

Digital Single Market

DSM blog post

25 October 2013

Digital is natural and online can be safe 4 kids - 10th Safer Internet Forum 17-18 Oct 2013

The Safer Internet Forum which was held last week in Brussels was a great opportunity to discuss open questions and concrete ways forward for a Better Internet for Kids. Speakers represented European Commission and European Parliament, international law enforcement, industrial big players, academia, Safer Internet Centres and projects across Europe, and - most importantly - many young people, reflecting on their native digital environment....

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The 2013 Safer Internet Forum edition saw the full deployment of the [European Strategy for Better Internet for Kids](#) [1], with the thriving Safer Internet community, powered by the Safer Internet/Better Internet for Kids programme of DG CONNECT. Again, it has shown its full potential, supported by the good work of [INSAFE](#) [2]/[INHOPE](#) [3] and the Centres. These are just a few impressions and Tweets from the busy two-day conference. Best proof - discussions are still ongoing on [#sif2013](#) [4].



The 10th Safer Internet Forum event: for young people, with young people and by young people; here the Pan-European Youth panellists - photo by @Insafenetwork

The event got off to a dynamic start with Director General of DG CONNECT [Robert Madelin](#) [5], sketching the [Digital Agenda](#) [6] frame for the debates: digital is natural and technology is good, however one has the right to remain safe online, through peer coaching and having a mentor within reach.

One issue which appeared right from the beginning - **anonymity and trust:**

 [@childnet](#) [7] Top reason for being anonymous online is to protect personal information - same for all age groups [#SIF2013](#) [8] [#IGF2013](#) [9] <http://www.youthigfproject.com/global-survey1.html> ... [10]

However, many participants said that they suffer from anonymous remarks and that in their view anonymity is sometimes a threat so then, how should the future Internet be – perhaps worth organising a [@FuturiumEU](#) [11] debate with kids?!

Protection and empowerment are two sides of the same coin

✖ [@Livingstone_S](#) [12]: At [#SIF2013](#) [8], about to discuss internet use among very young children. See [@EUKIDSONLINE](#) [13] research review <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/52630/> [14]

Although empowerment is at the heart of the Better Internet for Kids policy, youngest children do need help and protection, from parents and peers, on the Internet just as in real life. In order to assist more efficiently and teach how to help others, as [@olliebray](#) [15] tweeted: Grace Kelly (youth panel) sums up what is really needed: education, education, education..."

How to make internet better place for kids? A few open questions ...

As the internet participation evolves through all these years, so do the skills requirements.

Our panellist – the tech blogger [@iAlja](#), [16] – an OUTsider with very deep INSights shared [some valuable thoughts](#) [17] on how coding and knowledge of programming can help you to stay safe online – "building your own solutions for problems you are facing".

Two other interesting angles:

✖ [@HedlundSara](#) [18] To create a better and safer Internet for children, maybe we should educate adults in gender issues and in human rights?

[@pialang](#) [19] Youth say: lot of young people have not realised that what you do online is actually your real life, it's just another playground.....

Amidst the conference, an announcement...

... by Facebook. Content of timeline will be visible only to "friends", not as it is now, also to "friends of friends". Facebook is an active members of the Commission-brokered [CEO Coalition for making the Internet a Better Place for Kids](#) [20].

The Safer Internet Forum has gathered almost 400 participants from Europe and beyond. The [debates](#) [21] evolved around latest trends in policy and research in internet safety for kids, scaling up efforts for partnerships across all sectors, including industry, and increasing youth involvement.

INSAFE/INHOPE, projects and the Centres invite you to have a look at their excellent [material](#) [22] – infographics, videos, reports.

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Links

- [1] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/286>
- [2] <http://www.saferinternet.org/>
- [3] <http://www.inhope.org/>
- [4] <https://twitter.com/search?src=typd&q=%23sif2013>
- [5] <http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/connect/en/content/director-general-robert-madelin>
- [6] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/>
- [7] <https://twitter.com/childnet>
- [8] <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23SIF2013&src=hash>
- [9] <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23IGF2013&src=hash>
- [10] <http://t.co/HW66oWM7wA>
- [11] <https://twitter.com/FuturiumEU>
- [12] https://twitter.com/Livingstone_S
- [13] <https://twitter.com/EUKIDSONLINE>
- [14] <http://t.co/Old5En4Rdr>
- [15] <https://twitter.com/olliebray>
- [16] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/50628>
- [17] <http://blog.ialja.com/2013/10/18/safer-internet-forum-2013-lessons/>
- [18] <https://twitter.com/HedlundSara>
- [19] <https://twitter.com/pialang>
- [20] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/61973>
- [21] <http://www.cvent.com/events/better-internet-with-you-th-/agenda-e6c8907d87cf4e719aceb823e13c3463.aspx>
- [22] <https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/node/67285>