

Better Internet for Kids

Insafe Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

(2008, amended first in 2012, and again in 2015)



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Introduction

The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishes an Insafe Safer Internet network of Awareness Centres and Helplines (hereinafter jointly referred to as Centres) linked to the Connecting Europe Facility programme of the European Commission.

This MoU was adopted by the Steering Committee in 2008, and first amended in March 2012, and again in December 2015.

1. Mission Statement

The Insafe network is committed to promoting the safe, responsible, positive, creative, ethical use of online information and communication technologies, including the internet, while supporting children and young people, as well as their parents, teachers and care-takers. It aims at nurturing shared responsibility by government, educators, parents, media, industry and all other relevant actors for the protection of the online rights and needs of citizens, particularly children and young people, while embracing their rights to provision and participation. It aims more specifically at raising awareness, supporting and empowering users, fostering media and information literacy, as well as digital citizenship, and promoting positive content.

The members of the Insafe network commit themselves to:

1. Share knowledge, information, resources and best practice.
2. Build expertise together about digital technology and online safety issues while jointly developing insight and understanding into how to raise media and information literacy.
3. Foster synergy between Awareness Centres and Helplines in order to achieve European added value, while raising awareness of the existence and the work of Hotlines.
4. Promote a safer and better internet through common awareness-raising resources, campaigns and events.
5. Engage with children and young people, allowing them to express their views and pool their knowledge and experiences.
6. Offer online helpline services for reporting and dealing with harmful contact (e.g. grooming, online abuse), conduct (e.g. cyberbullying, hate speech, sexting) and content online.
7. Advise and support new members of the network.

2. Membership

The Insafe network comprises national Awareness Centres and Helplines as contracted by the European Commission, as well as a European network coordinator (hereinafter also referred to as the Coordinator). New Centres will automatically become members of the Insafe network upon the award of their contract by the European Commission.

Upon approval by the Steering Committee, any Centre that stops receiving funding from the European Commission can become an associate network member. Associated Centre status may be accorded as well to organisations interested in developing a sustainable partnership within the network.

The Steering Committee can accord observer status to organisations with which the network will closely collaborate at the European or international level. Consortia negotiating a contract to be a national Centre, shall be given observer status also.

3. Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will be the main coordinating body of the Insafe network. It will comprise one representative per Awareness Centre, plus one Helpline representative as selected by the Helpline Working Group, plus the European network coordinator which is acting secretariat for the Steering Committee.

Each Centre is represented by the Awareness coordinator of the national node. If the Awareness coordinator is prevented from attending, the Centre can send a deputy after informing the European network coordinator. The national Centre must ensure that its representative in the Steering Committee is authorised to vote on the agenda items and that the deputy attending is well briefed on the agenda and the official Centre point of view on agenda items.

The Steering Committee is responsible for adopting long-term goals and policies for the network. Where possible, the Steering Committee will endorse joint approaches to core issues. The Steering Committee shall also decide on other issues of common interest to the network, including, but not limited to:

1. Appointing Working Groups.
2. Defining the date and common topics for Safer Internet Day.
3. Deciding on participation in international meetings and Insafe network representation in third countries.
4. Sharing information, documentation and products with 3rd parties.
5. Deciding on formal cooperation with third countries, international organisations and industry, in agreement with the EC.

The Steering Committee will ordinarily meet two times per year, with at least one Steering Committee meeting in the first half of the year and another one in the second half of the year. The date of the next meeting will be ratified at each Steering Committee meeting. An extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee may be convened by the Coordinator, with the agreement of the Governance Working Group, or alternatively, by a group of at least five Centres.

Per Centre, one additional Awareness or Helpline representative can sit in the Steering Committee as observer. Observers will have no voting rights.

4. Working Groups

Both the European network coordinator and the Steering Committee can appoint Working Groups. The mandate of each Working Group is subject to approval by the Steering Committee. The mandate of a Working Group can be modified or ended by the Steering Committee. The Working Group will report on progress in writing in preparation of each Steering Committee meeting.

The current Insafe network Working Group structure is as follows:

- Governance Working Group
- Assessment Working Group
- Knowledge Management Working Group
- Helpline Working Group
- Youth Participation Working Group
- Safer Internet Day Working Group

Importantly, the Governance Working group will work in-between Steering Committee meetings in order to identify issues of strategic importance as well as help preparing the agenda for each Steering Committee meeting.

5. Co-operation with Third Countries and International Organisations

The Insafe network can co-operate with third countries and international organisations, including industry, for carrying out joint awareness raising activities (awareness campaigns, awareness tools, etc.) and helpline services which are pan-European, multi-lingual and possibly multi-industry, as well as within the context of Safer Internet Day.

The European network coordinator will ensure transparency when setting up these kind of partnerships. The Steering Committee and Coordinator will avoid giving permanent affiliation to any third country, international network, organisation or initiative. The Steering Committee and Coordinator should be able to decide case by case whether or not to co-operate with a specific industry initiative, and they will do as such following clear, ethical principles, whilst avoiding possible conflicts between European and national activity lines.

6. Rules of Procedure

The Steering Committee is chaired by the European network coordinator. The Coordinator does not vote in the Steering Committee.

Working Groups and Centres must submit proposals for issues to the Coordinator no later than 15 working days before a meeting. A finalised agenda, with final copies of supporting documents, must be available to the members ten working days before the Steering Committee meeting, indicating which points are for discussion and which are for decision.

Within ten working days of each Steering Committee meeting, the Coordinator will circulate draft minutes for comment. The final version of the minutes will be adopted at the next Steering Committee meeting. The minutes will display clearly texts submitted for vote and the outcome of the vote.

Each national Centre has one vote in the Steering Committee. Adopting a decision requires simple majority among present Centres. Changing the MoU requires a majority of no less than 2/3 of all Centres. Both Centres that hold a contract with the European Commission and Associated Centres are entitled to vote, or where there is no contracted national Centre the Steering Committee can decide on voting rights in advance, with a majority of no less than 2/3.

The Steering Committee can only make decisions if quorate and to be quorate, there should be at least 15 Centres.

If requested by three members, vote can be conducted by secret ballot.

For urgent matters, electronic voting or voting by e-mail can be used. To adopt a proposal by electronic voting, support by a majority of all members is required. In the case of amendments to the MoU, support by 2/3 of all members is required.