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Safer Internet plus

A multi-annual Community Programme on promoting safer use of the Internet and new online technologies

Work Programme 2007

Table of contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	3
2	OBJECTIVES AND OVERALL APPROACH.....	3
2.1	SAFER INTERNET PLUS PROGRAMME, THE OVERALL AIM	3
2.2	INTERNATIONAL SCOPE OF THE SAFER INTERNET PLUS PROGRAMME	3
2.3	ACTIONS OPEN IN 2007.....	4
2.4	PROJECT TYPES AND COMMON REQUIREMENTS FOR 2007	4
3	ACTION 1: FIGHTING AGAINST ILLEGAL CONTENT	6
3.1	ACTION 1.1 INTEGRATED NETWORK: HOTLINES	7
3.2	ACTION 1.2: INTEGRATED NETWORK: HOTLINE NETWORK CO-ORDINATOR.....	7
3.3	ACTION 1.3 TARGETED PROJECTS: ENHANCING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES' ANALYSIS OF ILLEGAL MATERIAL	8
3.4	ACTION 1.4 THEMATIC NETWORK: FACILITATING COOPERATION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES IN EUROPE AND INTERNATIONALLY	9
3.5	ACTION 1.5 ENCOURAGING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TASK FORCE	10
4	ACTION 2: TACKLING UNWANTED AND HARMFUL CONTENT	10
5	ACTION 3: PROMOTING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT	10
5.1	ACTION 3.1 THEMATIC NETWORK: NGO NETWORK FOR CHILD PROTECTION ON THE INTERNET.....	11
5.2	ACTION 3.2 ENCOURAGING SELF REGULATORY MEASURES ON CHILD SAFETY AND MOBILE PHONES ...	11
5.3	ACTION 3.3 SAFER INTERNET FORUM	12
6	ACTION 4: AWARENESS-RAISING.....	12
6.1	ACTION 4.1 INTEGRATED NETWORK: AWARENESS NODES.....	12
6.2	ACTION 4.2 INTEGRATED NETWORK: AWARENESS NETWORK CO-ORDINATOR	13
6.3	ACTION 4.3 INTEGRATED NETWORK: HELPLINES	13
6.4	OTHER AWARENESS ACTIVITIES	14
7	PARTICIPATION IN THE SAFER INTERNET PLUS PROGRAMME AND EVALUATION PROCESS	14
7.1	APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS FOR EVALUATION AND REVIEWS.....	15
7.2	ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	15
7.3	AWARD CRITERIA	16
7.4	SELECTION CRITERIA	17
8	IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BUDGET	18
8.1	CALL FOR PROPOSALS	18
8.2	PUBLIC PROCUREMENT ACTIONS	19
8.3	INDICATIVE CALENDAR FOR RELATED ACTIVITIES	19
9	FURTHER INFORMATION.....	19

1 INTRODUCTION

This Work Programme covers the activities to be carried out under the Safer Internet plus Programme in 2007. It defines the priorities of these activities, in line with the decision of the European Parliament and the Council establishing the Safer Internet plus Programme ("the Programme decision").¹ In particular, the Work Programme defines the content and criteria of the call for proposals, its objectives and expected results as well as the indicative budget, and gives information about the activities which the European Commission will organise in collaboration with stakeholders.

This Work Programme also takes into account and implements the 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

2 OBJECTIVES AND OVERALL APPROACH

2.1 Safer Internet plus Programme, the overall aim

The overall aim of the Safer Internet plus Programme ("the Programme") is to fight against illegal content and to promote safer use of the Internet and new online technologies, particularly for children, as part of a coherent approach by the European Union.

The Programme runs for the 4 years 2005-2008. It has a budget of 45 million € to be spent on activities under 4 actions:

- (a) fighting against illegal content
- (b) tackling unwanted and harmful content
- (c) promoting a safer environment
- (d) awareness-raising

In 2007, there will be an enhanced focus on fighting illegal content, with particular emphasis on fighting distribution of child sexual abuse images. Actions will also be undertaken promoting a safer environment and awareness-raising. New actions under the heading "tackling unwanted and harmful content" will not be funded in 2007, although existing actions will continue to be supported. .

This will be done through a call for proposals 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.

2.2 International scope of the Safer Internet plus Programme

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

¹ Decision No.854/2005/EC of 11 May 2005 of the European Parliament and of the Council published in OJ L149 of 11.6.2005, p.1

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

³ Communication from the Commission – Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child COM(2006) 367 final

images. In 2007, the Programme will support international actions in the following areas targeted at combating the distribution of child sexual abuse images: i) international outreach of the European network of hotlines; ii) support for police co-operation; iii) participation of children's rights and welfare NGOs concerned with child safety online in international meetings where relevant issues are discussed as well as encouraging dialogue and actions in countries close to the European Union where child sexual abuse material is produced and stored; iv) dialogue with the European financial institutions whose facilities can be used as part of the chain of distribution of child sexual abuse images would be extended to ensure exchange of best practice with financial institutions in other parts of the world

As Internet access becomes more widespread both throughout Europe and the rest of the world, children themselves increasingly become active users of this technology as well as mobile phones. Other countries may provide useful indications about 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. The awareness network should take steps to ensure that there is an exchange of experience, particularly with third countries which have well-structured national awareness-raising activities.

