

## **Report on the Global Alliance child sexual abuse online**

### **BULGARIA**

Annual report about Bulgaria's progress on the implementation of committed actions in the Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online

On 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012 in Brussels the Ministers of the Interior of the EU countries level signed an Agreement for the establishment of a Global Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Online. The Agreement for founding that global pact had been initiated by the EU commissioner Cecilia Malström during the US – EU summit several months ago. Each member state had been presented by its respective Minister of the Interior, as well as by a representative of the law enforcement agency in each of the countries, directly engaged with the various forms of child sexual abuse online. By the date of signing that Agreement – 05/12/2012, in Bulgaria, that used to be the General Directorate for Fight against Organized Crime – MoI but at present SANS is the competent institution.

Later, the Agreement was also signed by “third parties” such as Albania, Australia, Cambodia and etc., and at present the total number of countries which have signed it is 53.

There are four policy targets, defined by the Agreement for the establishment of the Global Alliance, which the countries are committed to follow in their work on countering online child sexual abuse by signing the document.

Furthermore, a request for information has been received in SANS by the Director General of Directorate General *Home Affairs* of the European Commission – Matthias Ruete, regarding the future development of the Global Alliance Initiative. For the purpose of regular reporting of the implementation of negotiated targets on the initiative, the member-states were kindly requested to provide information about the progress and the specific activities. To do that, we have filled in the attached table as follows:

#### Task 1:

Bulgaria has held a number of consultations with the General Secretariat of Interpol, as well as with Interpol – Sofia about the country's accession to the ICSE database for sexually abused children which has been created and maintained by Interpol. As a result, a direct connection has been

established between Interpol and the Bulgarian law enforcement unit countering online sexual exploitation of children in the beginning of July this year. Training by Interpol experts is expected to take place for Bulgarian staff, directly working on those problems. Therefore, by the end of 2014 it is expected that Bulgaria will be participating with full functionality in the ICSE database and in such a way it would contribute to the process of identification of children who have become victims of sexual exploitation.

#### Task 2:

Bulgaria participates in the EMPACT-CSE project in which, together with the rest of the participating EU countries, joint international operations and initiatives are planned to be carried out for monitoring, identification and detention of children's sexual abusers. In 2013 and by the first half of 2014 the Bulgarian law enforcement unit countering online sexual exploitation of children has held a number of operations for the detention of pedophiles on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria and also provided operative information to other partner services.

#### Task 3:

In 2012 the "Cybercrime" department applied for and was awarded with funding for the project "HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/C2/4000003996 Children – potential victims of crime on Internet project" by the ISEC program, funded by the European Commission. Malta and Romania are project partners. In the early 2014 the actual implementation of the activities described in the project began. The aim of the project is namely the achievement of a more effective countering of sexual exploitation and abuse of children on the Internet, the increase of awareness within the society and mostly within children population about those highly dangerous social crimes, as well as about the improvement of the mechanisms for international cooperation and increase of the expert capacity of the competent structures in the fight against those crimes. In early June 2014 an international conference was organized in Bulgaria on problems of online sexual exploitation of children – one of the activities under the aforementioned project which received large media coverage.

The implementation of the project is planned to continue by the end of 2014 and should end by mid 2015.

#### Task 4:

During the aforementioned international conference on problems of countering online sexual abusers of children, held in the early June 2014 in

Sofia, as one of the activities of the project “HOME/2012/ISEC/FP/C2/4000003996 Children – potential victims of crime on Internet project”, representatives of five of the largest Internet providers in Bulgaria were invited as participants. The aim was to thoroughly acquaint them with the problem, as well as with the so-called “process of filtration of the access to pages with child abuse”. After the end of the conference, the Internet providers’ representatives unanimously agreed that common actions are necessary to overcome the problem for countering sexual abusers of children. In that context, all of them expressed their agreement to take part in a pilot project the implementation of which is expected to begin in the autumn of 2014, and which would aim at the development of a model for implementation in the Internet providers’ systems of domain addresses containing materials with sexual exploitation of children, the access to which is to be blocked for users. After the end of the test period, during which only five of the Internet providers in Bulgaria will participate, it is expected that the project will also include the rest of the companies providing Internet access. Thus, the expectations of the Bulgarian law enforcement unit, countering online sexual exploitation of children, jointly with the private sector in Bulgaria are that the revictimization of children who have become victims to sexual abuse on the Internet would be taken to the minimum.