



Building Cybersecurity Skills for Europe's Critical Infrastructures

As we near the end of the project's inaugural year, we are reflecting on our achievements and strategising the next phase. Join us on this journey!

Overview

SecAwarenessTruss aims to deliver an advanced cybersecurity training platform designed to strengthen the skills of the cyber defense workforce responsible for critical ICT infrastructures. The platform's core feature will be sector-specific training scenarios, offering hands-on, practical experience to enhance skills in cyber defense.

This project brings together organizations from Greece and Cyprus, including critical infrastructure entities from the telecommunications, energy, maritime, and healthcare sectors, which will serve as pilot sectors. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) also play a key role in the initiative. The consortium further includes the cybersecurity authorities of Greece and Cyprus, as well as the Open University of Cyprus, aligning its objectives with European Network and Information Security legislation.

The consortium has structured a 36-month work plan that includes the analysis, customization, deployment, operation, validation, and performance evaluation of the cyber range infrastructure.

PARTNERS



Progress to Date

Implementation

The initial phase of the SecAwarenessTruss project, which focused on defining the technical framework and architectural design of the platform, has been successfully completed. This phase serves as a foundational element, providing the blueprint for all subsequent activities.

Currently, as the project transitions into the final stages of the second implementation phase, efforts are underway to finalize the overall design and specifications for the training programs.



1st Plenary Meeting

On April 24, 2024, the SecAwarenessTruss consortium convened in Athens for its 1st Plenary Meeting to discuss and review the project's progress. The meeting was organized and hosted by OTE, the telecommunications pilot partner, at the organisation's headquarters. Each Work Package (WP) was introduced, and the Task Leaders delivered thorough updates on the main objectives of their respective tasks including the ongoing and future activities and all the important milestones. The subsequent discussions enabled partners to share valuable insights, address challenges, and align their strategies effectively.



2nd Plenary Meeting

On November 6–7, 2024, the 2nd Plenary Meeting of SecAwarenessTruss took place at DSA's headquarters in Nicosia, Cyprus. Over the course of two days, project partners and members of the External Experts Advisory Board (EEAB) gathered to discuss project's progress to date, and plan upcoming tasks, ensuring all deliverables align with established deadlines.

On the first day, when the EEAB members joined the discussions, the Management Board had the opportunity to present a comprehensive overview of key activities across WPs since project's initiation and discuss future directions towards the development of the platform's architecture and training programs design. Leveraging the expertise of the EEAB members, the discussion yielded valuable advice and robust recommendations, enriching the project's strategic development.

As the meeting concluded, it addressed outstanding issues and emphasized that the training workshops to be organized are crucial milestones. These workshops aim to further engage key stakeholders and refine training requirements tailored to critical infrastructure sectors.



Cutting-Edge Publications

The research conducted under the SecAwarenessTruss project has resulted in the publication of a new open-access research paper titled:

Enhancing Maritime Cybersecurity through Operational Technology Sensor Data Fusion: A Comprehensive Survey and Analysis.

Mr. George Potamos from the Cybersecurity and Telecommunications Research Lab at the Open University of Cyprus (OUC) led the investigations to determine whether the fusion of Operational Technology (OT) data, used for maritime situational awareness, could also enhance the detection of cyber incidents in real-time or near-real-time. The findings are expected to contribute to developing new training programmes designed within the SecAwarenessTruss initiative.

Conferences Highlights

Dr. Eliana Stavrou from the Open University of Cyprus (OUC) raised awareness about the project's objectives in two conferences: IEEE EDUCON 2024 and HCI International 2024.

IEEE EDUCON 2024 took place from May 8 to May 11 in Kos Island, Greece, bringing together professionals and academics to encourage innovation and collaboration within the global engineering education community. Dr. Eliana Stavrou's presentation "***Empowering Professionals: A Generative AI Approach to Personalized Cybersecurity Learning***" highlighted how generative AI tools can be utilized to create effective and personalized training study plans using ECSF Cyber Threat Intelligence Specialist career role as a case study.

HCI International 2024, held from June 29 to July 4 in Washington, DC, celebrated its 40th anniversary as a hybrid event, featuring virtual and in-person presentations, workshops, and tutorials. The conference brought together experts in the field of Human-Computer Interaction from around the globe. Dr Eliana Stavrou (OUC) presented the paper "***Revolutionizing Social Engineering Awareness Raising, Education and Training: Generative AI-powered Investigations in the Maritime Domain***" on how genAI can be leveraged to create social engineering-tailored training attack scenarios in the maritime domain and provided insights to educators and trainers.

Events

1

The **European Big Data Value Forum (EBDVF) 2024**, held from October 2 to October 4 in Budapest, Hungary, was a significant event for the data and AI community. It gathered professionals from various industries, researchers, and policymakers to discuss and promote actions in data and artificial intelligence.

OTE, Platinum Sponsor, set up a booth showcasing the SecAwarenessTruss project. Attendees had the opportunity to engage with OTE representatives, explore the project's capabilities, and discuss potential applications and collaborations.



Events

2

SecAwarenessTruss participated in a Cyber Range demonstration event organized by the project **CYBERUNITY** on October 30, 2024. The event "**CYBERUNITY Demonstration: Advancing Security through Federated Cyber Ranges**" showcased the latest advancements in training and federated Cyber Ranges. During the event, several live Cyber Ranges were demonstrated, while related EU projects were given the opportunity to present their approaches and objectives.



CYBERUNITY aims to build an interoperable community of Cyber Ranges in Europe. Its main objective is to develop the specifications for an interoperable cyber range infrastructure. SecAwarenessTruss shares this vision, motivated by the need for cyber range expandability and interoperability.

3

SecAwarenessTruss participated in the **26th InfoCom Conference**, which was held at the Divani Caravel Hotel in Athens on November 12, 2024. InfoCom is a key annual event for security professionals, attracting commercial and academic interest. The conference brought together industry leaders, researchers, and policymakers. A dedicated booth was set up to present the project and demonstrate its expected outcomes. The objective was to engage a broader audience of Greek experts to increase attention and impact.



4

Strategising the next steps

Cybersecurity Training Event in Crete

SecAwarenessTruss will be organizing a **comprehensive training event in Crete on December 13, 2024**. The event will take place at the University General Hospital of Heraklion and will be divided into two key sessions. The first session will introduce the project to cybersecurity and IT professionals from hospitals across Crete, providing them with a deeper understanding of the initiatives and developments. The second session will focus on raising awareness among healthcare personnel about the latest cybersecurity threats within the health sector, highlighting specific incidents and the need for robust defenses against emerging risks.

The project aims to inform IT professionals about Cyber Ranges technology, emphasizing how the platform developed within the project can serve as a valuable and effective training tool. At the same time, healthcare professionals will gain a deeper understanding of the current cyber threat landscape in the healthcare sector, helping them recognize potential vulnerabilities and improve their cybersecurity posture.

For registrations, click [HERE](#).

3rd Plenary Meeting

In March 2025, the 3rd Plenary Meeting of SecAwareness will be held online. Partners will meet to discuss the project's progress and deal with outstanding issues. Plenary meetings are very important in keeping up with deliverables and relevant deadlines.

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A Dynamic Training Experience for Critical Infrastructures based on Cyber-Ranges

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