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*Plenary sitting*

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**A10-0213/2025**

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# **REPORT**

on the protection of minors online  
(2025/2060(INI))

Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Rapporteur: Christel Schaldemose(

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## MOTION FOR A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION

### on the protection of minors online (2025/2060(INI))

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act)<sup>1</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 December 2023 on addictive design of online services and consumer protection in the EU single market<sup>2</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 12 March 2009 on the protection of consumers, in particular minors, in respect of the use of video games<sup>3</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European Single Market approach<sup>4</sup>,
- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989 and to General Comment No. 25 (2021) of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child of 2 March 2021 on children’s rights in relation to the digital environment,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act)<sup>5</sup>,
- having regard to Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 May 2005 concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market and amending Council Directive 84/450/EEC, Directives 97/7/EC, 98/27/EC and 2002/65/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council (‘Unfair Commercial Practices Directive’)<sup>6</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission’s fitness check of EU consumer law on digital fairness<sup>7</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission notice of 17 December 2021 entitled ‘Guidance on the

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 277, 27.10.2022, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj>.

<sup>2</sup> OJ C, C/2024/4164, 2.8.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2024/4164/oj>.

<sup>3</sup> OJ C 87 E, 1.4.2010, p. 122.

<sup>4</sup> OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, p. 15.

<sup>5</sup> OJ L, 2024/1689, 12.7.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj>.

<sup>6</sup> OJ L 149, 11.6.2005, p. 22, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/29/oj>.

<sup>7</sup> Commission staff working document of 3 October 2024 entitled ‘Fitness Check of EU consumer law on digital fairness’ (SWD(2024)0230).

interpretation and application of Directive 2005/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council concerning unfair business-to-consumer commercial practices in the internal market<sup>8</sup> (the UCPD Guidance),

- having regard to the Commission communication of 7 October 2025 entitled ‘Guidelines on measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors online, pursuant to Article 28(4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2065’<sup>9</sup>,
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2017/2394 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2017 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws and repealing Regulation (EC) No 2006/2004<sup>10</sup> (Consumer Protection Cooperation Regulation),
- having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in view of changing market realities<sup>11</sup>,
- having regard to its resolution of 9 May 2023 on the implementation of the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive<sup>12</sup>,
- having regard to the Commission communication of 11 May 2022 entitled ‘A Digital Decade for children and youth: the new European strategy for a better internet for kids (BIK+)’ (COM(2022)0212),
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2024/1183 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 April 2024 amending Regulation (EU) No 910/2014, as regards establishing the European Digital Identity Framework<sup>13</sup> (eIDAS2 Regulation),
- having regard to the Commission proposal of 6 February 2024 for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child sexual abuse material and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA (COM(2024)0060),
- having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)<sup>14</sup>,
- having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
- having regard to the opinion of the Committee on Culture and Education,

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<sup>8</sup> OJ C 526, 29.12.2021, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> OJ C, C/2025/5519, 10.10.2025, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2025/5519/oj>.

<sup>10</sup> OJ L 345, 27.12.2017, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2017/2394/oj>.

<sup>11</sup> OJ L 303, 28.11.2018, p. 69, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2018/1808/oj>.

<sup>12</sup> OJ C, C/2023/1062, 15.12.2023, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/C/2023/1062/oj>.

<sup>13</sup> OJ L, 2024/1183, 30.4.2024, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1183/oj>.

<sup>14</sup> OJ L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1, ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2016/679/oj>.

- having regard to the report of the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection (A10-0213/2025),
- A. whereas 97 % of young people use the internet daily; whereas 78 % of 13 to 17-year-olds report checking their devices at least hourly and 46 % report checking them almost constantly<sup>15</sup>; whereas 16 to 24-year-olds spend an average of over seven hours a day on the internet<sup>16</sup>; whereas more than half of EU consumers regularly play video games and among children aged from 11 to 14, that share is as high as 84 %<sup>17</sup>; whereas among minors that play video games, 64 % of them spend an average of EUR 1-20 per month on games, while there has been an overall average monthly spending increase by children and consumers in general, from EUR 33 in 2020 to EUR 39 in 2023<sup>18</sup>;
- B. whereas one in four children and young people display ‘problematic’ or ‘dysfunctional’ smartphone use, meaning behavioural patterns mirroring addiction<sup>19</sup>; whereas minors are more vulnerable to AI-generated content, AI companions and chatbots, as their cognitive abilities are still developing; whereas research shows that habitual checking of social media in teenagers may be associated with changes in neural sensitivity as regards anticipation of social rewards and punishments; whereas research suggests that the rise in mental health problems in adolescents may be related to excessive social media use, and social media pressure has been identified as one of the top five causes of mental health difficulties for minors, such as heightened anxiety and depression; whereas the World Health Organization recognises gaming addiction as a mental health disorder; whereas studies have shown that excessive social media can impact brain development and brain capacity of minors; whereas correlations have been found between excessive social media use and lack of impulse control;
- C. whereas citizens, especially minors, are increasingly engaging with social media, video- and content-sharing platforms, and online aggregators, including for news consumption; whereas public figures and influencers active on these online platforms have gained considerable influence in shaping public discourse; whereas many users, including minors, find it challenging to distinguish between true and false information in online news; whereas ensuring the responsible operation and design of these platforms, alongside the promotion of critical thinking and media and digital literacy among minors, must be a priority;
- D. whereas digital education and media literacy are essential for strengthening the resilience of minors to online risks, including disinformation and harmful content, while

<sup>15</sup> Maza, M, T., Fox, K., A., Kwon, S., J., Flannery, J., E., Lindquist, K., A., et al., ‘Association of Habitual Checking Behaviors on Social Media With Longitudinal Functional Brain Development’, *JAMA Network*, (2023), doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2022.4924.

<sup>16</sup> Statista, ‘Average daily time spent using the internet by 3rd quarter 2024, by age and gender’, 22 May 2023, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1378510/daily-time-spent-online-worldwide-by-age-and-gender/>.

<sup>17</sup> The European Consumer Organisation, ‘Consumer groups denounce video games’ manipulative spending tactics’, 2024, <https://www.beuc.eu/press-releases/consumer-groups-denounce-video-games-manipulative-spending-tactics>.

<sup>18</sup> The European Consumer Organisation, ‘Monetising Play – Regulating in-Game and in-APP Premium currencies’, 2024, [https://www.beuc.eu/sites/default/files/publications/BEUC-X-2024-061\\_Monetising\\_play\\_Regulating\\_in\\_game\\_and\\_in\\_app\\_premium\\_currencies.pdf](https://www.beuc.eu/sites/default/files/publications/BEUC-X-2024-061_Monetising_play_Regulating_in_game_and_in_app_premium_currencies.pdf).

