

Global Alliance Against Child Sexual Abuse Online – 2014 Reporting Form

IRELAND

Policy Target No. 1

Enhancing efforts to identify victims and ensuring that they receive the necessary assistance, support and protection.

Operational Goal: Increase the number of identified victims in the International Child Sexual Exploitation images database (ICSE database) managed by INTERPOL by at least 10% yearly.

A) Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report

Since its implementation a total of 34 children have been identified by members of the Paedophile Investigation Unit attached to the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The previous report of ICSE, dated April 1st 2013 showed the figure at 23, this shows a 47% increase to June 2014.

B) Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance

An Garda Síochána are an active participant in the ICSE Programme. Two members travel to Interpol regularly to give training to law enforcement officers on the database.

C) Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up

An Garda Síochána has notified Garda personnel via the Garda Portal on the use and benefits of the ICSE database and all members of An Garda Síochána are encouraged to bring their cases involving child abuse material to the Paedophile Investigation Unit for inclusion on the database. This initiative will continue into the future.

Policy Target No. 2

Enhancing efforts to investigate cases of child sexual abuse online and to identify and prosecute offenders.

Operational Goal: Establish the necessary framework for the criminalization of child sexual abuse online and the effective prosecution of offenders, with the objective of enhancing efforts to investigate and prosecute offenders.

A) Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report

Under section 6 of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998, the possession of child pornography is a criminal offence which is punishable by a maximum penalty of imprisonment for up to 5 years and a fine.

The Act also provides that the production, importation, distribution, printing, publication, showing, and export or sale of any child pornography are offences with a maximum penalty of up to 14 years imprisonment plus a fine.

A person who knowingly possesses any child pornography for the purpose of distributing, publishing, exporting, selling or showing it is guilty of an offence. Again, the maximum penalty is 14 years imprisonment and a fine.

Under section 3 of the Child Trafficking and Pornography Act 1998 (as inserted by section 6 of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) (Amendment) Act 2007), any person who intentionally meets, or travels with the intention of meeting, a child, having met or communicated with that child on two or more previous occasions, and does so for the purpose of sexual exploitation of the child, is guilty of an offence. The definition of sexual exploitation in this context is very broad and it means:

(a) inviting, inducing or coercing the child to engage in prostitution or the production of child pornography;

(b) using the child for such purposes;

(c) inviting, inducing or coercing a child to participate in any sexual activity which is an offence under any enactment;

(d) the commission of any such offence against the child; or inviting, inducing or coercing the child to participate in or observe any activity of a sexual or indecent nature.

The maximum penalty is 14 years imprisonment.

Section 26 of the Sex Offenders Act 2001 makes it an offence for a convicted sex offender to apply for or enter into a contract of employment involving unsupervised access to children or mentally impaired persons without informing his or her prospective employer of the fact of the conviction. Failure to comply with this requirement carries a maximum penalty of 5 years imprisonment plus a fine.

B) Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance

The Paedophile Investigation Unit attached to the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Investigation Unit at the National Bureau of Criminal Investigation is a unit that specifically targets online child abuse material. The Unit is trained to international highest standards and has members that contribute to training both within Interpol and Europol. The Unit actively instructs members of the organisation in the investigation of online child abuse material and updates the Garda Portal on new methodologies and procedures.

C) Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up

On 17 December 2013, the Cabinet approved the drafting of a wide ranging Sexual Offences Bill. The Bill includes legislative provisions to further enhance the protection of children and vulnerable persons from sexual abuse and exploitation. The Bill will facilitate full compliance with the criminal law provisions of:

- EU Directive 2011/93/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography;
- The Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; and
- The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

Operational Goal: Improve the joint efforts of law enforcement authorities across Global Alliance countries to investigate and prosecute child sexual abuse online.

A) *Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report*

An Garda Síochána actively contributes to Interpol and Europol Sections concerned with child abuse material online and have members seconded to both organisations. An Garda Síochána regularly attends meetings, conferences and forums concerned with the prevention and detection of online child abuse material and are actively involved in numerous worldwide operations concerning the proliferation of such material.

