

Safer Internet Service in Turkey

Internet penetration is increasing rapidly all over the world and this trend makes it easy for users to access information. In this environment, children can be exposed to harmful content on the Internet and this may have negative effects on their spiritual health. It is considered necessary to protect children from Internet abuse and to prevent sexual exploitation of children. “By-Law on the Principles and Procedures Concerning to the Safer Internet Service” has been implemented and entered into force on 22 August 2011 above considerations in mind so as to provide safer internet service.

Safer Internet Service is a discretionary and free of charge internet access service offered by Internet Service Providers via their own networks through which families and children have the opportunity of protection against harmful contents such as gambling, leading to suicide, child sexual abuse, drugs, images of violence, bloody and violent martial arts, animal fights, fraud and malicious software and web sites or applications providing access to such content.

Principles to determine, allow and block lists are constituted by the “Child and Family Profiles Criteria Working Board” that meets regularly. This Board is made up total of 11 members; 2 members from Ministry of Family and Social Policies; 2 members from non-governmental organizations; 1 member from the Digital Games Federation of Turkey, 3 members from academia, experts on respectively pedagogy, sociology and psychology; and 3 members from the Information and communications Technologies Authority (ICTA), one of which is the Chairman of the Board.

Safer Internet Service of Turkey is in parallel with European Union and ITU efforts. Safer Internet Service of Turkey is a good example of better internet concept designated by Communication for a European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children initiated by the European Commission by Neelie Kroes. Moreover prominent Internet service providers have recently sent their intention letters to join the CEO Coalition for a Better Internet for Kids introduced by Mrs. Neelie Kroes.

Turkey is willing to roll out and develop better internet efforts in the basis of governance and participation principles. Turkey is always open to any other relevant stakeholders for experience sharing.

ICTA activities on protecting children can be summarized as:

- Web portals: Web portals designed to promote Safer Use of Internet, such as <http://www.guvenliweb.org.tr> and <http://www.guvenlicocuk.org.tr>, developed with a view to enable children to safely surf the cyber world.
- Seminars & Booklets: For the conscious, safe and effective use of Internet, seminars are held to mainly families and children throughout the country. As in previous years, ICTA continue to publish and distribute different awareness guide booklets and continue to develop projects with related organizations. For instances, ICTA initiated a new project with Ministry of National Education, which is training of trainers about safer use of Internet and related technologies at schools in Turkey. 400 ICT teachers around Turkey were being trained with this project.
- Safer Internet Service provided by ISPs: Internet Service Providers offer safer internet service which enables children to browse safe on the internet when they are alone when they are accompanied by their parents.
- Cooperation: Turkey’s Internet Hotline, IhaberWeb, a member of INHOPE (International Association of Internet Hotlines), for reporting abuse content of Internet has been established.

Combating Cybercrime

There are two main legislations regarding cyber activities. First is the Turkish Criminal Law that involves some articles regarding cybercrime. Second is the Law on Regulation of the publications on the Internet and Combating against committed crimes by these publications.

Moreover, Cyber Security Board chaired by the Minister of Transport, Maritime Affairs and Communications, was established, in order to determine the measures regarding cyber security, to approve the prepared plans, programs, reports, procedures, principles and standards and ensure the application and coordination of them. The first action of the Board was to prepare National Cyber Security Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2014 which is approved by Cabinet Decision Nr.2013/4890. This Strategy Document includes provisions about the implementation of internationally recognized cyber security standards within the public sector. The strategy is based on the principal of securing the information systems used in critical infrastructures and taking necessary measures to provide national cyber security. For his purpose, it encourages the efficient use and sharing of resources between public and private sector in cyber security related activities.

The main outcome of the Strategy and Action Plan was to establish national cyber incident response team, shortly TR-CERT which is responsible for national and international coordination about cyber security issues. The relations between other national and sector specific CERTs, law enforcement agencies, research centers, internet service providers, hosting firms, other governmental agencies and other private sector institutions are arranged by TR-CERT with the help of “Communiqué on the Establishment, Responsibilities And Activities of CERTS”. Besides, TR-CERT works in close collaboration with international networks such as FIRST and Trusted Introducer. As a result, TR-CERT has also been collecting cyber security incident reports from over 30 countries.