<sup>19</sup> Lopez-Fernandez, O. and Kuss, D., ‘Harmful Internet Use Part I: Internet addiction and problematic use’, study carried out at the request of the Scientific Foresight Unit of the European Parliamentary Research Service, 31 January 2019, p. 51.

equipping them with the skills to navigate, contribute to and shape the digital world responsibly and confidently; whereas comprehensive educational programmes and awareness campaigns are essential to inform minors, parents, guardians and educators about risks and safe practices online; whereas this includes targeted measures for minors, parents, guardians and educators, prevention techniques, awareness-raising and media and digital literacy campaigns, and information on tools to limit access to age-inappropriate or harmful content;

- E. whereas digital technologies and online services can offer benefits for minors by opening up new opportunities for performance, creativity and expression and supporting education; whereas it is essential to guarantee minors' right of access of to the internet as it contributes to their freedom of expression, learning, information and opinion; whereas minors should not be passive technology consumers, but be actively in control of the technologies they use; whereas media and digital literacy are simultaneously key enablers of children's active, creative and civic participation online, equipping them with the competences to actively take part in the digital world in a responsible and confident manner, beyond mere risk prevention;
- F. whereas the influencer advertising market in Europe has witnessed significant growth in recent years, driven by the increasing importance of social media platforms, a rise in digital advertising budgets and the increasing preference of brands for more authentic forms of marketing; whereas as businesses strive to engage with younger, tech-savvy consumers, influencer marketing has emerged as a key strategy for building brand awareness, trust and credibility; whereas the European market for influencer marketing is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate of around 12 % over the next five years, and by 2030 the market size is expected to surpass EUR 6.4 billion, demonstrating robust growth prospects; whereas only 20 % of influencers systematically indicate the commercial nature of the content they share;
- G. whereas more and more minors are becoming content creators or kidfluencers, sometimes involving commercialisation or early public exposure, which can lead to exploitation without consent;
- H. whereas at present, no EU legislation comprehensively addresses the protection of minors across the digital ecosystems; whereas minors should enjoy equal levels of protection regardless of where they live; whereas online platforms and applications have different purposes and services with various designs, interfaces and features, which can lead to different risks to minors, and, therefore, proportionality and risk-based assessment should be applied; whereas minors should enjoy a higher level of protection online, which requires a harmonised EU approach; whereas ensuring higher levels of protection of minors needs to be balanced with respecting their right to access information and participate in online communities;
- I. whereas the Digital Services Act (DSA) recognises the protection of minors as an important policy objective of the Union and includes key provisions to ensure better protection of minors online, such as Article 14(3), Article 28, Article 34(1)(d), Article 35(1)(j) and Article 44(1)(j); whereas the Commission guidelines on measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors online, pursuant to Article 28(4) of Regulation (EU) 2022/2065, further clarify the rules on the protection of minors

online;

- J. whereas the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) identifies the protection of minors as a key policy objective and lays down provisions to strengthen their online safety, notably on video-sharing platforms;
- K. whereas the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) system, as a European video game content rating system, can help consumers – especially parents – make informed decisions about the suitability of video games and apps for different age groups;
- L. whereas evidence from several countries in the EU shows that minors have access to pornographic content, sometimes involuntarily, at a very young age; whereas the viewing of pornography can expose children to violent and age-inappropriate content, which has been proven to increase aggression and sexual violence and may trigger harmful sexual behaviours among children and teenagers;
- M. whereas the DSA recognises that parental control tools are among risk mitigation measures for online platforms accessible to minors, as provided for in Article 35(1)(j), and thus play a role in managing the risks to minors’ safety, privacy and well-being in the digital environment;
- N. whereas the number of young women that are subject to gender-based violence is increasing year by year, in particular in the online sphere; whereas the lack of action and the persistence of online abuse pushes young women out of the digital sphere and impacts their freedom of expression;
- O. whereas there is an urgent need to effectively implement and enforce current EU legislation and to address outstanding challenges in order to create a safe online environment for all users, in particular minors; whereas collaboration with Member States is necessary to ensure consistent implementation and enforcement of protective measures across the EU; whereas the enforcement of existing EU legislation remains under-resourced across Member States, resulting in a fragmented implementation and disparities regarding online protection needed for minors; whereas international cooperation with non-EU countries and global organisations is essential to address the cross-border nature of online risks and harms;
- P. whereas several Member States have called for a common approach on digital majority and have already adopted national laws in this respect;
- Q. whereas the protection of minors’ data is of utmost importance, including ensuring that their data is not misused or exploited, and that a high level of minors’ privacy, safety and security is safeguarded in all online interactions, in line with the DSA;
- R. whereas the freedom of expression and of information, as guaranteed by the DSA, does not impede the implementation of effective measures for the protection of minors online;
- S. whereas the Commission has committed, in its mission letters and hearings, to proposing a digital fairness act that would tackle unethical techniques and commercial practices related to dark patterns, marketing by social media influencers, the addictive

design of digital products and services, and online profiling, especially when consumer vulnerabilities are exploited for commercial purposes for all consumers, including minors;

### ***Implementation and enforcement of existing legislation***

1. Stresses that the DSA requires online platforms that are accessible to minors to put in place appropriate and proportionate measures to ensure that minors benefit from a high level of privacy, safety and security when using their services;
2. Takes note of the Commission guidelines on measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors online, pursuant to Article 28(4) of the DSA; welcomes the broad scope of the guidelines, which include principles such as privacy and security by design and practical guidance on the application of assurance mechanisms following a risk-based approach, including the recommendation for high-risk platforms to adopt accurate, robust and privacy-preserving age verification mechanisms; welcomes, furthermore, the guidelines' support for protective default settings, the reaffirmed responsibility of app providers, regardless of delegation to operating system (OS) operators, and the promotion of existing tools such as the online safety-by-design codes and Child Rights Impact Assessments;
3. Considers that the Commission guidelines could be further improved, in particular regarding the protection of minors from addictive design, profiling-based recommendations and engagement-based recommendations; notes, furthermore, that these guidelines are not legally binding and that further legislative action might be required;
4. Stresses the importance of the swift implementation and effective enforcement of the DSA and other relevant legislation, including the AVMSD, and its full implementation at national level, in order to achieve the objective of guaranteeing a safe online environment for minors; welcomes the Commission's investigations under the DSA in the field of the protection of minors online, which focus, in particular, on addictive behaviour, the 'rabbit hole' phenomenon, age assurance mechanisms and recommender systems; urges the Commission to conclude its investigations imminently and to take any additional steps needed, including fines and effective corrective measures, in accordance with the rules established under the DSA;
5. Recalls that the Commission, on 27 May 2025, initiated formal proceedings against major pornographic platforms for breaches of obligations arising from the DSA; emphasises that the Commission's investigations specifically focus on the protection of minors online and the lack of effective measures to verify users' age; recalls that pornographic content, as well as violent content and content that perpetuates misogynistic, racist or homophobic views, can cause extremely serious physical, social and emotional consequences for minors, with harmful effects on their psychological development;
6. Stresses the importance of coordinated actions of the Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network in the field of the protection of minors online, which focus, in particular, on direct appeals to children in advertisements, the use of aggressive



commercial practices, the lack of clear and transparent information and influencer marketing;