2.3 Actions open in 2007

The following actions will be open under the 2007 Call for proposals:

1. Fighting against illegal content

- Integrated networks: Hotlines
- Integrated networks: Hotline co-ordinating node
- Targeted projects to enhance analysis of illegal material by law enforcement agencies
- Thematic network to facilitate efficient and coordinated law enforcement work against production and distribution of child sexual abuse material in Europe

2. Promoting a safer environment

- Thematic network: NGO Network for Child Protection on the Internet

3. Awareness-raising

- Integrated networks: Awareness nodes
- Integrated networks: Awareness co-ordinating node
- Integrated networks: Helplines

2.4 Project types and common requirements for 2007

Integrated networks: The Safer Internet plus Programme has set up two European networks:

- a network of hotlines where the public can report illegal content, and
- a network of national nodes performing awareness-raising activities and running helplines.

The purpose of the networks is to coordinate activities and bring together a variety of stakeholders to ensure action and facilitate transfer of knowledge locally, regionally and throughout Europe. The hotlines and awareness nodes are part of these networks. Each node has a national reach and the European-wide networking between nodes is enhanced by network coordinators. Awareness nodes may, as part of the integrated networks, apply to cooperate with or establish helplines where children can raise concerns about illegal and harmful content and uncomfortable or scary experiences related to their use of online technologies. Hotlines and awareness nodes apply for Commission support under the project type "integrated networks".

The Commission will expect cooperation of awareness nodes, hotlines and helplines at local level and therefore encourages the establishment of combined nodes composed of an awareness node, a hotline and a helpline.

In order to achieve maximum efficiency and impact, each hotline, each awareness node and each helpline should preferably consist of a single organisation. In a combined node, the awareness node, a hotline and a helpline will each retain their operational independence. They will, however, be expected to co-operate by:

- setting up a single advisory board with national stakeholders
- exchanging information about their respective activities
- agreeing common positions on Safer Internet issues for submission to policy-makers and the media

Not more than one awareness node, one helpline and one hotline will be selected for funding within a given geographical area.⁴

In the case of a consortium, the distribution of work between partners should be clear and logical. The recommended maximum size of the consortium for a combined node composed of awareness node, helpline and hotline is 4 partners. The recommended maximum size of the consortium for a combined node composed of awareness node and either helpline or hotline is 3 partners.

If the consortium is larger than the recommended maximum size, the Commission may require it to be reduced in size or offer a reduced rate of funding. Exceptionally, a larger consortium may be accepted without a reduction in the rate of funding if both the total project budget and each participant's part in that budget are substantial, or as a transitional measure to facilitate the move from "stand-alone" awareness nodes and hotlines to a combined node.⁵

In the integrated networks, the funding for hotlines, awareness nodes and helplines will be 50% (which may be increased to 75 % for public bodies, SMEs and non-profit organisations). The co-ordinators of the hotline network and awareness network will be funded at 80% of eligible costs as defined in the model grant agreement, in view of the European nature of the task, the specialised support infrastructure to be provided and the requirement for particular skills.

The Commission may refund 100% of the costs for specific activities such as organisation of regional meetings, training/mentoring of EU-funded hotlines and awareness nodes and travel bursaries. Where organisation of regional meetings and training/mentoring is carried out by hotlines, awareness nodes or helplines, the network co-ordinator may reimburse the costs and claim them as eligible costs.

Proposals must clearly describe the current situation in the country regarding issues related to safer use of technology and new online technologies and demonstrate the value the proposed national node expects to add in this context. Proposals have to explain which kind of support the project would receive from national authorities, industry, NGOs or childcare organisations. The proposal must show how the proposed national node will co-operate with other organisations active in the field in the same geographic area, both those funded by the Safer Internet plus Programme and others.

The national nodes will contribute to the consolidation and further development of the European networks of awareness nodes, helplines and hotlines. They should illustrate the European dimension of the issue(s) addressed in the proposals, and the extent to which the proposed action would contribute to tackling them at European level.

Targeted projects are pilot projects or best practice actions in areas relevant to the Programme, including projects involving innovative uses of existing technology. The standard funding model for

⁴ Proposals may be made for areas which cover more than one Member State or for areas which have a common language

⁵ Further guidance will be given in the guide for proposers

targeted projects is 50% of the eligible costs (which may be increased to 75 % for public bodies, SMEs and non-profit organisations). Proposals may be submitted by a consortium of legal entities.

The European added value of the proposal will have to be clearly demonstrated, including coverage of several different Member States. A targeted project consortium should be of a manageable size, 4-8 applicants covering at least 3 Member States. The consortium should include both industry/researchers and potential end users, who either contribute directly or indirectly, for instance through a project advisory board or a pilot user group, to be consulted by the consortium in order to provide advice and feedback on the results. Further links with relevant external organizations and/or other relevant projects should be established.

