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Cybersecurity hub keeping businesses safer online

With the cost of cybercrime in Europe rising to an average of €50,000 per incident – up from €10,000 the previous year – an attack can be very expensive for small to medium-sized businesses with limited resources. However, thanks to a digital hub creating a highly-skilled cyber workforce through the first-ever Cybersecurity Professional Register, staff based in universities and SMEs across the world have learned how to protect themselves against sophisticated online attacks with its new cybersecurity training programme – free of charge.

A European consortium is tackling sophisticated cybercrime with a new cybersecurity platform offering courses to keep businesses and academic institutions safe online.
Giving advanced and entry-level trainees the experience of taking part in a virtual cyber-attack, the courses have provided practical experience against phishing scams, cybercriminals and hackers – all in timed conditions.

The novel training programme has allowed participants to play the role of 'defender' or 'attacker' in a mock cyber-attack, giving them the unique insight and practice of what it is like to be a cybercriminal but without breaking the law.

Following successful trials and workshops in transport, academia and energy sectors, the cybersecurity hub has already created over 500 qualified individuals from over 20 institutions over the past year in tackling malware, spoofing, phishing scams, spam emails, SQL injection and password cracking.

Allowing users to gain financial insight into poor or incorrect decisions, the course has also provided a working knowledge of associated costs, with users penalised an imaginary €10,000 for not spotting an unsecured password, or clicking on suspicious links, for example.

Niccolò Zazzeri from CYBERWISER.eu said: "Against a backdrop of increased interconnected devices, advancing AI and improved machine learning, 2020 has shown there is an urgent need for highly-skilled and multi-disciplined cybersecurity professionals. Threat actors are continuing to evolve their ability to avoid detection and rapidly expanding their capabilities with the proliferation of accessible tools and exploits. Our end goal is the democratisation of cybersecurity training and the empowerment of multi-disciplined teams in public and private organisations.

"We have seen many SMEs, universities and small businesses with limited resources take part in our entry-level simulated environments as cybercrime has reached new and unprecedented levels. "With our rich and varied content and carefully-planned scenarios, there are no courses as interactive as CYBERWISER.eu. We have put our trainees into live attacks, as well as allowing them to access the actual code, play around with it and let them see first-hand how vulnerabilities can be exploited."

The courses look at all aspects of security, such as online fraud via scams eliciting personal information such as account passwords or credit card information, which currently costs the world $600 billion per year (Centre for Strategic and International Studies). A recent study by Insight has shown that [nearly 80% of senior IT and IT security leaders believe their organizations lack sufficient protection](#) against cyberattacks despite increased IT security investments.

Last year, the Lloyds Register Foundation World Risk Poll run by Gallup found that [seventy-one per cent of people who use the internet recognised three main internet-related risks](#) — misinformation, fake news, and cyberbullying. Worldwide, 45 per cent of internet users said they worry about being the victim of online fraud.

World's first Cybersecurity Professional Register
Consolidating the individuals it has trained, the EU-funded 'CYBERWISER.EU' project that runs the courses has made a significant impact in global internet safety by creating the world's first-ever **Cybersecurity Professional Register** (CyPR) – which all advanced users are enrolled into.

"Cybersecurity is not just an IT issue," Zazzeri explains "it affects cultures from all levels of seniority in all companies that have a digital presence. While the initial entry-level 'Primer course for cybersecurity beginners is free, Cyberwiser has three more commercial products – Basic, Intermediate and Advanced – tailored to the requirements and size of your business or institution."

"All our advanced users are automatically added to the Cybersecurity Professional Register where organisations of any size or sector can find and contact our members with the skills and experiences they need to improve their cybersecurity. We also approve the registration in the CyPR of Cybersecurity Experts that have already obtained Cybersecurity official certifications such as ISACA, ISC2 etc, a Higher Education Degree, or have certified working experience in the field."

The types of people who have enrolled so far have been employed in HR Departments, more skilled employees working in SOC, public sector workers, technical staff in the cybersecurity department and, junior staff who have been looking to develop their basic training.

