- The coordinator of the consortium must convincingly show that it has support from the other members of the network by, for example, providing letters of support.

Funding

The costs of the network coordinator for coordinating and implementing the network are covered at a rate of up to 100% of direct eligible costs (as defined in the model grant agreement), excluding indirect costs (overheads). Network members cover their own running costs except travel to network meetings, which may be reimbursed under the network budget.

4.2. Action 3.2 Promoting positive online experiences for children

Based on the preparatory work conducted by the Focus Group on positive content, established in 2009, on ways of encouraging positive content for children ('whitelisting', rating, private/public partnership, etc.), European guidelines are under development. In addition, a competition may be carried out to promote the production and provision of excellent online content for children on the national and European level.

4.3. Action 3.3 Safer Internet Forum

The open meeting of the Safer Internet Forum is a yearly event covering all Safer Internet actions, facilitating discussion and exchange of information, experiences and best practices at expert level and giving relevant national and European stakeholders a platform to drive consensus, recommendations, guidelines etc. It also provides an opportunity to discuss ways in which industry can contribute to ensuring the online safety of children and young people. The results and findings of ongoing and completed projects co-funded by the programme will feed into the process.

In 2011, the Safer Internet Forum may be dedicated to the topic of promoting the production and provision of online content aimed at giving children and young people positive experiences (referred to as positive content). The Forum might include discussions around the topics, but might also feature a marketplace where producers and providers of content aimed at children will be invited to present their products.

4.4. Action 3.4 Encouraging self-regulatory measures in promoting a safer online environment for children

A fully functioning system of self-regulation is an essential element in limiting the flow of harmful and illegal content through online technologies²⁷. Many self-regulatory initiatives

²⁷ See the indicative guidelines for the implementation, at national level, of a self-regulation framework for the protection of minors and human dignity in online audiovisual and information services in the Council. Recommendation of September 1998 on the development of the competitiveness of the

concerning the protection of children in the online environment exist throughout Europe. However, as new technological possibilities and services emerge, both uses and risks change. In order to ensure the safety of children in the changing online environment, industry self-regulation needs to be encouraged and effectively monitored.

One of the important tasks of the European Commission is to gather stakeholders in order to exchange experiences and best practices and to create cooperation. As a result of this activity, two industry self-regulatory agreements have been signed:

- The European Framework on Safer Mobile Use by Younger Teenagers and Children, signed on Safer Internet Day 2007
- The Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU, signed on Safer Internet Day 2009.

Monitoring the effectiveness of European self-regulatory agreements

Mobile phones

On the basis of the European Framework on Safer Mobile Use by Younger Teenagers and Children, national codes have been signed in 25 Member States. In 2008 and 2009 the European mobile industry association GSME has published implementation reports of the national codes by mobile operators and the Commission continues to follow the development on the national and European level closely. In 2010 the Commission convened meetings with the mobile industry, including handset manufacturers and NGOs, to follow up new developments including mobile internet and location services and to work towards increased safety of children and young people as mobile phone users.

In 2011 the Commission will follow up on these developments and support dialogue and implementation of concrete safety measures.

Social networks

In 2009, the Commission launched an independent assessment of the implementation of the Safer Social Networking Principles for the EU, whose results were published on 9 February 2010, Safer Internet Day. The findings of this assessment showed that all signatories are on board of this exercise and they have all taken steps to ensure the online safety of their minor users. However, more needs to be done in key areas such as making minors' profiles visible by default only to the approved list of contacts and non-searchable via common search engines, as well as responding to users' request for help.

In addition, social networking sites evolve very fast, in order to keep up with the demands of their users. Therefore, in parallel with the assessment process, many of the signatories have launched new features/services that could not be included in the evaluation.

In this context, the Commission will launch a second independent assessment that will take place in 2010 and 2011, possibly involving children and young people.

The Commission will continue to encourage industry self-regulation and public-private partnerships and will continue to monitor the existing agreements.

European audiovisual and information services industry by promoting national frameworks aimed at achieving a comparable and effective level of protection of minors and human dignity, OJ L 270, 7.1.1998, p. 48.