The issues addressed should have a European dimension, and the ways proposed to tackle them at European level should impact a large number of users in the largest possible number of EU countries. As far as the expected impact is concerned, the target users and their needs, also beyond the consortium participants, must be clearly identified. Proposers must present an analysis of demand based as much as possible on quantified evidence. The results of the project must be accessible by the target users beyond the end of the project. Exploitation and/or dissemination plans are expected to adequately support these objectives. Appropriate measures and indicators are required for monitoring the progress of the project and for assessing the results and the impact of the activities.

A clear case should be made for the sustainability of the proposed solutions, i.e. their capability of developing and surviving without Community funding after the end of the project. Sustainability comprises both economic and organisational aspects. This requirement may be translated into different practical measures and provisions, depending on the target users and the intended uses of the results of the projects, i.e. whether the results from the project are to be made available through commercial services or through open-access services or services based on public-private partnerships.

Thematic networks bring together stakeholders to ensure action throughout Europe and to facilitate coordination activities and the transfer of knowledge on a cross-country level. A thematic network ensures exchange of information and arranges conferences, seminars, workshops or other meetings. The direct costs for the network co-ordinator of co-ordinating and implementing the network are covered at a rate of 100% of eligible costs. Network members cover their own running costs except travel to network meetings which can be reimbursed under the network budget. A thematic network should be open to new members and the estimated budget should be calculated to allow for this.

Thematic networks should cover the majority of EU Member States and be open and proactive in attracting new partners. The network should include relevant stakeholders, the issues addressed should have a European dimension and the ways proposed to tackle them should impact a large number of users in the largest possible number of EU countries. Further links with relevant external organizations and/or other relevant projects should be established.

As far as the expected impact is concerned, the issues to be discussed and the aim of the actions of the thematic network must be clearly identified. Proposers must present an analysis of the impact of the actions under the thematic network. Appropriate measures and indicators for monitoring the progress of the project and for assessing the results and the impact of the activities are required.

Public procurement actions will be implemented through dedicated calls for tenders. Further details on the procurement actions foreseen in 2007 are given in the chapter "Implementation plan and budget".

3 ACTION 1: FIGHTING AGAINST ILLEGAL CONTENT

The production and distribution of material that depicts sexual abuse of children (child pornography) is a global problem. Internet and other online technologies have facilitated the distribution of such

material to the whole world. Most European countries have legislation banning the production and distribution of the material, but the amount that circulates online does not seem to decrease.

In 2007, the Programme will focus on fighting against the production and distribution of child sexual abuse images and the identification of the victims by providing support for cooperation between law enforcement agencies throughout Europe, through supporting the development of technical tools to make the forensic work more efficient and through exploring how different stakeholders (law enforcement agencies, financial sector and NGOs) contribute to combat the purchase of child sexual abuse material over the Internet which is facilitated through the use of credit cards or other electronic payment methods. The Programme also wishes to contribute to stimulating international cooperation and encouraging related activities in adjacent countries to EU, like Russia.

The Programme will continue to provide funding for a European network of hotlines for the public to report illegal content.

3.1 Action 1.1 Integrated network: Hotlines

Hotlines allow members of the public to report illegal content (such as child abuse images (child pornography), illegal adult pornography and racism) and pass the reports on to the appropriate body for action (Internet Service Provider (ISP), police or correspondent hotline). Their role is distinct from that of the law enforcement authorities, since they do not investigate offences or arrest or prosecute offenders. The hotlines may constitute centres of expertise providing guidance to ISPs and other stakeholders as to what content might be illegal.

Funding will be provided for hotlines to act as nodes of the network and to co-operate with other nodes within the European network of hotlines. Hotlines should show that they have the necessary financial resources and support for their activities from national authorities, law enforcement agencies (e.g. by providing supporting letters from national police) and NGOs, and that their activities are in accordance with national law. Co-funding is intended for civilian hotlines, and therefore will not be provided for hotlines run by the police.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for integrated networks, the proposed hotlines should meet the following conditions:

- establish, if necessary, and operate a hotline to receive information from the public relating to illegal content;
- draw up a manual of procedures in co-operation with law enforcement authorities and in accordance with best practice guidelines drawn up by the network
- actively inform users of the hotline's scope of activity and how to contact it. Hotlines will make clear to users the difference between their activities and those of public authorities, and will inform them of the existence of alternative ways of reporting illegal content;
- deal rapidly with complaints received;
- participate actively in networking nationally and at European level and contribute to cross-border discussions and exchange of best practice;

The Programme promotes close cooperation at local level and therefore encourages the establishment of combined nodes consisting of an awareness node, a helpline and a hotline. A proposal for a hotline should therefore be made either in combination with a proposal for an awareness node, or in partnership with an existing awareness node. If a stand-alone hotline and a stand-alone awareness node are selected for funding within a given geographical area, the Commission may, where possible, require them to form a combined node.

