

Why is awareness raising important

In the digital age, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have become invaluable in day-to-day tasks for individual citizens, businesses and the European economy alike.

However, with the convergence of new technologies, security vulnerabilities, "always on" connection and the continuous, exponential number of users within Member States, an increasing number of citizens and businesses are at risk of information security breaches. Statistics show that there is still much to do in Europe and across different sectors.

According to McAfee, nearly a quarter of 1,500 European professionals use a company laptop at home, 62% of which claim to have "very limited" security knowledge. Moreover, earlier ENISA findings show that two thirds of awareness raising programmes have been run in the north of the EU.

In addition to this, the UK *BERR Information Security Breaches Survey 2008* report showed that 21% of companies still spend less than 1% of IT budget on information security and 52% do not carry out any security risk assessment. Manufacturing, travel, leisure and entertainment companies are the least likely to have a security policy.

Security breaches may be IT related such as viruses, or socially motivated, for example, physical theft of equipment. At a time increasingly reliant on digital information, the number of dangers continues to grow. A considerable amount of citizens are still unaware of their exposure to security risks, which is a significant problem.

Change of culture – first line of defence?

With the continuously-changing security landscape and the proliferation of dangers, information security solutions used today will be obsolete tomorrow.

However, most analyst reports claim that the human component of any information security framework is the weakest link. Accordingly, only a significant change in user perception or organizational culture can really reduce the number of information security breaches in Europe.

Consequently, a high personal awareness of the risks and available safeguards has been recognised as the 'first line of defence' for the security of information systems and networks. All actors, including industry and its stakeholders as well as individual end users assume a responsibility to protect themselves.

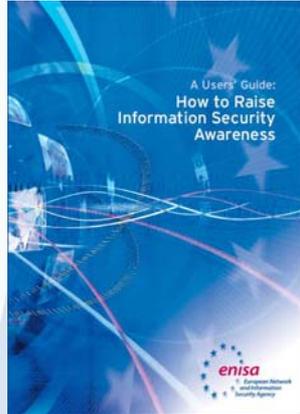
ENISA awareness raising objectives

ENISA has several goals in the awareness raising field including to:

- Help monitor the progress in national approaches to awareness raising;
- Offer an insight into the types of problems currently being faced by countries with regards to information security;
- Provide an inventory of successful practices run in EU Member States;
- Prepare awareness raising material which can be customised by the Member States; and
- Facilitate cooperation in awareness raising among NIS professionals by supporting a Europe-wide awareness raising community.

ENISA achievements

ENISA has compiled a practical guide on how to raise awareness in NIS. The purpose of the *Users' Guide: How to Raise Information Security Awareness* is to provide practical advice for Member States on how to prepare and implement awareness-raising initiatives in NIS. A 2008 survey amongst ENISA stakeholders indicated that this report has been the most widely-read and downloaded of all ENISA's studies. ENISA has, for example, distributed more than 1300 copies of its *Users' Guide*, since June 2006 and it is now available in all official EU languages.



Since 2005, on an annual basis, ENISA has compiled reports aimed at helping to monitor progress in national approaches to awareness raising. These reports provide an inventory of good practices run in the EU Member States and seek to contribute to the implementation of an information security culture. Different target groups, (e.g., national and local governments, enterprises and Internet Service Providers) ran the practices identified.

Furthermore, ENISA's study *Information Security Awareness Initiatives: Current Practice and the Measurement of Success* focuses on cultural change, the 'pay off' of metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs), and how qualitative and quantitative assessment methods contribute to a security culture. The study of 67 European organisations headquartered in nine different European countries, shows that 50% of companies consider information security of high priority while 88% use a formally-

documented security policy outlining security safeguards to make staff aware of information security issues and their obligations.

In 2008, ENISA continues to facilitate awareness raising by launching a subscription-free community open to experts who have an interest in engaging in raising information security awareness within their organisations. Though members have a diverse range of skills and knowledge of ICTs, and differing interests and levels of expertise and priorities, they are united in helping the AR community become the intellectual backbone of the exchange of information security good practices. Thus, the AR Community, comprising 130 members from 32 nations, marks the beginning of a deep engagement, not only with sharing but also with analysis of information security good practices across Europe.



I want to know more...

For further information on ENISA's awareness raising activities, visit our website www.enisa.europa.eu or please contact us directly at awareness@enisa.europa.eu