

Latvia

Name of the innovative awareness raising practice/tool:

“Cut the roots”! campaign



Link to the information/ resource: <https://drossinternets.lv/lv/info/zino-mobilaja-lietotne>

Location (country and city/region): Latvia

Background (why this tool/initiative was developed...etc.):

The Latvian Safer Internet Centre's (LSIC) hotline has been receiving reports since 2009 about illegal online content, breaches and problems that people face online. The majority of the reports are related to child sexual abuse materials found online, and the main objective of LSIC is, with the help of Law Enforcement Agencies and Internet Service Providers, to delete such content. The other types of reports are for the most part related to sextortion, financial fraud, cyberbullying and pornography accessible to minors. In order to understand how many internet users have had these types of problems and inform them on how to get online help from experts, it was decided to conduct a survey and organise a media campaign.

Duration: January 2018 – August 2019

Financing is ensured by the European Union's Connecting Europe Facility programme and partners of [Latvian Safer Internet Centre](#).

Objectives:

The objective was to encourage people to report online breaches and illegal content to stop the perpetrators, and encourage victims to seek online step-by-step assistance. In 2011, the Latvian Safer Internet Centre signed an agreement with the State Police on the processing of reports to their hotline (which can be done via mobile app, e-mail or an online form). Specific terms have been set out in the agreement - how and what kind of reports the Centre forwards to the police, etc.

The campaign activities and materials consisted of:

- a **preliminary survey** to understand how many people had faced problems online and how they felt about seeking help and reporting problems;
- **development of the “Dross internets” reporting mobile app**
- development of three awareness **video clips**
- **media campaign**: ads in different social media platforms, articles and interviews
- videos shown **in cinemas**
- publication of the **“Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media”**

Target group (the exact age of the youngsters concerned): 16+

Partners / stakeholders involved:

- State Police
- State Inspectorate for the Protection of Children’s Rights
- PR agency

Tools, links:

- Information and FAQs: <https://drossinternets.lv/lv/info/zino-mobilaja-lietotne>
- Videos on YouTube:
 - Long campaign video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9R11NfrCCjA&t>
 - Short video about Cyberbullying:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ekqgikercqg>
 - Short video about Sextortion:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=azE4Ss6UkuI>
 - Short video about child sexual abuse materials online:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-uFA2HAeKLI>
- Mobile app “Drošs internets”:
 - for Android devices:
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.lia.drossinternets>
 - for Apple devices: <https://apps.apple.com/lv/app/dross-internets/id1444995659>
- “Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media”:
<https://drossinternets.lv/lv/materials/download/socialo-tiklu-drosibas-celvedis>

Duration of the project (January 2018 - August 2019) and approximate costs (total ~€38,000):

- development of the “Dross internets” reporting app: 12 months, €13,000
- contract with PR agency to conduct survey, develop 3 awareness video spots, prepare articles for the media, place ads in different social media platforms: 4 months, €18,000 Eur
- videos shown in cinemas: 4 weeks, €6,000
- “Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media”: 2 weeks, ~500 Eur.

Main results (impacts and outcomes):

- during the campaign period (4 months) the mobile app was downloaded 2,000 times on both IOS and Android platforms;
- 711 respondents participated in the survey; 34% of respondents admitted having experienced problems online; 15% said they had met someone online and realised this person had a fake identity; 80% of parents said they didn't know if their children had had problems online; 30% of respondents who had faced problems online said they did not seek help because they did not know where to report;
- During the 2-week media campaign, each video was viewed more than 60,000 times on YouTube. The videos were shown as ads that could be skipped after 5 seconds, but surprisingly the viewing duration was very high and more than 90% of people watched until the very end. i.e. 45 seconds. This means that the video message grabbed the viewers' attention. The videos open with this sentence: "In this video you will see real case examples from drossinternets.lv"
- In the four weeks during which the videos were shown in 7 cinemas in the country's largest cities, an audience of over 40,000 was reached. Several serious cases were reported by minors about activities of paedophiles thanks to the videos they had seen in a cinema.
- The "Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media" consists of direct links to reporting, safety and privacy settings in more than 22 popular social networks and media platforms. It has proven as the most useful and popular material developed by LSIC with an average of 600 downloads per month

Critical evaluation (strong points and weaknesses, challenges and lessons learned):

The development of the mobile app took much longer than planned – 12 months instead of the 6 planned. This delay had a knock-on effect on the campaign, which had to be postponed from October to February. In the end, it proved beneficial because the campaign coincided with the national Safer Internet Day.

The chosen content and graphics of the campaign's videos were a success – people liked them and did not skip after the first seconds.

Transferability of the practice and / or tool to other local contexts (how easy or difficult it would be to localize the activity, material, tool in other countries):

- survey – it is easy to translate to any language
- "Dross internets" reporting mobile app – expensive and very time and energy consuming, but it could be replaced by reporting via e-mail
- development of 3 awareness ideo spots – texts easy to translate and the voice-over can be recorded in any language
- media campaign, ads in different social media platforms, articles and press interviews – any media agency can develop a good media plan. We decided on a budget of €18,000 and invited several agencies to tender on the basis of what they could offer for that amount.
- videos shown in cinemas – if you have a good short video, reach out to cinemas, they usually offer good discounts for social projects

- the “Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media” – easy to translate.

Key attention points:

- The survey should be short and precise; it is advised to contract a professional agency to conduct it.
- Developing a mobile app is quite expensive and you have to budget not only the development of the app itself but also the annual fee for being listed in the App Store, as well as regular updates and bug-fixing. Also, keep in mind that you have to regularly remind audiences to download and use the app .
- If your campaign includes messages on uncomfortable/ awkward topics such as the sexual abuse of children, be prepared to negative reactions. Not everybody will understand and you might receive unpleasant comments under the campaign articles or videos
- If you have short, attention-grabbing videos – cinemas are a very good venues to reach youngsters
- The information included in your “Guide to Safety and Privacy on Social Media” should be checked regularly, notably whether the links are still active