3.2 Action 1.2: Integrated network: Hotline network co-ordinator

A network co-ordinator will be assigned to the European network of hotlines, which will facilitate agreement between the hotlines so as to develop European-level guidelines, working methods and

practices which respect to the limits of the national laws applying to the individual hotlines and to update and develop the existing code of conduct and guidelines for best practice. Among issues covered will be co-operation between civilian hotlines and law enforcement authorities in accordance with national legislation, and legal and technical training of hotline staff.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for integrated networks, the network co-ordinator should meet the following conditions:

- organise regular exchange of information and experience between European hotlines;
- draw up and/or update best practice guidelines for the European hotlines and adapt them to new technology;
- providing a pool of expertise for advice and a coaching process for start-up hotlines and provide incentives for potential new hotlines with a view to completing the network's coverage across Europe;
- provide and disseminate statistics and information about the reports and the results of the network throughout Europe;
- international outreach: ensure liaison with hotlines in third countries, particularly in member countries of the Council of Europe, where illegal content is hosted and produced and ensure transfer of know-how and best practice⁶;
- participate in meetings organised by the Commission, Safer Internet Forum and other relevant events, co-ordinating input/feedback from awareness network and ensuring synergy between the integrated networks, thematic networks and other funded projects.
- maintain a close working relationship with the awareness network co-ordinator to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of overall Programme operations.
- participate in the Safer Internet Forum and other relevant events, co-ordinating input/feedback from hotlines.

If the network co-ordinator is an association, its membership should come predominantly from countries inside the geographical area of the Safer Internet plus Programme.

3.3 Action 1.3 Targeted projects: enhancing law enforcement agencies' analysis of illegal material

Building upon recommendations received in a roundtable meeting on victim identification that the Programme arranged in 2006, gathering computer vision and content based information retrieval experts with representatives of law enforcement authorities, the Programme invites proposals for **targeted projects** that could enhance the analysis of child sexual abuse material by law enforcement authorities.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for targeted projects, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- The project should be aimed at one or more of the following:
 - a) developing or enhancing technological tools for the specific needs of the police, aiming at facilitating the analysis of evidence material on seized computers or otherwise reported to them. The tools would help to cope with the sheer volume of illegal material to handle during forensic enquiries by identifying and distinguishing new material from already known material, or by linking different pieces of evidences together;
 - b) developing or enhancing technological tools for the specific need of the police, to match victims, offenders or details of crime scenes when they appear in different pictures or videos.

⁶ Hotlines in countries outside the geographical area of the Safer Internet plus 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.

This would enable facilitation and widening of investigations in order to rescue the victims from the abusive situation;

- c) conducting a survey of functional requirements of law enforcement agencies and identifying relevant state-of-the-art technologies with a view to making recommendations to agencies, to those providing funding for the agencies and to industry for future research topics or for deployment activities in the above mentioned fields;
- Projects under a) and b) should include the development of a prototype and field trials with specialised police units in operational conditions in at least 4 Member States, with the objective of an operational tool at the end of the project. These projects should also specify the business model in the proposal (commercial, open access);
- The proposals must involve target group/end users, in this case law enforcement agencies.

Proposals are invited from research institutions (public and private), technology suppliers and engineering companies within the fields of content based information retrieval, computer vision, in particular facial recognition, age estimation based on pictures or videos, pattern recognition, geographic localisation techniques, image enhancement from distorted image/video etc.

3.4 Action 1.4 Thematic network: Facilitating cooperation of law enforcement agencies in Europe and internationally

The production and distribution of child sexual abuse material is an international problem, and needs both global and local solutions and cooperation. The Programme invites proposals for a **thematic network** to stimulate organised and extensive cross-border exchange of best practice between law enforcement agencies in the fight against production and online distribution of child sexual abuse material within Europe and internationally. The thematic network should serve as a point for general exchange of information and best practices, but will not be responsible for police operations. The expected result is a coordinated approach across Europe and globally, targeted at limiting the market of commercial distribution of child sexual abuse material, with the effect of reduction of the amount of material that is produced and distributed through online technologies.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for thematic networks, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- the network co-ordinator and members of the network should be specialists in online child exploitation, cybercrime and high tech crime from national law enforcement agencies from the geographical area of the Safer Internet plus Programme;
- the network should ensure participation of relevant European and international institutions such as Europol and Interpol;
- international outreach: ensure liaison with law enforcement agencies in third countries, particularly in member countries of the Council of Europe, where illegal content is hosted and produced and ensure transfer of know-how and best practice⁷;
- the network should discuss relevant issues, exchange best practice and propose solutions to the issues at hand, for instance how to disrupt the commercial production and distribution of child sexual abuse material and reduce demand in order to make Internet safer for children and the general public; the setting up of blocking technology in cooperation with ISPs; analysis and investigation into payment systems used online in cooperation with financial institutions as well as other issues arising from the network itself;
- the network should aim at improving procedures for exchange of information;

⁷ National law enforcement agencies from outside the geographical area of the Safer Internet plus Programme could be associated members who would 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.