7. Expresses concern about the spread of dangerous trends and challenges on online platforms, including targeted disinformation campaigns, noting that these could harm minors; highlights the lack of awareness among parents and guardians, who often have limited capacity to react before harm is done; urges online platforms to proactively assess risks for minors, in line with the existing legislation, and detect emerging dangerous trends and challenges; calls on the Commission to establish, in cooperation with the Safer Internet Centres, an efficient rapid alert mechanism at EU level to detect such issues and to require platforms to mitigate these issues; calls on the Commission to propose that platforms display crisis resource panels with contact numbers for third-party support services, such as eating disorder or suicide prevention charities;
8. Expresses concern about the recruitment of minors by criminal networks on online platforms; expresses concern about the lack of more ambitious mitigation measures to protect minors, in particular when it comes to notice and action, hyper-personalised and engagement-based recommendation algorithms leading to addictive behaviour, and dark patterns; notes with alarm the recent trend by some large online platforms indicating a relaxation of strict content moderation practices on their platforms; expresses deep concern that such a move may increase the exposure of minors and other vulnerable users to harmful, illegal or inappropriate content, thereby undermining efforts to ensure a safe online environment;
9. Highlights the importance of risk assessment provisions in the DSA and stresses that the risk assessments carried out by very large online platforms and very large online search engines under the DSA with regard to the safety of minors online are often inadequate, do not go into sufficient detail beyond publicly available information, lack proper independent oversight and underestimate the risks posed to minors; calls on the Commission to make full use of the tools available under the DSA to address these issues and to make sure that obligations regarding risk assessments and related mitigation measures are fully respected; calls on the Commission, as part of its enforcement powers under the DSA, to also verify that online platforms are complying with their own terms and conditions; calls on the Commission to consider, as a last resort, banning persistently non-compliant sites or applications; calls on the Commission to provide guidance, criteria, benchmarks and a clear framework for independent audits;
10. Calls on the Commission to make risk assessments more robust by specifying the information, data and assessments that must be included in systemic risk assessments, such as revenue data from personalised versus non-personalised ads for children and an assessment of any risk to minors and the effect of algorithms on minors' user experience, in particular how algorithms may expose minors to illegal content or addictive design features; stresses the importance of including minors, guardians and all relevant experts in risk assessments in order to ensure that the best interests and needs of minors are duly taken into consideration when designing the service; expresses major concerns about the ongoing failure of major digital platforms to adequately protect minors on their services, as exposed by whistle-blowers who have revealed serious breaches and harmful practices; calls on the Commission to actively engage with

whistle-blowers who have disclosed concerns related to the protection of minors on digital platforms, in order to benefit from their expertise and insights with a view to improving the effectiveness of EU policies and enforcement mechanisms aimed at safeguarding minors online;

11. Recalls that the Commission and the Member States have a shared responsibility when it comes to the enforcement of the DSA; expresses concern that there are significant delays in designating and/or empowering Digital Services Coordinators (DSCs) in several Member States, which significantly undermines the protection of consumers, including minors, across the EU; welcomes the infringement procedures opened against a number of Member States that have failed to designate and/or empower DSCs; urges the Member States that have not yet done so to designate and empower DSCs without delay and to allocate adequate resources to DSCs and other relevant authorities involved in DSA enforcement; stresses the need to ensure, in the multiannual financial framework, that authorities have all the necessary resources to carry out their work properly and effectively;
12. Calls on the Commission to ensure a harmonised approach to enforcement actions by Member States, including through harmonised operational procedures for DSCs, in order to prevent fragmentation in the internal market; invites the Commission, the Board for Digital Services Coordinators and the relevant national authorities to closely monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of measures taken by online platforms to protect minors; urges the Commission to facilitate cooperation between DSCs and CPC authorities at Member State level and provide guidance to help Member States to structure this cooperation;
13. Welcomes the enforcement efforts made by the CPC Network in the field of consumer protection, notably e-commerce and video games, to protect minors from harmful practices, as well as the continued dialogue with the video game sector; urges the Commission to propose a revision of the CPC Regulation to ensure that the Commission has centralised investigative and enforcement powers across the EU in cases of widespread infringement of EU consumer laws;
14. Welcomes the Commission's 'digital fairness' fitness check of consumer law; underlines that some issues remain unaddressed concerning the protection of consumers online, with minors identified as particularly vulnerable to unfair and manipulative online practices; calls on the Commission to strengthen the protection of minors online through the upcoming digital fairness act; believes that persuasive technologies used by online actors, such as targeted advertising, influencer marketing, addictive design, loot boxes, in-app currencies in video games, and dark patterns, should fall under the digital fairness act, which should close legal loopholes and be consistent with current legal instruments in order to better protect consumers online, in particular minors, taking into account the need to avoid unnecessary regulatory burdens;

#### *Age verification*

15. Takes note of the fact that there is currently a fragmented approach to age assurance (age verification, age estimation and self-declaration) measures across the EU, and that this leads to fragmentation in the internal market; acknowledges that some Member

States have implemented advanced measures to enhance the protection of minors online; regrets that the different national approaches may result in an uneven level of protection of minors online across the EU; acknowledges the importance of the ongoing discussions at both national and EU level on this issue, with a view to determining how to best address this challenge at EU level;

16. Underlines that cultural norms, societal values and public sensitivities regarding digital tools and data use vary significantly across Member States, which influences how societies perceive, accept and trust measures such as age verification; stresses that these differences must be carefully considered to ensure that any European-level initiatives respect national contexts and public trust, while providing effective tools to protect minors;
17. Welcomes the Commission's risk-based approach taken in its guidelines for effective, proportionate and privacy-preserving age assurance mechanisms to protect minors online, in accordance with the DSA; highlights that the Commission considers the use of access restrictions supported by age verification methods an appropriate and proportionate measure to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors; calls on the Commission to present, if necessary, appropriate legislative measures to provide legal certainty and ensure a harmonised approach for safe and reliable age assurance mechanisms, taking into account the Commission guidelines on the protection of minors throughout the EU, and guaranteeing an equal level of protection of minors in the Union;
18. Notes, however, the concerns related to age assurance mechanisms regarding possible unintended consequences against the freedoms and rights of the child; calls, therefore, for any legislative measures related to age assurance mechanisms to be thoroughly assessed for their impact on fundamental rights, to avoid enshrining surveillance practices, and to ensure that any solutions proposed prioritise the most effective and privacy-preserving measures and are adopted only where strictly necessary, proportionate and accompanied by robust safeguards;
19. Calls for the Commission to ensure consistency in the area of minors' safety online across the various pieces of EU legislation in this area;
20. Stresses that age assurance mechanisms are not a silver bullet for protecting minors from the many risks they face online; emphasises that such tools cannot remove platforms' accountability for ensuring their products are safe and appropriate for minors by design and by default; encourages the development of versions of social media services that are age-appropriate for minors;
21. Highlights the initiative of Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to create a panel of experts to swiftly assess, among other issues, the question of digital age limits and which online services should be covered;
22. Considers that, when requiring confirmation of users' age, the Commission should only require the use of the most accurate, robust and privacy-preserving mechanisms; considers that such mechanisms should be systemically implemented for online platforms or digital services selling products or services that fall under an age restriction

under EU or national legislation and for social media platforms, video-sharing platforms and AI companions, which present risk to minors;