4.5. European coordination of stakeholder groups

The Commission will continue to ensure coordination of different stakeholder groups through:

- a Coordination Group representing the co-ordinators of all networks co-funded by the Programme (European network of Safer Internet Centres, NGO network, EU Kids Online network of researchers)
- a number of thematic Focus Groups including representatives of Safer Internet projects and other stakeholders, such as industry, parents' associations, teachers' representatives etc

The Coordination Group is chaired by the European Commission and meets twice a year, indicatively in March/April and September/October. It allows a structured exchange of information on ongoing and planned activities, and discussion of scope for joint actions.

The Focus Groups are convened by the European Commission and meet as required. The Commission may be assisted by experts brought in on contracts.

5. ACTION 4: ESTABLISHING A KNOWLEDGE BASE

The Safer Internet programme aims to establish a knowledge base for dealing adequately with existing and emerging uses of the online environment and relevant risks and consequences, with a view to designing adequate actions aimed at ensuring online safety for all users.

Under the 2011 Work Programme the 'knowledge base' action will focus on effective awareness raising strategies for child protection services and other professionals working with vulnerable children.

5.1. Action 4.1 Knowledge enhancement pilot project: Testing training programmes for professionals working with children at risk

When talking about victims of online risks, research very often makes a reference to the vulnerable children and young people. Recent surveys show that cyberbullying and online grooming is of increased concern for certain 'high risk' groups of children and young people²⁸. This is why the 2011 Work Programme calls for a pilot project which will focus on empowering professionals working with children to better address the needs of children who might be considered at risk. The project will aim at establishing training and tools targeted at this group of professionals and to assess their impact.

While children as a group might be considered at risk because of their social and physical development, and their trust in other people, certain factors might put them in a particular vulnerable position or state. The wide range of factors contributing to a child's vulnerability might encompass

²⁸ For cyberbullying see Beatbullying, Virtual violence: Protecting Children from cyberbullying London 2009, page 21 and onwards <http://www.beatbullying.org/pdfs/Virtual%20Violence%20-%20Protecting%20Children%20from%20Cyberbullying.pdf>. For grooming see Anders Nyman, Abused Online, 2008 <http://www.childcentre.info/projects/internet/dbaFile15618.pdf>

- experiencing family difficulties, emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse and neglect, witnessing domestic violence and/or family breakdown;
- having a physical or mental disability; having learning challenges or special educational needs;
- experiencing emotional/behavioural difficulties;
- marginalised groups within society such as travellers, asylum seekers, trafficked and migrant communities etc.

Training is needed in order to give child protection services and other professionals working directly with children at risk the necessary tools to be able to prevent, identify and deal with online safety risks.

Proposals are invited for a pilot project with the following objectives

- (1) to identify and further develop targeted training and awareness-raising tools (eg. video clip/online game and material) for professionals working with children at risk as defined above. The project should ensure that training is developed for a number of groups of professionals working with children exposed to at least 2 of the above factors contributing to a child's vulnerability, so as to ensure relevance and impact concerning several groups of children at risk;
- (2) on the basis of the above, implement a training programme(s) on the target group;
- (3) measure the effectiveness of the approach through an ex ante survey on the awareness level of the target group and surveys at 3, 6 and 12 months after the training has taken place. The assessment methodology should involve both a quantitative as well as qualitative approach.

The results of the project should be made available in order to feed into child welfare work and awareness-raising as well as providing topics for further actions and studies.

The European added value of the proposal must be clearly demonstrated, i.e. how the expected results will be of use to and might reflect a wider European situation and/or provide cross-border cooperation within the project. In particular, the pilot project should include testing of delivery on a broader scale through training the trainers and other ways of achieving the multiplier effect.

5.1.1. Conditions

Proposals for knowledge enhancement projects may be submitted by a consortium of legal entities.

The pilot study should involve 3-4 Member States (geographically balanced). In addition, other countries may participate in accordance with point 2.3 of the 2011 Work Programme.

Applicants should show that they have the relevant expertise for identifying and further developing targeted training for professionals, to deliver the training programme to the target group and to assess the effectiveness of the chosen approach.

Applicants should submit letters of support/commitment by the relevant services where the professional working with children is employed. Letters of support should also be provided from national authorities, industry, NGO, childcare organisations and Safer Internet Centres stating what kind of support they will give to the pilot project.