3.5 Action 1.5 Encouraging the establishment of a Financial Institutions Task Force

The distribution of child sexual abuse images online is facilitated through the use of credit cards and other electronic payment methods. While some of the financial institutions offering credit cards or other online payment systems are engaged in fighting the distribution of this material, not all are involved in taking action. The Programme wishes to encourage the establishment of a Financial Institutions Task Force, facilitating dialogue and actions from the European financial sector towards inhibiting payment through their systems and cooperating with law enforcement agencies, including financial institutions based in Europe which are part of a wider global network.

The Task Force would be an industry-led initiative, where the Programme would facilitate meetings and dialogue on how to tackle the commercial distribution of online illegal content and in particular child abusive images within the sector and between the sector and Commission services. This dialogue should extend to an exchange of best practice with financial institutions in other parts of the world, for instance in the United States where a similar Task Force has already been set up.

4 ACTION 2: TACKLING UNWANTED AND HARMFUL CONTENT

Harmful content is content which parents, carers, teachers and other adults responsible for children consider is harmful for them. Definitions of what is considered harmful varies across countries and cultures, but in many cases it ranges from pornography and violence to racism, xenophobia, self-mutilation, anorexia, and suicide sites.

A **process of exchange of good practices** will be set up, which may include a meeting on technical and market aspects of mobile handsets with special features for children with handset and network manufacturers and a forum on cross-media content classification.

There will not be a call for proposals under this action in 2007.

5 ACTION 3: PROMOTING A SAFER ENVIRONMENT

A fully functioning system of self-regulation is an essential element in limiting the flow of harmful and illegal content through online technologies.⁸ There is a continuing need for Community work in this area to encourage implementation of codes of conduct by the European Internet and other online technology industries.

The Safer Internet Forum is a yearly event that spans all action lines, facilitating discussion at expert level and giving a platform to drive consensus, recommendations, guidelines etc. to relevant national and European channels. It also gives the opportunity to discuss ways in which industry can contribute to the fight against illegal content. Results and findings from ongoing and completed projects co-funded by the Programme will feed into the process.

⁸ 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 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 L270, 7.1.1998, p. 48.

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

Internet is a global network with equally global challenges. A central focal point representing civil society concerning child protection on the Internet would increase the awareness of the risks and solutions relating to children's use of online technologies internationally.

The Programme invites proposals to set up a **thematic network** of European non-governmental organisations promoting children's rights and welfare to develop a concerted approach by sharing experience and best practices, and by developing joint strategies, in order to ensure that the needs of children are taken into account in discussions about the Internet and new media in Europe, as well as in the relevant international fora. Expected result: Child protection and children's rights are included on the agendas, when issues concerning internet governance, cyber-crime and Internet and online security/safety are discussed by relevant national and international actors.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for thematic networks, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- The network should consist of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) established within the Safer Internet plus Programme's geographical area that are active in the field of child protection on the Internet (preferably in several Member States);
- The coordinator of the consortium must convincingly show that they have support from the other members of the network;
- The network must clearly define the issues that are to be treated, and will be expected to include the following issues in their work: fighting against online child sexual abuse material, combating online grooming, assess the effects that the involvement of new technologies have on children's lives from a child rights perspective. The network will also be expected to deal with new issues concerning online child safety and to carry out consultations with children and young people;
- The network will be expected to participate in European and international fora as well as reporting to the European Commission on their results and assessments. The network should publish reports about progress and important issues raised;
- The network should seek to develop relationships with international agencies and NGOs outside of Europe, particularly in countries close to the European Union where child abusive material is produced and stored, i.e. through the participation in international meetings, where relevant issues are discussed as well as by encouraging dialogue, capacity building, awareness raising, exchange of best practices, networking and other relevant actions.
- The network should aim at arranging 2-4 meetings a year with relevant stakeholders in order to ensure their engagement in the issues at hand;
- The network should aim to cooperate with other actions of the Safer Internet plus Programme.

Before the network is set up, the Commission may in addition make a call for expression of interest and offer bursaries to selected NGOs to cover travel and subsistence costs for participation in such meetings.

5.2 Action 3.2 Encouraging self regulatory measures on child safety and mobile phones

The number of European children who own a mobile phone is increasing - in some cases the uptake of mobile phones are higher than Internet use. Mobile phones can be of great use and fun to children, and are in many cases seen as an advantage by parents who feel safe that they can get in touch with their children, and their children can get in touch with them. There are many self-regulatory initiatives throughout Europe.

Work will continue in the area of child safety and mobile phones, following the results of the public consultation and the meetings of the High Level Group of stakeholders held in 2006 to prepare for the signature of the "**European Framework on Safer Mobile Use by Younger Teenagers and Children**" by Mobile Network Operators on Safer Internet Day 2007.