23. Encourages collaboration between the Member States that have already developed digital tools for effective age verification and the Commission in order to develop a strong and effective age verification tool at EU level, ensuring full respect for the technical specifications derived from the eIDAS2 Regulation;
24. Welcomes the Commission's efforts to provide an EU-wide solution by developing an age-verification app and the EU Digital Identity (eID) Wallet; recommends that the Commission further invest in privacy-preserving systems, such as zero-knowledge proof protocols, building on the principles of minimal exposure and data minimisation; calls on the Commission to ensure that age assurance mechanisms that are deployed are accurate, effective, reliable, robust, non-intrusive, privacy-preserving and non-discriminatory by design, and do not incentivise the development of technologies that rely on the surveillance of users, in particular minors, nor on the deployment of other unethical technological practices;
25. Emphasises that individuals should be granted access to online platforms that use the easiest, safest and most privacy-friendly option by default; considers that, to date, the eID Wallet fulfils these objectives; calls on the Commission to ensure that any age assurance mechanisms put on the market to allow access to online services are not based on tracking or profiling of individuals, and fulfil a maximum level of privacy and accuracy for the verification of the users' age; stresses the need to ensure that online platforms only receive a yes or no response to a query on whether a user is of a certain age, rather than identifying a user; calls on the Commission to introduce a principle of non-linkability to ensure that neither governments nor online platforms can trace on which service users have used their age assurance tool;
26. Stresses that it is the provider's primary responsibility to ensure effective age assurance for minors accessing their service; welcomes the Commission's consideration that it remains the responsibility of the provider to ensure that the method used by a third party is effective;
27. Notes the fact that several providers of online platforms have put in place mechanisms to control and/or verify who can access their services, some of which have serious problems regarding their accuracy and privacy or rely on mechanisms that are biased; notes, furthermore, that some online platforms have already stated in their terms and conditions that their services cannot be used by minors under 13; stresses that despite these mechanisms, minors are, to a large extent, exposed to, actively recommended or targeted with content that is not age-appropriate or are exposed to risks such as addiction to social media, video-sharing platforms or video games; stresses that the current mechanisms can be circumvented easily and their use needs to be complemented by strong and appropriate safeguards to guarantee a sufficient level of protection of minors online;
28. Calls for the establishment of a harmonised European digital age limit of 16 as the default threshold under which access to online social media platforms should not be allowed unless parents or guardians have authorised their children otherwise; calls for

the same age limit to apply to video-sharing platforms and AI companions that present risks to minors; calls, furthermore, for a harmonised European digital age limit of 13, under which no minor can access social media platforms; calls on the panel of experts commissioned by President von der Leyen to assess, as part of their mandate, the application of an age limit of 13 for video-sharing services and AI companions; stresses that this would serve as a protective measure to support parents in managing their children's digital presence and ensuring age-appropriate online engagement;

29. Calls, furthermore, on the Commission to consider introducing personal liability for senior management in cases of serious and persistent non-compliance with the protection provisions concerning minors of Articles 34-35 of the DSA, in order to incentivise better compliance;
30. Underlines that while online platforms roll out age assurance mechanisms, more action is needed to make online services safe for minors in particular, as well as for the rest of society; concludes that addictive features and other problematic mechanisms cannot remain and need to be addressed urgently;

#### *Parental control*

31. Calls for greater collaboration between parents, communications providers, media companies, video game publishers and developers, and online platforms when it comes to identifying threats to child safety online and in the exchange of best practice in this area;
32. Stresses that the DSA requires online platforms to ensure that effective safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable groups, such as minors; highlights the fact that providers of online platforms that are accessible to minors can put in place easily understandable and user-friendly parental control measures to allow parents and guardians to help protect minors against the risk of exposure to harmful content; recalls that the AVMSD sets out similar obligations for video-sharing platforms; highlights that parental control measures should be effective and designed with privacy in mind, and should avoid excessive monitoring of minors' online activities; considers that the use of these tools should be optional for parents; emphasises that parental control tools are without prejudice to the responsibility of online platforms to ensure that their products are safe and appropriate for minors by design or by default, for instance by setting the highest security and privacy settings of accounts held by minors by default, or by designing clear and concise easy-to-find reporting mechanisms, in particular for minors;
33. Expresses concern that parents often lack the knowledge, competences, and adequate and efficient tools to monitor and manage minors' online activities or are unaware of the tools available to them; notes that even when parental control tools are used, they are not always easy to find or navigate, and minors can easily circumvent them; stresses the importance of ensuring that such tools are user-friendly, intuitive and easily found and understood by all parents and guardians, including those with disabilities; urges platforms to take greater responsibility in promoting and improving the effectiveness of parental control systems, and calls on them to publish relevant data on the effectiveness of these systems;

34. Believes that while parental control tools offer a solution to limit children's exposure to inappropriate content, services or excessive screen time, they remain fragmented across different platforms and devices, and are often difficult for the average parent or guardian to use effectively; calls on the Commission to encourage online platforms and other digital services to develop interoperable parental control tools, including a basic set of interoperable features, in order to overcome operating system and device fragmentation and enable parents to manage their children's device and application access regardless of brand or OS; believes that this approach should also be part of the updated Commission guidelines on protecting minors;
35. Underlines the importance of existing public awareness initiatives by certain Member States to support parents and guardians in ensuring the safety of minors on the internet and social media platforms by providing information and awareness on the use of tools for parental control;

### ***Filling the gaps in current EU legislation***

#### *Digital addiction*

36. Acknowledges that certain design features can also offer some benefits, such as helping users find relevant and high-quality content, and enabling user-driven assessment of content quality; stresses, however, that the addictive use of digital products and services carries the risk of economic, physical and mental harm to minors; highlights the fact that addictive design features are often inherent to the business model of platforms, notably social media, as well as to certain online services and online games, but they are also used by services providers that do not fall within the scope of the DSA, resulting in the commercial exploitation of minors; highlights, furthermore, the fact that some addictive design features could also manifest themselves in algorithmic recommender systems that prioritise emotive, extreme, inappropriate or (hyper)personalised content to maximise user engagement; is concerned that online platforms may push minors into harmful 'rabbit holes' of toxic content or take advantage of minors' vulnerabilities through advertising; notes that the Commission has already launched investigations relative to addictive designs under the DSA; calls for the effective enforcement of existing provisions under the DSA that address addictive design features as part of the risk assessment and mitigation obligations; calls on the Commission to propose legislation that mandates age-appropriate design, and safety by design and by default, requesting that all platforms and other traders include the necessary risk-based safeguards in their recommender systems, ban engagement-based recommender algorithms for minors, ban the most harmful addictive practices and disable other addictive design features by default for minors, where appropriate;
37. Stresses that features such as 'infinite scrolling'<sup>20</sup>, 'auto play'<sup>21</sup>, 'pull to refresh', disappearing stories, rewards and incentive features for continuous or repeated use and penalties for inactivity, streaks and excessive push notifications, gambling-like mechanics (loot boxes) and harmful gamification practices are aimed, by design, at

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<sup>20</sup> The elimination of natural stopping points by showing new content automatically and continuously as the consumer scrolls down.

