

# Youth Protection Roundtable



youth protection roundtable newsletter nr. 2

august 2007



## news from the field

20.08.07 Game developers complaining about unfair treatment by youth protection

17.08.07 Germany: success in the fight against child pornography on the internet

25.07.07 Call for Participation in the SIP-Benchmark-Project

09.07.07 Ein Netz für Kinder – safe and secure use of the Internet

19.06.07 Global Online Child Abuse Network Smashed - CEOP lead international operation into UK based paedophile ring

## YPRT editorial

Dear Readers,

the Youth Protection Roundtable has the honour to welcome two new members. With the French 'Forum des droits sur l'internet' and the Spanish 'Protegeles' we were able to expand the project's expertise to all European regions.

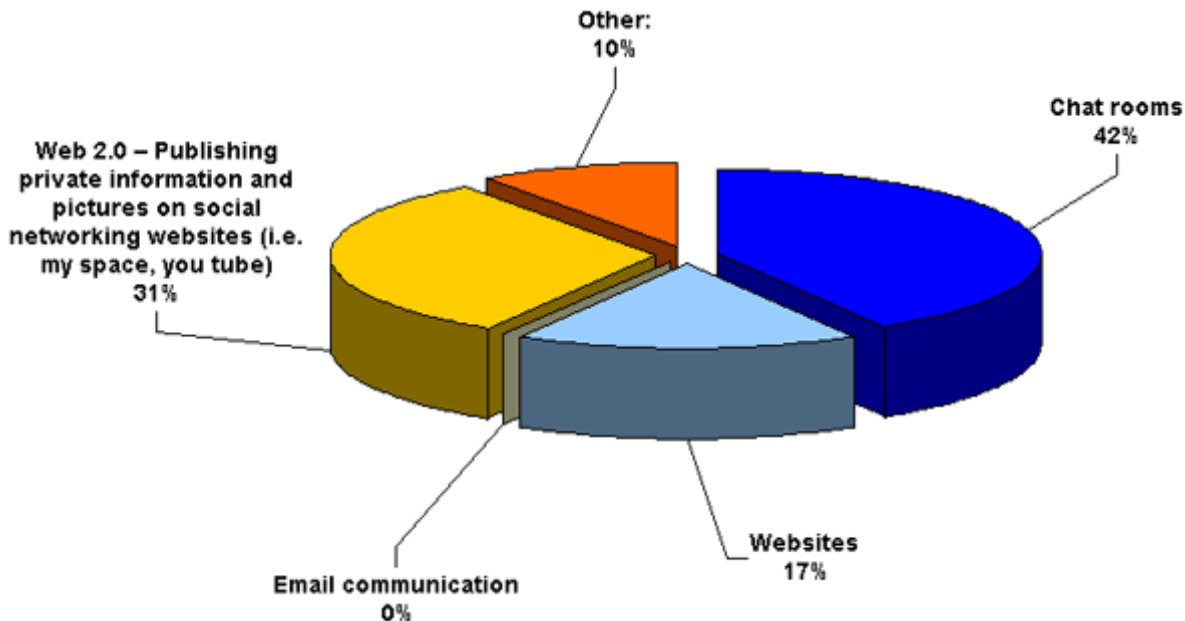
The YPRT has started their collaborative and cross-sector dialogue to develop a common view on the requirements for a safe and secure use of the Internet by children and youth. After carrying out a survey on matters youth protection in Europe leading to partly surprising results we discussed the project's work plan together with the members in the light of the newly gained knowledge. Hereby we would like to announce to a broader public what the outcomes of the project will be.

The YPRT will develop **guidelines for technical developments in respect of pedagogical issues** and furthermore **product-neutral guidelines for the use of filter technologies and pedagogical measures in private and public areas.**

Please read about our survey results, news, events and recent research in this second issue of the newsletter.

Yours

Katharina Kunze, project manager



## YPRT report

### Where are the risks and what are the dangers?

In times of the global information society, youth protection can not only be addressed as a national challenge. On the one hand web content is hosted on servers all around the world that are hardly to be controlled by national law. On the other hand besides national legal authorities more and more international players are engaged in procedures of co- and self-regulation. The need for youth protection is acknowledged worldwide and promoted especially in Europe by the measures funded by the European Commission within the Safer Internet Programme.