5.3 Action 3.3 Safer Internet Forum

The Commission will continue to set the agenda for and convene the meetings of the Safer Internet Forum. In 2007 a plenary meeting will be held in June, making room for a consultation with interested parties and relevant stakeholders on the development of the Safer Internet plus Programme as well as receiving advice for future developments.

6 ACTION 4: AWARENESS-RAISING

A central aim for the Safer Internet plus Programme is to inform the general public; parents, carers, teachers and children themselves about issues relating to children's safety online. The main aim is to help them to find relevant information and increase their knowledge about how they can use the Internet and other online technologies more safely.

The Programme is funding the European network of awareness nodes to coordinate and carry out awareness actions and programmes in close co-operation with all relevant actors at European, regional and local levels. The awareness nodes may apply to set up helplines.

6.1 Action 4.1 Integrated network: Awareness nodes

The Programme promotes the set up of awareness nodes across Europe to ensure awareness-raising among parents, carers, teachers and children, and opens the call 2007 for the set up of such nodes.

The actions carried out by the nodes address issues related to content considered unsuitable for children, racism and xenophobia, bullying and harassment, use of 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 deployment of Internet, mobiles and game consoles by children. The actions take into account related issues of consumer protection, data protection, information, network security issues (viruses/spam).

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for integrated networks, the proposed awareness nodes should meet the following conditions:

- devise cohesive, hard-hitting and targeted awareness campaigns using the most appropriate media, taking into account best practice and experience in other countries, and which may involve the participation of children and young people;
- 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 relating to safer use of Internet and new media;
- inform the intended target groups about European filtering software and services and about hotlines and self-regulation schemes through using 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);
- actively co-operate with other nodes 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;

- perform studies to gather knowledge about the development of children's own use of online technologies and the effects that this has on their lives, including assessment of risks;
- where appropriate, co-operate with other actions under the Safer Internet plus Programme;

Bodies seeking to act as awareness nodes need to show that they have the strong support of national authorities. They should have a clear mandate to educate the public in safer use of the Internet and new media or in media and information literacy, and must have the necessary financial resources to implement that mandate.

The Programme promotes close cooperation at local level and therefore encourages the establishment of combined nodes consisting of an awareness node, a helpline and a hotline. If a stand-alone hotline and a stand-alone awareness node are selected for funding within a given geographical area, the Commission may, where possible, require them to form combined nodes.

6.2 Action 4.2 Integrated network: Awareness network co-ordinator

To ensure maximum co-operation and effectiveness of awareness actions across Europe, the 2007 call is also open for a network co-ordinator to provide logistical and infrastructural support for the awareness nodes, ensuring European-level visibility, good communication and exchange of experience so that lessons learnt can be applied on an ongoing basis.

In addition to the common requirements for integrated networks, the proposed awareness network co-ordinator should meet the following conditions:

- provide effective communication and exchange of information and best practice within the network;
- provide training in safer use of Internet and new technologies for awareness node staff;
- provide for expertise and technical assistance to candidates wishing to set up awareness actions and to start-up awareness nodes;
- provide infrastructure for a single, comprehensive web portal to provide visibility for awareness activities and to provide a collection of relevant information and awareness and research resources with content such as news services, articles, monthly newsletter;
- organise an annual Safer Internet Day throughout Europe and beyond;
- participate in meetings organised by the Commission, Safer Internet Forum and other relevant events, co-ordinating input/feedback from awareness network and ensuring synergy between the integrated networks, thematic networks and other funded projects.
- maintain a close working relationship with the hotline network co-ordinator to ensure the cohesion and effectiveness of overall Programme operations and to increase public awareness of the hotlines.

6.3 Action 4.3 Integrated network: Helplines

Awareness nodes may apply to cooperate with or establish helplines, where children can raise concerns about illegal and harmful content and uncomfortable or scary experiences related to their use of online technologies. The helplines would offer one-to-one conversations with trained helpers in real time (by telephone or online). 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 from children.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for integrated networks, the proposed helplines should meet the following conditions:

- provide a call facility for answering calls from children related to their use of online technologies;
- design operating guidelines and a training module for the staff;
- actively inform the users of the helpline's scope of activity and how to contact it;

- disseminate the results by providing statistics on the number of calls received and the issues raised;
- discuss the results from its activities with experts on an ongoing basis.

Helplines will be affiliated to the European network of awareness nodes. They are expected to participate in networking at European level and to contribute to cross-border discussions and exchange of best practice. A proposal from a helpline must be made in partnership with an awareness node.

6.4 Other awareness activities

6.4.1 Europe Direct

The EUROPE DIRECT contact centre, funded by the European Commission, offers a multilingual free telephone and e-mail service which citizens can use from anywhere in the European Union to find answers to questions they may have about the EU and EU-related issues, or about very practical issues related to, for instance, education and mobility.