<sup>21</sup> Automatic playing of new content.

influencing minors' decision-making, drawing them in with manipulative strategies that are aimed at increasing their engagement and the amount of time and money they spend online and can increase addiction; stresses that such features can negatively affect minors' ability to concentrate and engage healthily with online content; stresses that features such as auto play are already used for video content targeting minors; reiterates Parliament's call to effectively tackle addictive design in all online services and for all ages in the review of consumer protection law, and urgently calls for ambitious action at EU level in this regard;

38. Stresses that certain features of digital services, such as the 'like' mechanism, social validation loops and 'read receipts', can be seen as promoting approval-seeking behaviour and social comparison and undermining self-acceptance and self-worth when the desired feedback is not received, and highlights the fact that they are used by online platforms and traders as a powerful motivator for engagement, especially for minors;
39. Calls on the Commission to ensure that providers of social media and video-sharing platforms' recommender systems do not present content to minors based on profiling; stresses that this helps protect minors' mental health, reduce addictive behaviours and encourage more meaningful offline experiences;
40. Underlines the mental and physical health effects of excessive screen time and problematic smartphone use; welcomes the announcement by the President of the Commission in her 2025 State of the Union address to convene a panel of experts on children's access to social media before end of the year; calls on the Commission to urgently convene such a panel and to ensure it works in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the national health authorities of the Member States, as well as youth and parent representatives, in order to issue European evidence-based state-of-the-art guidelines on screen time for minors to improve the protection of minors as consumers online, building on the work already done in France, Sweden and the Netherlands; notes that these guidelines should include guidance on age-appropriate screen use, including maximum time per age, recommendations per type of online service broken down by different age categories, a recommended minimum age for the use of smartphones and, where relevant, other devices, and for example recommendations on smartphone use in schools; highlights the urgency of progressing on the findings of the EU-wide inquiry on the broader impacts of social media, which should cover screen time more comprehensively, and may serve as a basis for further action to protect minors; calls for the Commission and the Member States to address the issue of blurring user control over time spent online and excessive screen time and to raise awareness of parents on the effects and risks of excessive screen time, and problematic internet use, where relevant, on the basis of these guidelines;
41. Underlines the growing problem of the online dissemination of extreme content that may be considered illegal content; considers that this is often closely linked to the commercial design of certain online platforms, which may include features that foster digital addiction, maximise engagement and negatively affect civic discourse; notes that minors may be particularly vulnerable to such content due to developmental factors, such as heightened emotional reactivity, lack of critical judgement and limited impulse control; highlights that since minors spend considerable time online, their exposure to extreme content online can progressively contribute to the normalisation of certain

forms of extremism; considers that such a growing problem should be addressed urgently as part of the risk assessments and mitigation measures under Articles 34 and 35 of the DSA, which explicitly mention gender-based violence, protection of minors, mental well-being and the importance of content moderation and algorithmic amplification in this regard; notes that there has been a notable rise in extremist activity among minors in recent years;

#### *Dark patterns*

42. Stresses that 97 %<sup>22</sup> of the most popular websites and apps used by EU consumers deploy at least one dark pattern; stresses that minors are particularly vulnerable to dark patterns; underlines that because of their developmental stage and psychological vulnerabilities, minors are more easily manipulated into, for example, sharing personal data, making unintended online purchases or installing applications; underlines the need for robust enforcement of the relevant legislation, in particular the UCPD and DSA provisions, to prevent manipulative interface design, particularly when targeting vulnerable users;
43. Stresses that there is no single comprehensive EU regulation on dark patterns; recalls that the EU has taken steps to address dark patterns through various legal instruments, such as the UCPD and the DSA; stresses, however, that the scope of the prohibition of dark patterns in the DSA is limited to online platforms whereas dark patterns are widely used across all sectors; recalls that the UCPD provides a general prohibition of dark patterns and that only certain dark patterns are directly prohibited by the UCPD black-list and that none of the current prohibitions refer specifically to digital interfaces; is concerned that this results in legal uncertainty for consumers, including minors, businesses and authorities;
44. Urges, therefore, the Commission to clarify the interplay between existing legislation regulating dark patterns and to consider reviewing the list of unfair commercial practices under Annex I to the UCPD in order to close further legal gaps where appropriate; points in particular to practices such as giving more prominence to certain choices when asking consumers for a decision, preselecting options, requesting that consumers make a choice that has already been made, hampering free choice, such as by removing all stopping cues, making it difficult to change the default settings, using emotional language to steer consumers towards certain choices, using ambiguous language to confuse consumers when asking them for a decision, and creating a sense of urgency by falsely indicating that other users are currently also interested in certain products or services or that only a few items are left, or falsely indicating that many users recently purchased a particular product;

#### *Video games*

45. Highlights the fact that online video games fall within the scope of the DSA insofar as they qualify as an intermediary service or a platform; calls on the Commission to

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<sup>22</sup> European Commission: Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, Lupiáñez-Villanueva, F. et al. 'Behavioural study on unfair commercial practices in the digital environment – Dark patterns and manipulative personalisation – Final report', Publications Office of the European Union, 2022.



vigorously enforce the relevant provisions of the DSA; stresses, however, that the providers of online video games that do not qualify as intermediary services or platforms are not subject to the rules laid down in the DSA; calls on the Commission, where applicable, to ensure minimum DSA-equivalent obligations for all online video games regardless of whether they qualify as an online platform under the DSA or not; calls on the Commission to require child impact assessments for online games targeted at minors, in order to continuously identify and mitigate risks to children;

46. Highlights the video game industry's commitment to self-regulation, as demonstrated by the implementation of age recommendation systems, which play a role in safeguarding younger audiences and promoting responsible gaming practices; recalls that all video games supplied in Europe should abide by the PEGI's code of conduct rules;
47. Expresses concern that video games are an increasingly commercial environment for minors, and often encourage unwanted spending and involve the sale of virtual items, including uncertainty-based rewards and gambling-like mechanisms such as loot boxes, and the use of intermediate in-app virtual currencies, which could make it difficult to assess the real value of the transaction and the real price of each individual purchase;
48. Highlights how video games that feature chat boxes enabling user-on-user communication pose a risk for children and make them vulnerable to being surreptitiously coerced into purchasing items and sharing personal data, including banking details;
49. Regrets that there is no EU legislation that specifically regulates features such as virtual items or in-app currencies; stresses that some Member States have adopted national laws to further regulate gaming and that this leads to market fragmentation, which is detrimental to consumers and EU companies; calls on the Commission to assess these national initiatives in order to determine whether an initiative at EU level is required to avoid market fragmentation and to ensure a harmonised and high level of protection across the Union;
50. Notes that many minors watch e-sports competitions; regrets, aside from legitimate sponsorship of e-sports teams or competitions, the increase in sponsorship of e-sports players, teams or competitions by third-party websites that allow virtual items to be exchanged or bought and sold for real money through the use of automation software (bots), thereby distorting in-game economies and undermining fair competition; recalls that this practice often breaches the terms and conditions of video game publishers; calls on video game publishers to take measures to prevent these practices where there is a breach of the terms and conditions;
51. Stresses that minors with disabilities should be able to play online video games; notes the efforts by video game companies towards accessibility and encourages video game companies to continue their efforts; calls on the Commission, in conjunction with video game publishers, to present initiatives to improve the accessibility of online video games for people with disabilities;
52. Urges the Commission to guarantee a high level of protection for minors who play video games, in particular by prohibiting loot boxes and other randomised content such

as wheels of fortune, prize wheels, card packs in exchange for real money in games that are likely to be accessed by minors, as well as to address risks linked to in-app currencies, micro-transactions, pay-to-progress and pay-to-win mechanisms that are accessible to minors and that can be presented in a way that encourages overspending or gambling behaviours or that are embedded in the core gameplay dynamic, and therefore forced on the users;

### *Toys*

53. Highlights that toys incorporating artificial intelligence (AI) may present risks to children's physical and mental health, as well as to privacy, data protection and security; underlines that, in line with the forthcoming Toy Safety Regulation<sup>23</sup>, toys containing AI systems as safety components are considered high-risk AI systems and require third-party conformity assessment unless relevant harmonised standards have been applied; calls on manufacturers to ensure compliance with both the Toy Safety Regulation and the Artificial Intelligence Act (AI Act), implementing effective risk management, transparency, human oversight and robust data governance to safeguard minors online;