The Internet and the services available are not only growing but also rapidly changing. Enhanced possibilities for communication, interactivity and the publishing of content by the user are accompanied by new threats and risks. And the measures undertaken to protect children and youth have to be adjusted to the new landscape of the web. Therefore within the survey undertaken for the YPRT 126 experts have answered to the question: Which area of the virtual world do you estimate the most dangerous for children and youth? 31 % of the respondents declared the area of Web 2.0 as more risky than i.e. classical Websites. One-to-one communication via email seems not to bear any risks, but communication with many unknown people in chat rooms is estimated the most dangerous.

86 % of the experts fear that children and youth are facing age inadequate sexual content while being online, more than 70 % see unsuitable contacts as an incalculable threat. While there are some more or less effective instruments to check for the content of classical websites and filter systems what seems to be illegal or even harmful, it is a much more difficult task to supervise chat communication or to ensure that the so called user generated content published in community websites does not infringe the requirements of privacy and decency. In the light of the European experts' opinions as affirmed by the survey the Youth Protection Roundtable has adjusted the project's work plan to the new threats occurring from Web 2.0 and defined more clearly the expected outcomes. In springtime 2009 we will deliver to the public

- **Guidelines for technical developments in respect of pedagogical issues**  
The adoption of these guidelines shall ensure that technicians take account of the possible effects of newly developed technologies on their safe use by children and youth.
- **Product-neutral guidelines for the use of filter technologies and pedagogical measures in private and public areas**

These guidelines shall be recommendations that lead to an optimal mix of technical tools and pedagogical measures to ensure a safe and secure of already known and future media. In pedagogical work it is necessary to know how far one can rely on technical tools and how essential additional measures are.

Only a combination of both strategies – use of technical solutions and empowerment of children and youth and responsible adults in the case of minors by digital literacy – can induce ongoing and effective protection of children and youth.

Both together will ensure that the impact of the project is effective for the pedagogical area as well as for the industry sector.

More interesting details and further results from the survey will be published in further newsletters and can be found in the website under [www.yprt.eu](http://www.yprt.eu) later on.

## research in the field

### **Eurobarometer: Are Europe's children too confident in tackling online risks?**

Eurobarometer's qualitative survey interviewed children of 9-10 and 12-14 years old from all 27 EU Member States plus Norway and Iceland. They were asked in-depth about how they use online technologies, and how they would react to problems and risks when using the internet and mobile phones.

The survey shows that children use technologies in very similar ways all across Europe. Online gaming, surfing and communication are considered as the top activities online while texting, and talking with parents and friends come out top for young mobile users. The majority use the internet several times a day, and also own a personal mobile phone. Internet use is to some extent limited by parents while the use of mobile phones is much freer and less supervised.

The results show that children are globally well aware of the potential online risks, such as security, viruses, access to unwanted content, identity theft and potential dangerous contact with strangers. Many of them are also well aware of the necessary precautions they need to take.

Some children nevertheless admitted that they have engaged in risky behaviour, and some acknowledged that they have been victims of bullying and had contacts with strangers. Even though young people know about of the risks and precautions, most would rather try to solve the problem themselves or with friends, and would talk to their parents only as a last resort in the most serious cases.

### **Germany: Regulation system on youth protection in the area of video and computer games evaluated**

The German Hans-Bredow-Institut has published the results of a part of their study about the effectiveness of the German youth media protection systems. Due to the study acceptance and traceability of youth protection in the area of video and computer games could be improved by a more consistent and transparent practical approach. The legal framework for youth media protection has become more effective through the legislative reform in Germany 2003, but there remain areas which could be improved, so the Hans-Bredow-Institut. The study was commissioned by the Federal Ministry of Family Affairs and the Federal States of Germany.

### **Every third German is playing computer games**

Playing computer and videogames has been developed to a kind of German national sport. More than one-third of the Germans - and even more than two-third of the 14 to 19 year-olds - are playing those games. Online gaming is gaining more importance, 38% using this possibility. Most favoured are multiplayer games like card games, strategy games and chess. 68% of the computer games users are playing online at least once a week, 22% even daily.

## events in the field

### **25.09.07 - 26.09.07 New Media and juvenile violence**

Bildungsstätte des Landessportbundes Hessen, Frankfurt/Main

### **16.10.07 - 17.10.07 International Conference: Keeping children and young people safe online**

Sheraton Hotel, Warsaw, Poland

### **25.10.07 Youth - Media - Culture**

Filderhalle Leinfelden Echterdingen

### **12.11.07 - 15.11.07 Internet Governance Forum**

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

## contact information

Stiftung Digitale Chancen

Fasanenstraße 3

10623 Berlin

Tel.: 030-437277-30; -40/Fax: 030-437277 39

E-Mail: [kunze@yprrt.eu](mailto:kunze@yprrt.eu)