The EUROPE DIRECT service acts as a European contact point for inquiries relating to safer use of the Internet by filtering incoming inquiries and guiding/redirecting citizens to the appropriate national hotline, helpline, or awareness node websites. This should contribute to increase information for the general public and enhance visibility of the hotlines, helplines and awareness nodes and of the Safer Internet plus Programme.

6.4.2 Eurobarometer survey

Following the Eurobarometer survey of 2005 of parents' views on their children's use of online technologies, the Programme will carry out a survey of children's own views on their use and how they deal with risks. A follow-up survey of parents' views of their children's use may be organised, designed for comparability with the survey held at end of 2005 as well as possibly include questions on emerging issues. The surveys will cover all Member States, EEA/EFTA and candidate countries. They will be carried out under the relevant framework contract.

6.4.3 Safer Internet Day

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. In February 2005 and 2006 Safer Internet Days were organised under the patronage of Commissioner Reding by the European Internet safety network INSAFE, which is co-funded by the Safer Internet plus Programme, with the participation of a broad number of organisations and countries across Europe and world-wide. In preparation for Safer Internet Day 2007, a competition was launched for partner schools worldwide to produce awareness material. Prizes for the best material were given on Safer Internet Day 2007. A European Framework on Safer Mobile Use by Younger Teenagers and Children was signed by major mobile network operators, the implementation of which will be followed up in 2007.

In the framework of Safer Internet Day 2008 the Commission will take the opportunity to encourage industries, organisations and children themselves in Europe to engage in awareness-raising activities.

7 PARTICIPATION IN THE SAFER INTERNET PLUS PROGRAMME AND EVALUATION PROCESS

The call for proposals under this Work Programme is open to all legal entities established in the Member States. It is also open to participation of legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties to the EEA Agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

It is furthermore open to legal entities established in Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.⁹ If proposals submitted by legal entities from these countries are selected for funding, a grant agreement will only be signed once the necessary steps have been taken for the country concerned to join the Programme through signature of a bilateral agreement. Up to date information on which countries are part of the Programme is available on the programme web site at <http://ec.europa.eu/saferinternet>.

Legal entities established in third countries and international organisations may take part in all projects at their own expense.

7.1 Appointment of independent experts for evaluation and reviews

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

The Commission will appoint independent experts to assist with the evaluation of proposals and with the review of project results. The experts shall be identified on the basis of a current call for independent experts for the eContentplus and Safer Internet plus Programmes (2005-2008). Experts will be selected in consideration of the skills and knowledge appropriate to the tasks assigned to them, taking into account the thematic requirements of a call or project, and with consideration of geographical and gender balance.

Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided in three categories: eligibility criteria, award criteria, selection criteria. Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria shall be evaluated further. The description of these criteria is presented below.

7.2 Eligibility criteria

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

The following checks will be carried out:

- Receipt of proposal by the Commission on or before the deadline date and time established in the call.
- Proposal completeness. Proposals which are substantially incomplete - that is to say that the forms 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

⁹ Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of the other part, OJ L84 of 20.3.2004. Protocol to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of the other part, on a Framework Agreement between the European Community and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the general principles for the participation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Community programmes OJ L92, p. 23 of 22.7.2005

- 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) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of grant agreement for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

All applicants shall declare on their honour that they are not in one of the above listed situations.

Applicants making false declarations expose themselves to financial penalties or exclusion from grants and contracts¹⁰.

7.3 Award criteria

Award criteria will be applied to evaluate the relative merit of proposals received as well as specific weighting of the criteria. Integrated networks, targeted projects and thematic networks all have specific sets of award criteria, with specific weightings.

Award criteria are applied on the basis of 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 do not reach at least 60 points will not be retained for co-funding.

7.3.1 Integrated networks

- 1. Relevance, impact and quality of the technical part of the proposal** (*Weighting of criteria 20%*)
- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet plus Programme and the relevant action as set out in the call.
 - Clear description of the current situation in the country regarding issues and of the intended impact in this context of the proposed national node.
 - Clear description of problems, proposed solutions.
 - Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.
- 2. Partnership, resources, management** (*Weighting of criteria 40%*)
- Adequacy of the partnership in terms of relevance and expertise of the applying organisation(s), size of the consortium and the combination of complementary expertise and task distribution of the participants.
 - Extent to which the project provides for the personnel and financial resources necessary for carrying out the proposed work.
 - Adequacy of the management, decision making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the node.
 - Adequacy of measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and impact.
- 3. National co-operation** (*Weighting of criteria 25%*)
- Extent to which the project demonstrates in a convincing way support from national authorities, industry, NGO, Childcare organisations (eg. by providing supporting letters)
 - Co-operation with other organisations active in the field, both those funded by the Safer Internet plus Programme and others.
- 4. European added value and network contribution** (*Weighting of criteria 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 node to the consolidation and further development of the European network

¹⁰ Art. 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.