### *Targeted advertising*

54. Stresses that tracking and targeting increases the asymmetry between minors on the one hand and traders and digital service providers on the other hand, and increases the risk of unfair commercial practices, notably manipulation; notes that the tracking of minors online can also present a security risk, for example by making them more vulnerable to fraud, manipulation or foreign influence if the data collected about them is used against them; points out that minors are particularly vulnerable in this regard as they can be more easily exploited or deceived; calls, therefore, on the Commission and the Member States to pay particular attention to the persistence of such risks, in particular in upcoming initiatives;
55. Highlights that despite the existing legal protections in the DSA, studies have shown that minors can still be targeted with ads via proxy categories; underlines that research has found that numerous advertising practices were hidden and fraudulent and could therefore deceive minors in particular<sup>24</sup>; calls on the Commission to pay particular attention to such possible circumventions of the UCPD when it comes to the protection of minors when enforcing the relevant provisions under the DSA and to address possible shortcomings;
56. Highlights the fact that minors need more protection from behavioural monitoring, profiling and influencing; stresses that the DSA bans targeted advertising to minors

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<sup>23</sup> Commission proposal of 28 July 2023 for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the safety of toys and repealing Directive 2009/48/EC (COM(2023)0462), provisionally agreed between Parliament and Council in April 2025.

<sup>24</sup> Auer, V., Krickl, J., Hölzl, I., Beltzung, L., '#KEINWERBUNG? Schleichwerbung und problematische Marketingkommunikation auf TikTok', 2025, [https://wien.arbeiterkammer.at/beratung/konsumentenschutz/achtungfalle/Schleichwerbung\\_auf\\_Tiktok\\_202505.pdf](https://wien.arbeiterkammer.at/beratung/konsumentenschutz/achtungfalle/Schleichwerbung_auf_Tiktok_202505.pdf).

based on profiling on online platforms; calls on the Commission to launch investigations when this ban is violated; stresses that this ban does not currently apply to other traders and digital services that may engage in personalised advertising; stresses that minors should enjoy a high and consistent level of protection regardless of the type of service; calls on the Commission to introduce equivalent obligations that would be applicable to all digital services and traders;

57. Highlights the fact that, while public interest communications, such as the promotion of protection helplines for minors, may use similar channels and techniques as advertising, they do not always constitute advertising, especially if their primary purpose is to inform or benefit the public rather than to achieve commercial gain; notes, however, that the ban on targeted advertising for minors as set out in the DSA may prevent such communications; calls on the Commission to assess this issue and consider how such public interest communications that aim to protect minors can continue to be effectively disseminated;

### *Influencer marketing*

58. Highlights the fact that EU consumer law only partly addresses the issues posed by influencer marketing, and that the promotion of unrealistic lifestyle, dangerous or unhealthy products or services to minors by influencers and the harmful commercial practices involved in influencer marketing remain a reality;
59. Stresses also the concerning use of minors' images by 'parent influencers' or 'family influencers' outside of any legal or ethical framework, often in exchange for financial remuneration, raising serious questions about consent, privacy and the commercial exploitation of minors;
60. Highlights the fact that despite social media platforms' minimum age requirements, minors below this age are active on these platforms and operate as kidfluencers; highlights this widespread underage presence and the growing trend of kidfluencing among minors of all ages;
61. Emphasises that followers of kidfluencers are typically minors themselves; stresses that direct exhortation to minors to buy advertised products or persuade their parents or other adults to buy advertised products for them is highly likely to happen via kidfluencer marketing and is therefore contrary to the UCPD<sup>25</sup>; stresses that kidfluencers' knowledge of the legal rules governing their operations is doubtful;
62. Highlights the challenges that minors may face as influencers or protagonists of the content generated by another influencer (i.e. sharenting); stresses that this activity makes kidfluencers dependent on platforms, on community feedback such as 'likes', on viewership data/ratings and on the pressure to constantly create content for commercial gain;
63. Calls on the Commission to protect minors from commercial exploitation, including by prohibiting platforms from monetising or otherwise providing financial or material

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<sup>25</sup> Point 28 of Annex I to the UCPD.

incentives for kidfluencing; highlights that certain Member States have extended their existing national legal regimes protecting child actors to influencers who are minors; calls on the Member States to consider establishing equivalent levels of protection of minors by applying a similar regulatory approach framework;

64. Highlights the fact that consumers, including minors, face a lack of transparency about the paid promotion of products by social media influencers and have difficulty distinguishing between commercial and non-commercial content; highlights that a number of Member States have started to implement rules for influencers at national level; underlines the need for an EU-wide transparency and disclosure mechanism for advertising content promoted by influencers; underlines, furthermore, the need to reduce fragmented application and enforcement of existing rules and further strengthen EU consumer rules; points out that transparency obligations should be accompanied by clear rules on how to display paid content to consumers, in particular minors, reflecting growing recognition of the need for further transparency obligations and for greater harmonisation across the single market;
65. Welcomes the Commission's Influencer Legal Hub, which provides resources and training to help influencers and other relevant parties understand and comply with EU consumer and advertising laws;
66. Calls on the Commission to encourage brands to work together with influencers who can be certified voluntarily to ensure they have the knowledge of legal rules applicable to their activities, giving brands cooperating with certified influencers assurance that their products are marketed in a legally compliant manner and enabling users to place greater trust in influencers;
67. Recalls that the AVMSD provides protection for minors against commercial communications encouraging behaviour prejudicial to a person's health or safety; notes, however, that the AVMSD applies to influencers insofar as they qualify as media service providers; highlights that not all influencers are therefore covered by the AVMSD; notes, furthermore, that the Commission's 2021 guidance on the UCPD clarified that influencers can be covered by the UCPD, including the prohibition of misleading and unfair commercial practices; notes, however, that in the 2024 Fitness Check on Digital Fairness, the Commission concluded that there is still legal uncertainty about the applicable rules and that a risk of regulatory fragmentation exists; calls, therefore, on the Commission to further assess the need to address legal uncertainties, including by having a harmonised definition of 'influencer marketing', and strengthen, where appropriate, the prohibition of commercial practices that include the promotion by influencers of products, trends, challenges or behaviours that may put minors at risk, including health or financial risk;
68. Expresses concern about the rapid spread of AI-generated content impersonating famous personalities, online content creators and brands, which exploit users' trust for commercial gain or for the dissemination of disinformation; calls on the Commission to classify scams and false impersonation as part of possible systemic risks under the DSA and AI Act and to consider adopting measures to protect minors from being misled and deceived and allow for recourse to businesses and consumers affected by these scams and false impersonations;

69. Calls on the Commission to adapt EU rules, including by clarifying, where necessary, the responsibilities of platforms, influencers and other actors in the value chain, such as their agencies, and the brands whose products and services are being promoted;

