Insafe helplines quarterly report: Q1 2024

Time period: 1 January - 31 March 2024

This report provides a comprehensive overview of the activities and trends observed by the Insafe helplines during the first quarter of 2024, highlighting the main reasons for contact and the preferred methods of communication, along with the key issues faced.

Contact overview

During the first quarter of 2024, Insafe helplines reported data across 28 countries in Europe and from 31 helplines.

Of the total contacts received, 41 per cent were from males and 59 per cent from females. The majority of these contacts, 59 per cent were made by teenagers aged 12-18, followed by 28 per cent from parents, and 7 per cent from children aged 5-11.

This data highlights the significant engagement of teenagers with the helplines, indicating their need for support and guidance.

59% Teenagers

28% Parents

7% Children
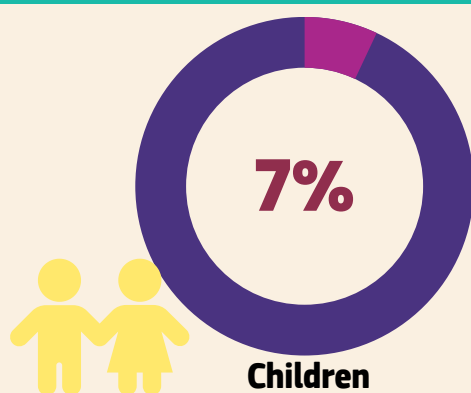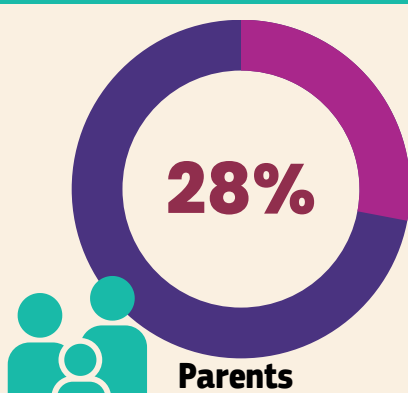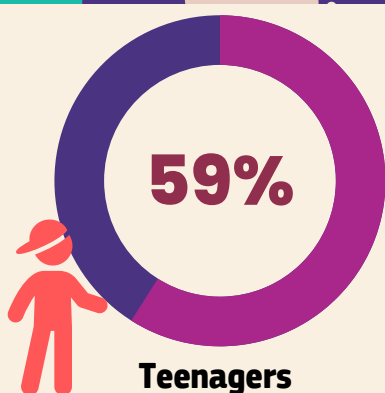
Contact method and location

The preferred option for contacting helplines is by phone, with 44 per cent of contacts made this way. Chat accounts for 33 per cent of contacts, and is growing in popularity as more and more helpdesks offer this option.

Social media is the primary location where most problems are encountered. Although not all helplines capture this data, 79 per cent of contacts say that the problem occurred on a social media platform.

Suicide 7%

Media literacy 9%

Cyberbullying 13%

e-crime 11%

Relationships 10%

Reason for contact

During the first quarter of 2024, the primary reasons individuals contacted Insafe helplines included cyberbullying, which accounted for 13 per cent of all contacts, and e-crime, which made up 11 per cent. E-crime includes issues like chain emails, phishing sites, identity theft, fraud, data theft, copyright infringement, hacking, and piracy.

Other notable reasons for contacting the helplines included concerns about advertising/commercialism, data privacy, excessive use, fake news, gaming, grooming, hate speech, love/relationships/sexuality online, media literacy/education, non-consensual sharing or receiving of intimate images (NCSII), online reputation, online sexual coercion and extortion of children (sextortion), pornography, potentially harmful content, radicalisation/terrorism, self-harm, suicide, and technical settings.
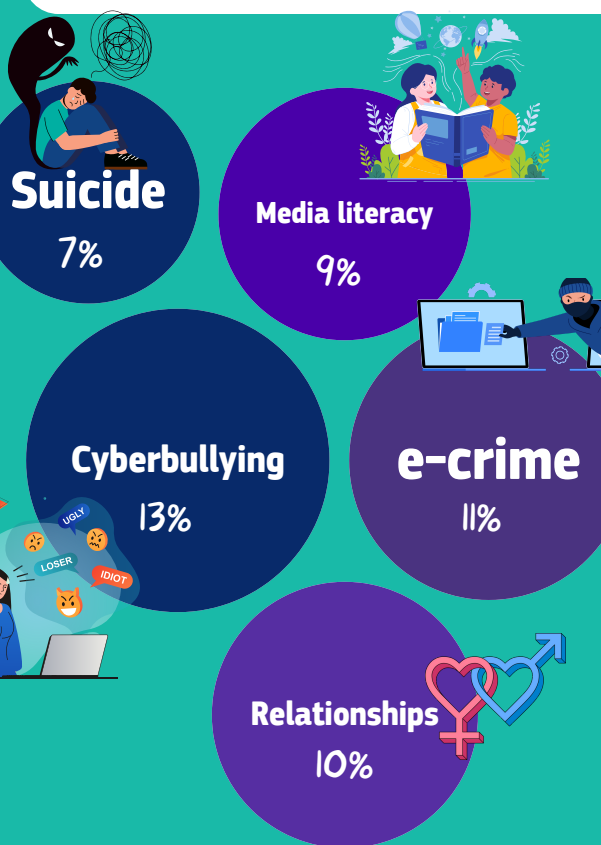
Key trends and issues

There has been a notable increase in reports of sextortion, particularly targeting teenage boys. This alarming trend was a key topic of discussion at the recent Insafe/INHOPE training meeting in April. Additionally, several helplines have reported a rise in contacts related to cybercrime, including identity theft, phishing, and other related issues, indicating growing concerns in these areas.

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