7.3.2 Targeted projects

1. Relevance and impact	(Weighting of criteria 30%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet plus Programme and the relevant action as set out in the call. - Expected impact of the proposed action on the target group and its viability beyond the phases of work sponsored by the European Union. - 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 of criteria 30%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clear description of the current state-of-the-art of the underlying technologies - Clear description of the problems addressed and the proposed solutions. - Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal, including their applicability in practical terms (e.g. through development of prototype and field trials). 	
3. Partnership, resources and management	(Weighting of criteria 20%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the partnership in terms of relevance and expertise of the applying organisation(s), size of the consortium and the combination of complementary expertise and task distribution of the participants. - Extent to which the project provides for the personnel and financial resources necessary for carrying out the proposed work. - Adequacy of the management, decision making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the consortium. - Adequacy of the measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and impact. 	
4. European added value and networking synergy	(Weighting of criteria 20%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - European dimension of the issue(s) addressed, and extent to which the proposed action would contribute to tackling them at European level. - European added value of the consortium behind the proposal. - Links with relevant external organizations or projects. 	

7.3.3 Thematic networks

1. Relevance and impact	(Weighting of criteria 15%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contribution to achieving the objectives of the Safer Internet plus Programme and the relevant action as set out in the call. - Expected impact of the proposed action. 	
2. Quality of the technical part of the proposal	(Weighting of criteria 25%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 of criteria 25%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality of the coordinating team and partnerships to achieve the co-ordination envisaged as well as the adequacy of the management, decision making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the network. 	
4. Quality of the proposed network and European added value	(Weighting of criteria 35%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adequacy of the organisations participating in the network in terms of relevance, competences, combination of complementary expertise and resources available. - Complementarities of expertise available in the partnership. - European added value of the network. - Links with relevant external organizations or projects. - The adequacy of the measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and impact. 	

7.4 Selection criteria

Selection criteria will ensure that the applicants possess the resources to co-finance the project and the professional competencies and qualifications required to complete the work successfully.

Selection criteria are applied on the basis of the information supplied in the proposal. If this identifies cases of weak financial capacity or professional competence it may necessitate compensating actions such as financial guarantees or other actions. Successful proposals called to negotiations will be the subject of a formal legal and financial validation as a requirement to the issuing of a grant agreement.

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.

8 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BUDGET

8.1 Call for proposals

A single call for proposals, with a fixed deadline, will be published in 2007 covering the actions of the Programme mentioned above.

8.1.1 Budget

The Community contribution to the indirect actions selected from the call for proposals 2007 will be covered by the commitment appropriations for 2007.

An indicative amount of 11.51 MEUR is available for the call. If the number and quality of projects recommended for funding is higher than this, funding could also be foreseen from the 2008 budget.

The **indicative budget breakdown** between actions is as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|
| 1. Fighting against illegal content | 40 % |
| 2. Promoting a safer environment | 4 % |
| 3. Awareness-raising | 56 % |

8.1.2 Projects overview

	Characteristics	Typical duration	Typical EU Contribution	Typical consortium size
Integrated networks	Hotlines (action 1) Awareness nodes and helplines (action 4)	Up to 24 months	50 % co-funding of eligible costs for the nodes	3-4 partners
Targeted projects	Develop and adapt technology in order to reduce the amount of illegal material to be analysed by law enforcement agencies (action 1)	Up to 36 months	50 % co-funding of eligible costs for the nodes	4-8 partners
Thematic networks	- facilitate exchange of good practices between law enforcement agencies across Europe (action 1) - NGO network for child protection on the Internet (action 3)	24-30 months	Up to 100 % funding of a limited set of eligible costs	At least 10 partners/ members

8.1.3 Overview by action

	ACTION 1	ACTION 3	ACTION 4
Integrated networks	X		X
Targeted projects	X		
Thematic networks	X	X	

8.2 Public procurement actions

An indicative amount of 1 MEUR is available for the following public procurement actions which are foreseen in 2007:

Title	Indicative date for commitment	Budget
Study mapping European legal and non legal initiatives concerning online "grooming".	4 th quarter	0.5 M€
Eurobarometer survey (framework contract)	4 th quarter	0.260 M€
Project reviews (appointment letters)	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th quarters	0.04 M€
Expenses for Safer internet Forum	2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th quarters	0.1 M€
Expenses for Safer Internet Day 2008	3 rd and 4 th quarters	0.1 M€

Administrative budget line

Commitment appropriations for 2007 available under the ADMIN budget line 09 010404:

Evaluation of calls for proposals (appointment letters)	€50.000
Evaluation Service Provider	€30.000
Publications & other expenses	€80.000
Communication activities of the DG	€20.000
Travel reimbursement (international meetings)	€50.000

8.3 Indicative calendar for related activities

Date	Event
April/May 2007	Adoption of Work Programme
June 2007	Publication of the call for proposals
October 2007	Evaluation
December 2007	Evaluation report and draft implementation plan approved by Authorising Officer (DG)
February 2008	Committee Meeting – presentation for opinion of call results European Parliament Right of Scrutiny
March – June 2008	Negotiations, award decisions, individual commitments, grant agreements signature

9 FURTHER INFORMATION

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