### *Artificial intelligence*

70. Underlines the increasing ease of access to generative AI tools, which are also accessible to minors; highlights the risks regarding transparency, training data, manipulation and AI anthropomorphism, deepfakes, companionship chatbots and AI agents, all of which can result in a distortion of reality and in misinformation, or harm mental health, which in some cases has already led to serious tragedies, including suicides, or led users to make unintended online purchases and share personal data; warns, in particular, against the misuse of children's images available online, which can be exploited by AI technologies for inappropriate or harmful purposes, including the creation of manipulated or abusive content; is deeply concerned about the fact that companies have started to roll back their efforts in testing AI models<sup>26</sup> with regard to safety and fundamental rights, which puts minors at particular risk when interacting with AI; stresses the importance of the implementation and effective enforcement of the AI Act in this regard;
71. Stresses that AI-powered applications may be collecting and processing children's data without the informed consent or awareness of the child or their legal guardians, especially in regard to the rights of the child as a data subject;
72. Stresses the potential risks of generative AI programs being used to facilitate child sexual abuse grooming by predators, but also deepfake sexualised material of minors, which is used in cyberbullying by peers, and stresses the need to counter this from the side of services providers and platforms that make these tools available;
73. Recognises the significant threat posed by AI-powered nudity applications, which allow users to generate manipulated images of individuals without their consent, thereby infringing upon personal privacy and dignity; acknowledges the potential for such technologies to facilitate gender-based cyberviolence; calls on the Commission to urgently address the ethical and legal challenges posed by these technologies;
74. Emphasises that minors are particularly vulnerable to addictive design features of interactive AI applications and games that often may be intentionally developed to maximise engagement; highlights that AI-driven recommendation algorithms may lead to excessive screen time and create dependency, thus hindering cognitive, emotional and social development in minors and hampering the development of individual skills and competences;
75. Highlights that the AI Act is an important instrument to address the systemic risks posed by AI systems, especially to public health, safety, public security, fundamental

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<sup>26</sup> Once, L., 'OpenAI slashes AI model safety testing time', 2025, <https://news.outsourcacelevator.com/openai-safety-testing-time/#:~:text=CALIFORNIA%2C%20UNITED%20STATES%20%E2%80%94%20OpenAI%20has,being%20ushd%20without%20adequate%20safeguards.>

rights or society as a whole<sup>27</sup>, and to establish a minimum level of safety and trustworthiness for AI in the EU, including the AI systems used in content generation, recommendation systems and user interaction on online platforms; calls for the swift implementation and enforcement of obligations arising from the AI Act, to ensure safe and trustworthy AI that is also safe for minors; calls on the Commission and the Member States' authorities to firmly enforce the AI Act provisions addressing manipulative and deceptive chatbots;

76. Stresses the critical importance of the Code of Practice on General-Purpose AI (GPAI) models as a cornerstone for the effective implementation of the AI Act's systemic risk mitigation obligations, particularly in safeguarding fundamental rights and addressing the risks posed to minors;
77. Notes that AI agents, companions and chatbots for minors are increasingly present online and can pose significant risks to minors' rights and healthy development; stresses that the Commission should, as part of its ongoing evaluation of consumer legislation, consider additional safeguards, transparency standards and a prohibition of human-like features, to avoid nudging children to make purchases, and to ensure the ability for children to easily disengage from AI chatbots;
78. Calls on the Member States to urgently appoint competent authorities in charge of enforcing bans on prohibited practices and enforce the AI Act in an ambitious and effective manner, in particular but not limited to provisions concerning the protection of minors; highlights that competent authorities should pay particular attention to AI systems, notably those deployed by social media platforms, and investigate whether any AI systems likely to interact with minors exploit the vulnerabilities of minors or distort their behaviour in a manner that causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, that person or another person significant harm, as prohibited by the AI Act;
79. Stresses the importance of supporting research on AI for and with children, as well as of promoting incentives to reduce the digital divide;

#### ***Media and digital literacy and education***

80. Acknowledges the importance of media and digital literacy in empowering minors to navigate online environments safely and responsibly and to apply critical thinking; recalls that the Member States and the European Union have the competencies to adopt specific measures in this area, including in educational settings; recommends the inclusion of media and digital literacy in national curricula and the development of training programmes for teachers and educators on a regular basis; stresses the necessity of linking media literacy to basic skills, such as reading comprehension, and underlines the importance of AI literacy and digital literacy as prerequisites for creating a safer internet environment and recognising online risks; stresses the need to assess both potential harms and available mitigation tools, while also exploring the positive role that digital environments can play in access to information, education and civic participation; acknowledges the role of public service media in providing diverse, high-quality content for minors to reinforce educational and cultural objectives; recommends

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<sup>27</sup> Article 3(65) of the AI Act.

that digital platforms promote educational materials and cultural diversity, particularly from European creators and public institutions;

81. Underlines that protecting minors online is a shared responsibility that requires the involvement of parents, guardians, public authorities, platforms and schools; highlights the need for adequate resources, and calls for structured cooperation between education systems, digital platforms and regulatory authorities to deliver high-quality digital and media literacy programmes; calls on the Commission to encourage exchange of best practices and cross-border cooperation to ensure safe and responsible online environments;
82. Stresses the need to provide parents and guardians with adequate training and guidance to help them support their children's digital experience; calls for EU-funded training and awareness initiatives for parents, guardians, teachers and educators, including on the effects of excessive use of social media, exposure to harmful content and online addiction; stresses that minors are particularly vulnerable to online disinformation, on account of their developmental stage and the evolving nature of their media literacy and critical thinking skills; emphasises the urgent need for age-appropriate awareness campaigns in schools to empower minors to recognise and report online risks; encourages online platforms and digital service providers to adopt voluntary measures and tools that help strengthen the digital skills, critical thinking and digital literacy of minors and support parents or guardians in guiding their online experience; recalls that the most vulnerable children offline are often also the most vulnerable online and highlights the need for targeted support for vulnerable children, including those from low-income backgrounds or with disabilities; encourages age-appropriate literacy support for minors acting as digital content creators, with guidance for teachers and youth workers, and ethical guidelines for children's images and narratives online;

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83. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

## EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Online services have a huge potential to improve minors' access to services and information. However, it is important that minors can benefit fully from the digital environment without being manipulated, exploited, or exposed to risks. Ensuring a high level of online protection for minors in the entire digital ecosystem is essential for creating environments where they can actively engage with, learn from, and benefit from the digital possibilities.

The Digital Services Act (DSA) marked a major step forward in strengthening the EU's digital rulebook. The DSA provides a robust toolbox to ensure the protection of consumers on online platforms, including minors. Among other provisions, it introduces a framework for prohibiting targeted advertising based on profiling of minors and requires online platforms to implement appropriate and proportionate measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security for minors. These rules must now be enforced swiftly and effectively by all Member States and the European Commission. They must be accompanied by guidelines to ensure a high-level protection of minors online.

When it comes to age verification mechanisms, the Rapporteur believes that the current fragmentation in the internal market weakens the protection of minors online, and calls on the Commission to address the issue at EU level. The Rapporteur considers that the primary responsibility to ensure adequate protection of minors online lies with the platforms and digital services providers and it cannot be passed on to the parents or guardians. The Rapporteur acknowledges that some online platforms are deploying age estimation and parental control, to help protecting minors against the risk of exposure to harmful content.

