

Cybercrime Digest

Bi-weekly update and global outlook by the
Cybercrime Programme Office of the Council of Europe (C-PROC)

1 – 15 March 2021

Source: Council of
Europe

Date: 09 Mar 2021

Council of Europe at the Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

"The 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice will explore a vast range of aspects arising out of crime prevention and the consequences of crime, including economic crime. The UN Congress, and the context in which it is placed, confirms the relevance and added value of the Council of Europe in this field. It also illustrates how new issues continuously emerge and benefit from being examined and addressed through a multilateral and inter-governmental approach. The Council of Europe is contributing to this flagship event [...] Special events supported by the Organization will focus on combating cybercrime and on promoting the abolition of the death penalty." [READ MORE](#)

Source: United Nations

Date: 12 Mar 2021

UN OEWG on information and telecommunications in the context of international security adopts final report by consensus

Following more than two years process covering OEWG official sessions and consultations with industry, technical community, non-profit sector and academia, on 12 March 2021, the Open-ended Working Group on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security adopted by consensus: (i) [Final OEWG report](#), (ii) [Chair's Summary \(reissued for technical reasons\)](#), (iii) [Updated procedural report](#). As stated in the final report, "conclusions and recommendations that are drawn include concrete actions and cooperative measures to address ICT threats and to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment." [READ MORE](#)

Source: GFCE

Date: 08 Mar 2021

AUC-GFCE Collaboration: "Enabling African countries to identify and address their cyber capacity needs"

"The Global Forum on Cyber Expertise is happy to announce its collaboration with the African Union Commission on "Enabling African countries to identify and address their cyber capacity needs" through a two-year project. [...] To build on the success of the Annual Meeting 2019 and the continuous efforts of the AUC, the GFCE and the AUC seek to strengthen cyber resilience in the African region in close collaboration with all relevant stakeholders." [READ MORE](#)

Source: Council of the
European Union

Date: 09 Mar 2021

Draft Council conclusions on the EU's Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade

"On 16 December 2020, the Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy published its Joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council "The EU's Cybersecurity Strategy for the Digital Decade". The new Cybersecurity Strategy aims to bolster Europe's collective resilience against cyber threats and ensure that all citizens and businesses can fully benefit from trustworthy and reliable services and digital tools." [READ MORE](#)

Source: KrebsOnSecurity

Date: 05 Mar 2021

At Least 30,000 U.S. Organizations Newly Hacked Via Holes in Microsoft's Email Software

"At least 30,000 organizations across the United States [...] have over the past few days been hacked by an unusually aggressive Chinese cyber espionage unit that's focused on stealing email from victim organizations, multiple sources tell KrebsOnSecurity. The espionage group is exploiting four newly-discovered flaws in Microsoft Exchange Server email software, and has seeded hundreds of thousands of victim organizations worldwide with tools that give the attackers total, remote control over affected systems." [READ MORE](#)

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BBC News, [European Banking Authority hit by Microsoft Exchange hack](#), 8 Mar 2021

CyberScoop, [Microsoft warns of state-sponsored Chinese hackers exploiting multiple zero-days](#), 2 Mar 2021

Computer Weekly, [Norwegian government falls victim to Microsoft attacks](#), 11 Mar 2021

Source: Council of Europe

Date: 01 – 05 Mar 2021

GLACY+: 4th edition of the INTERPOL Malware Analysis Training – Africa, Europe and MENA region

"Experienced cybercrime investigators and digital forensics experts from Benin, Cape Verde and Ghana (GLACY+ project priority countries) have participated in the 4th edition of the INTERPOL Malware Analysis Training. The course was designed for cybercrime investigators from law enforcement agencies to gain technical knowledge and skills on static and dynamic analysis of malware [...]" [READ MORE](#)

Source: Europol

Date: 10 Mar 2021

New major interventions to block encrypted communications of criminal networks

"Judicial and law enforcement authorities in Belgium, France and the Netherlands have in close cooperation enabled major interventions to block the further use of encrypted communications by large-scale organised crime groups (OCGs), with the support of Europol and Eurojust. The continuous monitoring of the criminal use of the Sky ECC communication service tool by investigators in the three countries involved has provided invaluable insights into hundreds of millions of messages exchanged between criminals. This has resulted in the collection of crucial information on over a hundred of planned large-scale criminal operations, preventing potential life-threatening situations and possible victims." [READ MORE](#)

RELATED ARTICLES

U.S. Department of Justice, [Sky Global Executive and Associate Indicted for Providing Encrypted Communication Devices to Help International Drug Traffickers Avoid Law Enforcement](#), 12 Mar 2021