Representatives from the target group should be involved through a project Advisory Board to be consulted by the consortium in order to provide advice and feedback on the identification and further development of the training programme.

Proposals will be expected to clearly describe

- the current underlying knowledge and research on which they build
- make use of methodology (qualitative and/or quantitative) and work plan appropriate to the proposed objectives, including their applicability in practical terms, for example staff expertise relevant to carrying out the project (e.g. their expertise in handling sensitive situations and issues) and how focus groups will be selected and approached and give their consent to the study at hand, taking into account the possible sensitivity of the subject to be investigated.

5.1.2. *Funding*

Knowledge enhancement projects will receive up to 100% of direct eligible costs (as defined in the model grant agreement), excluding indirect costs (overheads).

6. EVALUATION PROCESS

6.1. Appointment of independent experts for evaluation and reviews

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the principles of transparency and equal treatment.

The Commission will appoint independent experts to assist with the evaluation of proposals and with the review of project results. The experts will be identified on the basis of a call for expressions of interest. Experts will be selected according to the skills and knowledge appropriate to the tasks assigned to them, taking into account the thematic requirements of the call or project, and considering geographical and gender balance.

Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided into three categories: eligibility criteria, award criteria, and selection criteria. Only proposals meeting the eligibility criteria will be evaluated further. These criteria are set out below.

6.2. Eligibility criteria

On receipt, all proposals and applications will be subject to an eligibility check, to ensure that they meet the requirements of the call, and of the submission procedure.

The following checks will be carried out:

- receipt of proposal by the Commission on or before the deadline date and time set in the call;
- proposal completeness: proposals which are substantially incomplete — i.e. do not include sufficient information to identify the partners, their legal status and their ability to carry out the work and to evaluate the scope of the proposed project — will be excluded.

Applicants will be excluded from participation if:

- a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;
- c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;
- e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in Art. 96(1) of the Financial Regulation;
- g) they are subject to a conflict of interest;
- h) they are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the procurement procedure or fail to supply this information.

All applicants must declare on their honour that none of the above situations apply to them.

Applicants found to have made false declarations face financial penalties or exclusion from grants and contracts²⁹.

6.3. Award criteria

The relative merit of the proposals received will be judged on the basis of award criteria subject to specific weightings. There are separate sets of award criteria, with specific weightings for integrated networks and knowledge enhancement projects.

²⁹ Article 175 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 as amended by Commission Regulation 1248/2006 of 7 August 2006, OJ L 227/3 19/8/2006.

The award criteria are applied to the information supplied in the proposal. Each criterion is marked from 1 to 10. A maximum of 100 points can be attributed to a proposal.

Proposals that fail to obtain at least 60 points in the evaluation will not be selected for co-funding.

6.3.1 Integrated networks (Safer Internet Centres)

1. *Relevance, impact and quality of the technical part of the proposal* (Weighting: 20%)

- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet programme and the relevant action as set out in the call.
- Clear description of the current situation in the country regarding issues related to the use of Internet and other online technologies
- Proposed solutions and the intended impact of the Safer Internet Centre.
- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

2. *Partnership, resources, management* (Weighting: 35%)

- Adequacy of the partnership in terms of relevance and expertise of the applicant organisation(s), size of the consortium, combination of complementary expertise and task distribution among the participants.
- Extent to which the project provides for the human and financial resources necessary to carry out the proposed work.
- Adequacy of the management and decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the Safer Internet Centre.

3. *National cooperation* (Weighting: 30%)

- Extent to which the project convincingly demonstrates support from national authorities, industry, NGO, and childcare organisations in the form of letters from them stating what kind of support they will give.
- Extent to which the Safer Internet Centre includes a hotline and a helpline.
- Cooperation with other organisations active in the field, both those funded by the Safer Internet programme and others.

4. *European added value and network contribution* (Weighting: 15%)

- European dimension of the issue(s) addressed, and extent to which the proposed action would contribute to tackling them at European level.
- Contribution of the Safer Internet Centre to the consolidation and further development of the European network.

6.3.2 Coordinator of integrated networks

1. Relevance and impact (Weighting: 20%)

- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet programme and the relevant action as set out in the call.
- Clear description of problems and proposed solutions.
- Adequacy of measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and the impact of the network.

