

# Coalition against Stalkerware

In November 2019, Kaspersky and nine other organizations from the IT Security industry and advocacy/non-profit groups launched the Coalition Against Stalkerware, a global initiative to provide support to survivors of domestic violence, to combat the use of stalkerware, and to work towards increasing public awareness about this issue. The initiative gathered prominent organizations including: Avira, Electronic Frontier Foundation (USA), European Network for the Work with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence, G DATA, Malwarebytes, National Network to End Domestic Violence (USA), NortonLifeLock (USA), Operation Safe Escape (USA), and Weisser Ring (Germany). In its first year, the Coalition has more than doubled its membership.

## What is stalkerware?

Stalkerware is commercially available software that enables a remote operator to monitor the activities on another user's device without their consent. It allows the operator to collect keystrokes, monitor messages, call information and GPS locations – all without the user's knowledge. It can often be used to abuse the privacy of current or former partners.

Stalkerware can be installed on both Android and iOS devices. There are also desktop versions of commercial spyware, but these are not particularly popular.

## How pervasive is stalkerware?

We detected almost 54.000 of our mobile users were affected globally by stalkerware in 2020. Russia, Brazil, the United States, India and Mexico are at the top of list of countries where users are most impacted. Below them, Germany is the first European country, occupying sixth place in the global rankings.

There is no indication that stalkerware will be disappearing. Findings of the Second National Survey on technology abuse and domestic violence in Australia ran in 2020 by WESNET, are that 99.3% of domestic violence practitioners have clients experiencing technology-facilitated abuse.

European Institute for Gender Equality research states that "seven in ten women (70%) who have experienced cyber stalking, have also experienced at least one form of physical or/and sexual violence from an intimate partner".

## Our response to protect users against stalkerware

- In April 2019, Kaspersky upgraded its Internet Security for Android solution with [Privacy Alert](#). Kaspersky was the first vendor in the industry who started notifying users about stalkerware installed on their devices and the dangers that it poses.
- A GREAT security researcher has developed '[TinyCheck](#)' – a simple and free tool to help NPOs detect stalkerware and spyware installed on smartphones and tablets, without making the perpetrator aware that such a check is being carried out.

# The Coalition Against Stalkerware's Values and Objectives

The Coalition formed to facilitate bidirectional dialogue among those committed to protecting individuals from stalkerware and other forms of tech-enabled abuse. The Coalition's partners work to drive real outcomes through their collaboration, including:

- improving technical mitigation of stalkerware via creating consensus-based definition and detection criteria, developing a stalkerware sample and metadata information sharing mechanism for IT security vendors, other tech firms, academics, independent security researchers, etc.;
- providing technical assistance to organizations that support survivors of domestic violence;
- raising public awareness via hosting a number of events.

## Our future plans

The Coalition's plans for its second year include:

### Step #1

**Samples exchange:** Outreach to individuals and organizations that can contribute to the stalkerware sample/metadata information sharing mechanism

### Step #2

**Technical capacity of NPOs:** Series of informational and technical assistance seminars to assist support organizations working with survivors of domestic violence and other individuals targeted by stalkerware

### Step #3

**Policymakers:** Additional data collection to inform evidence-based policymaking to respond to threats posed by stalkerware

### Step #4

**New partners:** Further expansion of the Coalition to include additional organizations globally to assist in the mission of combating stalkerware and protecting individuals

#### Links:

<https://stopstalkerware.org/>  
<https://kas.pr/ym61>

[www.kaspersky.com](http://www.kaspersky.com)

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#### Contacts

The Coalition is looking forward to working with new partners (non-profit organizations, industry, academia and other areas such as law enforcement) that think alike and would like to cooperate in reaching our joint goal to protect people against stalking.

To become a new partner, please contact Kristina Shingareva, Head of External Relations at Kaspersky: [ka@kaspersky.com](mailto:ka@kaspersky.com) or use the web form at the Coalition's web site: [stopstalkerware.org](https://stopstalkerware.org).