Brussels Times, [Cracking of encrypted messaging service dealt major blow to organised crime](#), 9 Mar 2021

Politico, [Cryptophone firm and Belgian police clash over 'cracked' drug trafficker messages](#), 10 Mar 2021

Source: *Plataforma Digital única del Estado Peruano*

Date: 03 Mar 2021

Peru: Ministerio Público fortalece capacidades de fiscales en cooperación jurídica internacional

“El Ministerio Público, a través de la Unidad de Cooperación Judicial Internacional y Extradiciones de la Fiscalía de la Nación (UCJIE) y la Escuela del Ministerio Público, inició el fortalecimiento de capacidades en materia de cooperación jurídica internacional, a fiscales y personal que labora en las diferentes fiscalías, a nivel nacional. Durante los talleres, se abordaron temas relacionados al uso de herramientas de la cooperación jurídica internacional, tales como: asistencia judicial internacional, la denuncia internacional, transmisión espontánea de información, equipos conjuntos de investigación, redes internacionales, los pedidos de la cooperación internacional en el marco de la ciberdelincuencia y el Convenio de Budapest, entre otros.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: *EUROPOL*

Date: 09 Mar 2021

Illegal mobile application with more than 100 million users taken down in Spain

“Europol supported the Spanish National Police (Policía Nacional) to dismantle a criminal group distributing illegal video streams. The investigation also involved law enforcement authorities from Andorra and Portugal. [...] The investigation identified a number of connected websites and platforms located in Spain and Portugal with connections to servers in Czechia. [...] Through the computer infrastructure and power, they were able to sell user information to a company related to botnet and DDoS attacks. Investigators estimate the overall illegal profits at more than €5 million.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: *Radio Prague International*

Date: 06 Mar 2021

Czech Republic extradites two Ukrainians to U.S. on suspicion of cybercrime

“The Czech Republic extracted two Ukrainians suspected of cybercrime and money laundering to the United States at the start of this month, Czech Television reported on Saturday. Investigators say the two, who were arrested in February, were part of an organised crime group active in a number of states. The investigation into their activities has been conducted in cooperation with the FBI.” [READ MORE](#)

RELATED ARTICLE

U.S. Department of Justice, [Two Ukrainian Nationals Extradited to U.S. on Money Laundering Charges](#), 05 Mar 2021

Source: *Europol*

Date: 03 Mar 2021

Trace An Object initiative expands to the Asia Pacific region

“The Australian Federal Police (AFP) is launching today its own version of the Europol ‘Stop Child Abuse - Trace An Object’ public appeal to help identify more children victim of sexual abuse. A total of nine non-confrontational details of images extracted from child sexual abuse cold cases are being made public today by the AFP, such as piece of clothing or bedding. Investigators believe the victims are in the Asia Pacific region, including Australia, and are calling on the public to view the images and contact the AFP-led Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation (ACCCE) if they recognise the objects.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: Council of Europe

Date: 09 Mar 2021

Webinar on cyberbullying: trends, prevention strategies and the role of law enforcement

"According to the international studies, bullying is a widespread negative phenomenon, affecting more than 20% of the school students. In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, bullying has more and more moved from the school yard towards the internet, increasing the number of the victims of cyberbullying. In addition, the anonymity of the Internet has scaled up the dimension of violence seen in bullying, and acts of cyberbullying increasingly fell into the realm of criminal offences which requires the involvement of law enforcement. In this context, a [webinar on cyberbullying](#) trends, prevention strategies and role of law enforcement in preventing and combating the phenomenon, was organized by the Council of Europe, on 9 March 2021. The webinar that was joint initiative of the End Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse @ Europe ([EndOCSEA@Europe](#)) project and the joint European Union and Council of Europe [iPROCEEDS-2](#) project, was aiming to support the officials and policy makers responsible for protection of children against all forms of violence, including cyberbullying, as well as human rights specialists, criminal justice authorities (judges, prosecutors, law enforcement agencies), non-governmental organisations and researchers/academia with an interest in the subject. The discussions focused on the efforts and actions taken in order to combat cyberbullying and on providing guidance to law enforcement and other relevant actors to identify cases of cyberbullying that would require further investigation. The activity also raised awareness on existing prevention measures and advised on mindfulness in relation to psychological aspects involving both victim and aggressor." [READ MORE](#)