2. Quality of the technical part of the proposal (Weighting: 30%)

- Clear description of the activities proposed.
- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

3. Partnership, resources, management (Weighting: 30%)

- Adequacy of the partnership in terms of relevance and expertise of the applicant organisation(s), size of the consortium, combination of complementary expertise and task distribution among the participants.
- Adequacy of the management and decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms between the European coordinator and the members of the network.
- Extent to which the project provides for the resources necessary for carrying out the proposed work.

4. European added value and network contribution (Weighting: 20%)

- Contribution of the coordinator of Safe Internet Centres to the consolidation and further development of the European network.
- Cooperation with other organisations and networks active in the field, both those funded by the Safer Internet programme and others.

6.3.3 Thematic networks

1. Relevance and impact (Weighting: 15%)

- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet programme and the relevant action as set out in the call.
- Expected impact of the proposed action.
- Adequacy of the dissemination plans to ensure optimal use of the project results, also beyond the participants in the project.

2. Quality of the technical part of the proposal (Weighting: 25%)

- Clear description of the problems and the proposed solutions.
- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

3. Resources and management (Weighting: 25%)

- Quality of the coordinating team and partnerships to achieve the coordination envisaged, adequacy of the management and decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the network and resources available.
- Adequacy of the measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and impact.

4. Quality of the proposed network and European added value (Weighting: 35%)

- Adequacy of the organisations participating in the network in terms of relevance, competences, combination of complementary expertise.
- European added value of the network.
- Links with relevant external organisations or projects.

6.3.4 Knowledge enhancement projects

1. Relevance and impact (Weighting: 30%)

- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet programme and the relevant action as set out in the call.
- Expected impact of the proposed action on the target group and on methods used for awareness raising activities beyond the phases of work sponsored by the European Union.
- Extent to which the project demonstrate support from the target group (eg. by providing support/commitment letters).
- Adequacy of the exploitation and/or dissemination plans to ensure optimal use of the project results, also beyond the participants in the project.

2. Quality of the technical part of the proposal (Weighting: 30%)

- Clear description of the current underlying knowledge/research.
- Clear description of the problems addressed and the pilot project to be undertaken.
- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal, including their applicability in practical terms (e.g. how possible target groups will be selected, approached, and give their consent to the pilot project).
- Adequacy of the proposed assessment methodology to evaluate the effectiveness of the approach.

3. Partnership, resources, management and co-operation with stakeholders, (Weighting: 20%)

- Quality of the partnership in terms of relevance and expertise of the applicant organisation(s), size of the consortium, combination of complementary expertise, and task distribution among the participants.
- Extent to which the project provides for the resources necessary for carrying out the proposed work.
- Adequacy of the management and decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the consortium.
- Extent to which the project convincingly demonstrates support from national authorities, industry, NGO, childcare organisations and Safer Internet Centres in the form of letters from them stating what kind of support they will give.

4. European added value (Weighting: 20%)

- European dimension of the issue(s) addressed, and extent to which the proposed action can be replicate in other European countries.
- European added value of the consortium submitting the proposal.
- Links with relevant external organisations or projects.

6.4. Selection criteria

The selection criteria are designed to ensure that the applicants possess the resources to co-finance the project and the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the work successfully.

The selection criteria are applied to the information supplied in the proposal. If this identifies cases of weak financial capacity or professional competency it may require compensating actions such as financial guarantees or other actions. Successful proposals leading to negotiations will be the subject of formal legal and financial validation as a prerequisite to the signing of a grant agreement.

The selection criteria are divided into two parts:

Financial and operational capacity to carry out the project

- Capacity to co-finance the proposed project as demonstrated by the applicant's accounts.
- Capacity to allocate adequate human resources to carry out the project in question.

Professional competencies and qualifications

Documented relevant experience in the field of the proposed action.

7. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BUDGET

7.1. Call for proposals

A single call for proposals, with a fixed deadline, will be published in 2011 covering the actions of the Programme.

7.1.1. Budget

The Union contribution to the indirect actions selected from the call for proposals 2011 will be covered by commitment appropriations for 2011, for which an indicative amount of EUR 14 132 240 is available³⁰.

Grants for proposals submitted in response to this call will be awarded under grant agreements.