Training the cybersecurity workforce of tomorrow, CYBERWISER.EU is enabling users to understand the operational and business risks and responsibilities from an organisation-wide perspective with its innovative mix of a theoretical and practical approach.

CYBERWISER.EU is now organising their latest workshop, entitled "[Effective training in cybersecurity in the new era of staff remotisation: Practical solutions, tools & opportunities](#)" which will take place on the **25 March 2021** as a virtual event from **10:00 AM to 4:30 PM**. Participants will hear from

internationally-renowned cybersecurity experts about the possible solutions for improving the **cybersecurity posture** of their organisation. Participants can enrol in the CYBERWISER.eu **training programme** for free. Early registrants have the unique opportunity to use the platform for free, with a 6-month window for you to complete the courses.

Register for the event here: https://www.cyberwiser.eu/content/effective-training-cybersecurity-new-era-staff-remotisation

About CYBERWISER.eu
CYBERWISER.eu, www.cyberwiser.eu/, is an Innovation Action co-funded by the European Commission, H2020 Programme, under Grant Agreement 786668.

PRIMER is an entry-level course for cybersecurity beginners. It will give you the basic skills you need to work online every day.
The PRIMER is mainly addressed to Students or Early professionals that do not have any knowledge of the cybersecurity framework. The aim is to give a complete understanding of the basic concepts like most common cybersecurity threats and best practice. Another learning goal is to understand the overall process of cyber-risk analysis and its relationship with cybersecurity.

BASIC is for those who already understand the essentials of cybersecurity. It will help prepare you to work in the cybersecurity field.
The BASIC targets users that are familiar with cybersecurity and want or need to test and improve their skills at a higher level.

The BASIC offering level offers users more complex courses and training materials, as well as a first look at the cyber-range training with simple, pre-defined training scenario, giving them access to "real" use case scenarios as defined by the CYBERWISER.eu team.

INTERMEDIATE is for those who are already familiar with cybersecurity threats and best practices. It will prepare you to work in cybersecurity and cyber-risk.
The INTERMEDIATE offering level enables a much more personalised experience with a larger number of features. These include the number of elements that can be used for defining a cyber-range training scenario, the possibility to create new training scenarios, a suite of available automated attacks and the first version of vulnerability assessment tools.

Another new feature is a parameter-based real-time evaluation of trainee performance supported by models and algorithms for economic risk evaluation.

The courses develop aspects of context establishment, cyber-risk assessment, cyber-risk treatment, and cost/benefit analysis not covered at the BASIC offering level. INTERMEDIATE level also introduces competitive training and exercise scenario models (team vs. team).
This level targets more expert users from academic/educational and business contexts as well as SMEs, large enterprises (LEs) as well as CSIRTs and CERTs.

ADVANCED is for those who are already experienced in cybersecurity and cyber-risk. It will take your cybersecurity skills to the next level!
In the Advanced offering level, all the features in the Intermediate level are upgraded to their full potential to guarantee adequate training materials, the provision of cyber-rage training scenarios and exercises, simulation of cyber-attacks and defence mechanisms, monitoring and measurement of user performance for those users already tasked with the defence of high-risk organisations against cyber-attacks and incidents.

Targets include Institutions of Higher Education and Research centres, SMEs, LEs and public-sector Organisations employees.

The Consortium is composed of 9 domain-skilled partners from 7 European Countries: Spain: (ATOS), United Kingdom (Trust-IT Services), Norway (SINTEF), Slovenia (XLAB), Italy (Ferrovie Dello Stato Italiane, Università di Pisa, AON), Portugal (EDP) and Belgium (RHEA Group), bringing together a nice mix of large companies, SMEs, research and educational institutions.
CYBERWISER.eu expands and builds on the success and strong user community of the H2020 Innovation Action WISER (2015-2017), helping to accelerate awareness-raising and jump-start earlier investments.