Source: AdVox Global voices

Date: 04 Mar 2021

Sudan's revised cybercrime law falls short on its promise

"On February 11, Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, chairman of the Sudanese Sovereign Council, registered a cybercrime lawsuit against Sudanese politician and political activist, Orwa Alsadig. The lawsuit has sparked controversy over the nature of Sudan's current cybercrime law, and the potential to abuse the law to limit freedom of expression. [...] He was later charged with publishing lies or and fake news and committing insults of disrepute under Articles 24, 25, and 26 of the 2020 cybercrime law, known in Arabic as *قانون مكافحة جرائم المعلوماتية* or "the law to combat information crimes." [READ MORE](#)

Source: Council of Europe

Date: 08 Mar 2021

Developing SOPs and toolkit for first responders on cybercrime and e-evidence in Lebanon

"Following the second meeting on the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with Lebanon, [...] the third activity for national Lebanese SOPs, , organized in the framework of the CyberSouth Project, was implemented online on the 8th of March 2021, together with the members of the working group – law enforcement representatives from the Internal Security Forces." [READ MORE](#)

Source: Council of Europe

Date: 12 Mar 2021

CyberSouth: Judicial material mainstreaming, third meeting of the working group in Tunisia

"The third meeting for mainstreaming the judicial material in Tunisia took place, online, on the 12th of March 2021. This event was a follow-up on the second meeting of the working group focused on developing the Tunisian course on cybercrime and electronic evidence for magistrates." [READ MORE](#)

Source: Angop

Date: 15 Mar 2021

Angola carece de centro de resposta de incidentes informáticos

“Diante dos avanços tecnológicos e da frequência, cada vez mais notória, de diferentes crimes cibernéticos, Angola precisa urgentemente de um Centro de Estudos, Respostas e Tratamento de Incidentes Informáticos (CERT), com vista a acompanhar e prevenir delitos na internet. [...] Segundo apurou Angop, a criação do CERT e a adesão do país à convenção de Budapeste sobre a luta contra os crimes informáticos ajudaria a mitigar ataques e crimes, que já visaram várias empresas públicas e privadas em Angola, num mínimo mil infracções cibernéticas.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: CDN

Date: 15 Mar 2021

Dominican Republic: Microsoft y el Centro Nacional de Ciberseguridad capacitan instituciones de Gobierno en protección de datos

“El Centro Nacional de Ciberseguridad (CNCS) del Ministerio de la Presidencia, en conjunto con Microsoft, realizaron el evento “Ciberseguridad y Cumplimiento Para Gobierno”, dirigido a líderes de seguridad de TI en instituciones gubernamentales para capacitarlos ante la evolución de las tácticas de los ciberdelincuentes y los retos que enfrentan ciertas entidades ante el uso de tecnologías. [...] Entre los temas de la actividad, se destacaron cómo las organizaciones están abordando diferentes amenazas de ciberseguridad, la perspectiva de un atacante, cómo iniciar la estrategia de protección de la identidad a través de tres pilares, y la detección y respuesta de los ataques sofisticados.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: ENISA

Date: 02 Mar 2021

ENISA and CERT-EU sign Agreement to start their Structured Cooperation

“The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), signed by ENISA and CERT-EU on 15th February, was announced on the occasion of the 13th CSIRTs Network meeting. The agreement is the successful outcome of extensive and fruitful discussions triggered by the Cybersecurity Act to identify and enhance the synergies between the two organizations. With a view to better fulfil their respective mandates, this MoU sets the frame for supporting each other’s work and achieve a higher degree of efficiency.” [READ MORE](#)

Source: Human Rights Watch

Date: 12 Mar 2021

Myanmar: Facial Recognition System Threatens Rights

“On December 14, 2020, Myanmar authorities rolled out the first phase of its “Safe City” initiative and started using a system of 335 surveillance cameras in eight townships in the capital, Naypyidaw. [...] Neither the privacy law nor other Myanmar law contains any protection for the collection, use and storage of personal data. There is also no specific protection of sensitive personal data, including biometrics, or their processing.” [READ MORE](#)