The evaluation of proposals will give rise to a list of proposals to be funded. This list may be complemented by a reserve list of proposals of sufficient quality to be funded if the budget is available.

Within the indicative budget for the call, changes not exceeding 15% of the maximum contribution of the Union are not considered to be substantial provided that they do not significantly affect the nature and objective of the Work Programme.

³⁰ Under the condition that the draft budget for 2011 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority.

7.1.2. *Project overview*

| | Characteristics | Duration | Co-funding rate | Typical consortium size | Indicative EU contribution (€) |
|---------------------------------------|---|-----------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| Integrated network | Safer Internet Centres — awareness raising, hotlines and helplines and European coordination | Up to 28 months | Up to 50-75% co-funding of eligible costs Up to 100% funding of direct eligible costs | 3-4 partners for Safer Internet Centres ³¹ 3 partners for European co-ordination | 13 132 240 |
| Thematic network | NGO (network for child protection on the Internet) | 24-30 months | Up to 100% funding of a limited set of direct eligible costs | At least 10 partners/ members | 400 000 |
| Knowledge enhancement projects | Training programme for professionals working with children at risks | Up to 24 months | Up to 100% funding of direct eligible costs | 3-8 partners | 600 000 |
| TOTAL | | | | | 14 132 240 |

³¹ The Commission may approve additional strategic partners, not requesting funding, committed to specific project activities.

7.2. Public procurement

An indicative amount of EUR 910 000 is available³² for the following public procurement procedures planned in 2011:

| Title | Indicative date for launch of procedure | Indicative budget (€) |
|---|--|------------------------------|
| Expenses for Safer Internet Day 2012 (1-2 public procurement contracts/framework contracts) | 1st , 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters | 120 000 |
| Impact assessment of the Programme (1 public procurement/framework contract) | 1st quarter | 90 000 |
| Benchmarking of national safer internet policies and actions (1 public procurement/framework contract) | 1st quarter | 475 000 |
| Experts' support for Safer Internet Forum (up to 10 low value public procurement contracts/framework contracts) | 2nd quarter | 50 000 |
| Monitoring of industry self-regulatory agreements (1-2 public procurement contract/framework contracts) | 2nd quarter | 150 000 |
| Expenses for the Best Children's Online Content competition (up to 10 low value public procurement contracts/framework contracts) | 1st and 2nd quarters | 25 000 |
| TOTAL | | 910 000 |

7.3. Other expenses

An indicative amount of EUR 110 000 is available³³ for the following other activities planned in 2011:

| Title | Indicative date for launch of procedure | Indicative budget (€) |
|--|--|------------------------------|
| Project reviews (+/- 16 appointment letters selected on the basis of the call for experts published in the OJ C130 of 9.6.2009, p.5) | 1st , 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters | 60 000 |
| Focus groups (up to 50 experts to be reimbursed) | 1st , 2nd, 3rd and 4th quarters | 50 000 |

³² Under the condition that the draft budget for 2011 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority.

³³ Under the condition that the draft budget for 2011 is adopted without modifications by the budgetary authority.

| | | |
|--------------|--|----------------|
| TOTAL | | 110.000 |
|--------------|--|----------------|

The **indicative breakdown** of the 2011 budget³⁴ is as follows:

1. Ensuring public awareness 52%
2. Fighting against illegal content and tackling harmful conduct online 37%
3. Promoting a safer online environment 7%
4. Establishing a knowledge base 4%

7.4. Indicative timetable for related activities

| Date | Event |
|------------------------|--|
| December 2010 | Adoption of Work Programme |
| January 2011 | Publication of call for proposals |
| Beginning of May 2011 | Deadline, call for proposals |
| End of May 2011 | Evaluation |
| June 2011 | Evaluation report approved by Authorising Officer |
| July 2011 | Draft Implementation Plan approved by Authorising Officer (DG) |
| September 2011 | Committee Meeting — presentation of call results for opinion |
| October 2011 | European Parliament — Right of scrutiny |
| November 2011 | Adoption of selection decision |
| December 2011-May 2012 | Grant agreement signature |

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information about this programme please consult the Safer Internet web site at <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>.

³⁴ using the categories set in the breakdown of Annex II of the programme decision see fn. 1