B) *Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance*

An Garda Síochána constantly updated their contacts worldwide and continue to keep their members globally informed of new technologies, methodology and advances in both the distribution and detection of child abuse material online. Close ties are maintained with Law Enforcement Agencies worldwide by the Paedophile Investigation Unit.

C) *Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up*

An Garda Síochána deploy two members yearly to the Europol Training Course on combating the Sexual Exploitation of Children on the Internet, a course which brings all European Law Enforcement Agencies together. An Garda Síochána are also active within the European Financial Coalition against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children Online. An Garda Síochána will in the coming years increase its ties with Law Enforcement Agencies, Commercial Organisations and NGO's worldwide involved in the combating of child abuse material online.

Policy Target No. 3

Enhancing efforts to increase public awareness of the risks posed by children's activities online, including grooming and self-production of images that results in the production of new child pornography that may be distributed online.

Operational Goal: Develop, improve, or support appropriate public awareness campaigns or other measures which educate parents, children, and others responsible for children regarding the risks that children's online conduct poses and the steps they can take to minimize those risks.

A) *Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report*

In Ireland, the Office for Internet Safety (OIS) has general but not exclusive responsibility for internet safety; the OIS has responsibility for raising general public awareness but other sector –specific agencies address internet safety issues in relation to those sectors. The OIS is an Executive Office of the Department of Justice and Equality.

The OIS carried out a review of its awareness raising materials in 2013. All of the awareness raising materials were edited and hard copies were re-printed. Half of the materials were extensively revised and updated. All of the materials continue to be made electronically available free of charge on the OIS website www.internetsafety.ie .

In addition to the awareness raising materials mentioned above the OIS produced and disseminated a dedicated leaflet for Safer Internet Day 2014. It again addressed the theme of cyberbullying and was entitled 'Combat Cyberbullying'. This material is also made available free of charge in hard and soft copy by the OIS website.

The OIS continues to act as the coordinator for the EU Safer Internet Programme in Ireland. The partner organisations in the EU Safer Internet Programme are

- (i) the National Centre for Technology in Education (it is a branch of the Department of Education & Skills) – it works with teachers and provides resources targeted at young people, for example, www.watchyourspace.ie ,
- (ii) the Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, its helpline 'Childline' is available for young persons,
- (iii) the National Parents Council (Primary), it provides, inter alia, a helpline for parents,
- (iv) Hotline.ie.

B) Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance

In November 2013 the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources set up an 'Internet Content Governance Advisory Group' (ICGAG). The Group reported at the end of May 2014 and its Report was noted by Government in June 2014. The Group recommended alterations to the approach to internet content governance and to the protection of children online in Ireland. An implementation Group with representation from five Government Departments has been set up. It is anticipated that the implementation group will report before the end of 2014.

C) Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up

If the recommendations of the Internet Content Governance Advisory Group are carried through in full it will mean that Ireland will put in place new mechanisms to deal with internet content governance and specifically with the protection of children online.

In line with the recommendations of the Group, responsibility for internet content governance will rest with the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources.

Operational Goal: Share best practices among Global Alliance countries for effective strategies to inform the public about the risks posed by online, self-exploitative conduct in order to reduce the production of new child pornography.

A) *Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report*

Hotline.ie continues to raise awareness of its service and it encourages increased use of its logo on other websites. Hotline.ie commissioned research on parental attitudes to children's online safety. This research has received media attention in conjunction with the launch in 2014 of the Hotline.ie Annual Report for 2013. The Hotline.ie report for 2013 featured a revised layout and an increased use of infographics to inform and enlighten the public about its work.

Hotline.ie liaises closely with the Gardaí on an ongoing basis in relation to illegal content on the internet. Hotline.ie is a founder member of INHOPE which is the umbrella organisation for hotlines internationally.