Latest reports

- Council of Europe, [CyberSouth: Study on Judicial Training Systems and Capabilities in the Southern Neighbourhood Region](#), March 2021
- Council of Europe, [CyberSouth: Study on the Competent Authorities and the Functioning of International Cooperation](#), March 2021
- EU CyberNet, [How COVID-19 became a dominant issue in the cyber threat environment](#), 10 Mar 2021
- ENISA, [EU Cybersecurity Initiatives in the Finance Sector](#), 5 Mar 2021
- European Commission, [Cybercrime Fact Sheet](#), 5 Mar 2021
- UK Government, [African Cyber Experts Fellowship: lessons learnt report 2020](#), 8 Mar 2021
- Lexology, [The Practitioner's Guide to Global Investigation 2021](#), 14 Mar 2021
- CyberPeace Institute, [Playing with Lives: Cyberattacks on Healthcare are Attacks on People](#), 9 Mar
- PWC, [Cyber Threats 2020: Report on the Global Threat Landscape](#), March 2021
- Jigsaw, [The State of Online Violence Against Women](#), 1 Mar 2021
- Afnic, [Report Internet of Things & Digital Sovereignty](#), 1 Mar 2021
- Oxen Privacy Tech Foundation, [Assessing the digital security needs and practices of human rights defenders in Africa, MENA, South Asia, and Southeast Asia](#), March 2021
- Tessian, [Opportunity in Cybersecurity Report 2021](#), March 2021
- Cornell University, [Exploitation and Sanitization of Hidden Data in PDF Files](#), 3 Mar 2021
- Diario Constitucional, [Doctrina Grooming: Algunas reflexiones sobre la Ley 27.590 «Mica Ortega», de Rosa Warlet](#), 5 Mar 2021

Upcoming events

- 16 March, C-PROC, (on-line), Participating in the expert consultation regarding the societal impact of ransomware attacks, organized by Cyber Peace Institute, [GLACY+](#)
- 17-18 March, C-PROC/ALBANIA (on-line), Business analysis CERT/LEA, [iPROCEEDS-2](#)
- 17-18 March, C-PROC/ALBANIA (desk assessment), Guidelines and procedures on sharing of data by CERTs/CSIRTs with criminal justice authorities [iPROCEEDS-2](#)
- 19 March, C-PROC/MOLDOVA, (on-line), Workshop with Moldovan authorities on cybercrime/cybersecurity strategy and action plan (with CyberSecurity EAST), [CyberEast](#)
- 20-25 March, C-PROC, (on-line), Participating in the meeting ICANN 70, Cancun, MEXICO, [GLACY+](#)
- 22-25 March, C-PROC/GEORGIA, (on-line), Online Judiciary Training (with High School of Justice), [CyberEast](#)
- 22 March, C-PROC/COTE D'IVOIRE (on-line), Orientation meeting with participation of OCWAR-C and ECOWAS, [GLACY+](#)
- 23 March, C-PROC/NIGERIA, (on-line), Desk study on cybercrime legislation and human rights, [GLACY+](#)
- 23-24 March, C-PROC/MONTSERRAT, (online), Workshop on Cybercrime legislation in Montserrat, [Octopus project](#) in cooperation with CARICOM IMPACS
- 24-26 March C-PROC/COLOMBIA, (on-line), Initial assessment, [GLACY+](#)
- 24-26 March, C-PROC/BRAZIL, (on-line), Initial assessment, [GLACY+](#)

- 25-26 March, C-PROC/JAMAICA, (online), Workshop on Cybercrime legislation in Jamaica, [Octopus project](#) in cooperation with CARICOM IMPACS
- 29 March, C-PROC/BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, Workshop and hands-on simulation for improvement of the skills, set-up and competencies of 24/7 points of contact, [iPROCEEDS-2](#)
- 29 March-1 April, C-PROC/MOLDOVA, (on-line), Online Judiciary Training (with National Institute of Justice), [CyberEast](#)
- 30 March, C-PROC/BELIZE, (on-line), Stakeholders Webinar on new cybercrime legislation, [GLACY+](#)
- 30 March, C-PROC, (on-line), Series of monthly thematic webinars for the International Network of the National Judicial Trainers, [GLACY+](#)
- 31 Mar - 1 April, C-PROC/INTERPOL, (on-line), Workshop on the functioning and role of 24/7 Networks of Contact Points in the international cooperation on cybercrime and e-evidence, [GLACY+](#), [iPROCEEDS-2](#), [CyberSouth](#), [CyberEast](#)
- 31 March-1 April, C-PROC/ MONTENEGRO (on-line), Business analysis CERT/LEA, [iPROCEEDS-2](#)
- 31 March-1 April, C-PROC/ MONTENEGRO (desk assessment), Guidelines and procedures on sharing of data by CERTs/CSIRTs with criminal justice authorities, [iPROCEEDS-2](#)
- By 31 March, C-PROC, Desk Study, Country profiles on online child sexual exploitation and abuse for Belize, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Philippines, El Salvador, Sri Lanka, [Octopus project](#), [EndOCSEA@Europe](#)
- 31 March (TBC), C-PROC (online), Working group meeting on the development of an online training platform on cybercrime, [Octopus project](#), [GLACY+](#), [iPROCEEDS-2](#), [CyberEast](#), [CyberSouth](#)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and the countermeasures applied by most of the countries worldwide, in-country activities of the C-PROC capacity building initiatives foreseen in the month of March have been rescheduled to a later date.

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