B) *Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance*

The Office for Internet Safety makes its awareness raising and Safer Internet Day materials freely available both nationally and internationally on request. The OIS asks that acknowledgement be made of the OIS as the source of the material. The OIS feels that the availability of these materials in the English language makes it easily transferrable to other countries.

Hotline.ie plays an ongoing and active part in INHOPE, the umbrella organisation for hotlines across 43 countries. The Executive Director of INHOPE attended and gave a presentation at the 2014 launch of the Hotline.ie annual report for 2013 in the presence of the Irish Minister for Justice and Equality who formally launched the report. Both the Executive Director of INHOPE and the Minister contributed forewords to the Hotline.ie report.

C) *Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up*

The OIS continues to make its awareness raising materials freely available. The OIS plans to further revise and update its materials.

Hotline.ie continues to raise awareness nationally of its service and it encourages increased use of its logo on other websites.

Policy Target No. 4

Reducing as much as possible the availability of child pornography online and reducing as much as possible the re-victimization of children whose sexual abuse is depicted.

Operational Goal: Encourage participation by the private sector in identifying and removing known child pornography material located in the relevant State, including increasing as much as possible the volume of system data examined for child pornography images.

A) *Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report*

Hotline.ie is operated by the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland. Hotline.ie continues to raise awareness of its service and to that end it encourages increased use of its logo on other websites.

Hotline.ie continues to liaise closely with the Gardaí on an ongoing basis in relation to notice and takedown of child pornography.

The good relationship and trust developed between the ISPs and the law enforcement agencies (achieved, in large measure, as a result of their collaboration in providing the Hotline.ie service) will be utilised to ensure wider dissemination of information about Hotline.ie and its operations. This is likely to include wider use of the Hotline.ie logo and links with other websites, thereby making more people aware not only of the problem but also ensuring access to effective action. Ireland will be addressing positively the question of blocking access to illegal material hosted outside of Ireland. Ireland recognises that international cooperation is an essential element in any strategy to defeat the spread of child pornography and its stands ready to participate fully in any new developments in that respect. A memorandum of understanding is under development for Irish Internet Service Providers to implement blocking of child pornography material.

B) Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance

Hotline.ie is operated by the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland. Hotline.ie continues to raise awareness of its service and to that end it encourages increased use of its logo on other websites. Hotline.ie continues to liaise closely with the Gardaí on an ongoing basis in relation to notice and takedown of child pornography.

Hotline.ie commissioned research on parental attitudes to children's online safety. This research has received media attention in conjunction with the 2014 launch of the Hotline.ie Annual Report for 2013. The research assisted in highlighting a certain level of parental non involvement in issues to do with internet safety. Some of these parental attitudes were found to be related to a perceived lack of knowledge by parents about ICT and about social media in particular. The research further found that only some parents set down guidance for their children concerning technology use. Publicity surrounding the results of the research served to further emphasise to the general public the importance of parental involvement in all aspects of their children's lives and in particular in relation to the use of new technologies and social media.

C) Please indicate specific actions that your country will undertake as a follow-up

The Gardaí have proposed a new initiative in relation to the blocking of child pornography. It will involve setting up Memorandums of Understanding between the Gardaí and individual companies.

Operational Goal: Increase the speed of notice and takedown procedures as much as possible without jeopardizing criminal investigation.

A) *Please report on implementation of any measures announced in your country's 2013 report*

The ongoing close cooperation and collaboration between Hotline.ie and the Gardaí means that illegal content is notified and taken down as speedily as possible commensurate with law enforcement's requirements.

B) *Please assess progress made in your country to pursue this shared policy target and to reach this operational goal of the Global Alliance*

The development of memorandums of understanding between internet service providers and law enforcement remains under way in relation to the implementation of the blocking of illegal internet content.

C) *Please indicate specific actions that will be undertaken as a follow-up*

The advent of memoranda of understanding between internet service providers and law enforcement in relation to the implementation of the blocking of illegal internet content is anticipated.