Despite the regulatory achievements, minors continue to be exposed to manipulative design features, exploitative commercial practices, and digital environments that prioritise engagement and monetisation over users' best interests. Online platforms and digital services systematically deploy algorithmic systems, dark patterns, and addictive design techniques engineered to maximise user engagement and prolong time spent online. These systems prioritise emotive and extreme content to maximise user engagement increasing the risk of minors being pushed into harmful "rabbit holes" of toxic content. Moreover, minors experience adverse mental and physical effects which can include anxiety, low self-esteem, disrupted sleep patterns, reduced concentration, and compulsive online behaviour. The algorithmic systems are deliberately constructed to influence behaviour, especially considering minors are more susceptible to such mechanisms, and the design choices are directly linked to platform business models aiming at commercial exploitation of minors.

Additionally, minors are increasingly active in gaming, often involving unwanted commercial practices including the sale of virtual items and gambling-like mechanisms such as loot boxes, and the use of intermediate in-app virtual currencies. These practices are designed to stimulate prolonged engagement through addictive design features. Even though part of the gaming sector falls under the DSA, it remains largely outside the scope of current EU digital rulebook.

Furthermore, the Rapporteur is of the view that in order to ensure a high level of online protection for minors in the entire digital ecosystem, the Commission should consider reviewing existing consumer legislation and where appropriate present new legislative proposals aiming to close the existing gaps in the regulatory framework. In particular, the



Rapporteur strongly believes that a horizontal legislative initiative to prohibit addictive design features is much needed at EU level.

As digital technologies evolve, the EU rules, guidelines and mechanisms need to be robust and future proof and effectively enforced in order to ensure the high level of protection of minors online.

## ANNEX: DECLARATION OF INPUT

Pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure, the rapporteur declares that she included in her report input on matters pertaining to the subject of the file that she received, in the preparation of the report, prior to the adoption thereof in committee, from the following interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register<sup>1</sup>, or from the following representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies:

<b>1. Interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register</b>
Meta
Apple
DOT Europe
Child focus
Digitalt Ansvar
Børns Vilkår
Middle Tech Europe
Snap, Inc.
Red Barnet
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Computer and Communications Industry Association
Radius
Samsung Electronics Europe
Internet Watch Foundation
TikTok Technology Ltd
Avaaz Foundation
Google
European DIGITAL SME Alliance
Zscaler
AWO agency
BEUC
Danske Pressepublikationers Kollektive Forvaltningsorganisation
5 rights
<b>2. Representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies</b>
Ministry of Digitalisation and Public Governance, Norway

The list above is drawn up under the exclusive responsibility of the rapporteur.

Where natural persons are identified in the list by their name, by their function or by both, the rapporteur declares that she has submitted to the natural persons concerned the European Parliament's Data Protection Notice No 484 (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/data-protect/index.do>), which sets out the conditions applicable to the processing of their personal data and the rights linked to that processing.

<sup>1</sup> Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register (OJ L 207, 11.6.2021, p. 1, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree\\_interinstit/2021/611/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2021/611/oj)).



21.10.2025

## OPINION OF THE COMMITTEE ON CULTURE AND EDUCATION

for the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection

on protection of minors online  
(2025/2060(INI))

Rapporteur for opinion: Ivaylo Valchev

### AMENDMENTS

The Committee on Culture and Education submits the following to the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, as the committee responsible:

#### Amendment 1

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation -1 (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

– *having regard to Articles 114 and 165 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,*

#### Amendment 2

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation -1 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

– *having regard to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (the Charter),*

#### Amendment 3

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation -1 b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted on 20 November 1989,*

**Amendment 4**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation -1 c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted on 20 November 1989, and General comment No. 25 (2021) thereon, on children’s rights in relation to the digital environment,*

**Amendment 5**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to Directive (EU) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services (Audiovisual Media Services Directive) in view of changing market realities<sup>1a</sup> (the*

*Audiovisual Media Services Directive),*

## **Amendment 6**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the Council conclusions of 2 May 2025 on the assessment of the legal framework for audiovisual media services and video-sharing platform services<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 7**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the Commission communication of 7 July 2020 entitled ‘Guidelines on the practical application of the essential functionality criterion of the definition of a “video-sharing platform service” under the Audiovisual Media Services Directive’<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 8**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 d (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to Commission staff working document of 5 January 2024*

*entitled ‘Reporting on the application of Directive 2010/13/EU “Audiovisual Media Services Directive” as amended by Directive (EU) 2018/1808, for the period 2019-2022’ (SWD(2024)0004),*

## **Amendment 9**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 e (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

– *having regard to its resolution of 9 May 2023 on the implementation of the revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 10**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 f (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

– *having regard to the Commission communication of 11 May 2022 entitled ‘A Digital Decade for children and youth: the new European strategy for a better internet for kids (BIK+)’ (COM(2022)0212) and its first evaluation<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 11**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 g (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the Commission communication of 9 March 2021 entitled ‘2030 Digital Compass: the European way for the Digital Decade’ (COM(2021)0118),*

## **Amendment 12**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 h (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to its resolution of 10 November 2022 on esports and video games<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 13**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 1 i (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation)<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 14**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Citation 6 a (new)**



*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the study requested by its Committee on Culture and Education entitled ‘The influence of social media on the development of children and young people’, published in February 2023<sup>1a</sup>,*

## **Amendment 15**

**Motion for a resolution  
Citation 6 b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- *having regard to the report of May 2025 by the European Union Drugs Agency entitled ‘Key findings from the 2024 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD)’,*

## **Amendment 16**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

- Ea. whereas the obligations laid down by the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) for video-sharing platforms to protect minors from content that may impair their physical, mental or moral development include, as appropriate, establishing and operating age verification systems for users of those platforms, and providing for parental control systems that are under the control of the end-user with respect to the*

*aforementioned content;*

**Amendment 17**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Eb. whereas the Commission needs to make greater effort to raise awareness about the limitations of self-declared age verification;***

**Amendment 18**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ec. whereas certain forms of age assurance and verification may risk excluding undocumented or marginalised users and could affect privacy and free expression; whereas measures to protect minors should prioritise youth empowerment;***

**Amendment 19**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E d (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ed. whereas ensuring appropriate protection for young people and children online requires targeted measures and***

*education programmes, not only for minors but also for their teachers, parents and caregivers, focusing on prevention techniques, awareness-raising and media and digital literacy campaigns, and informing parents of tools to limit access to age-inappropriate or harmful content;*

## **Amendment 20**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E e (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ee. whereas digital education and media literacy are essential for strengthening children's resilience to online risks, including disinformation and harmful content, while equipping them with the skills to navigate, contribute to and shape the digital world responsibly and confidently;*

## **Amendment 21**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E f (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Ef. whereas as children develop their digital literacy and online competencies, their capacity for independent engagement increases, requiring age-appropriate educational support to empower informed choices, critical thinking and safe online participation; whereas minors increasingly act as content creators or 'child influencers', sometimes involving commercialisation or early public exposure, which can lead to*

*exploitation without consent, highlighting the need for ethical guidance and educational support;*

#### **Amendment 22**

**Motion for a resolution**

**Recital E g (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Eg. whereas media literacy and content labelling initiatives vary widely across platforms, and citizens, especially minors, engage increasingly with social media, video-sharing or content-sharing platforms and online aggregators, where influencers and personalities shape public discourse;*

#### **Amendment 23**

**Motion for a resolution**

**Recital E h (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Eh. whereas parents, teachers and caregivers often lack adequate support, training and tools to help minors navigate online environments safely and responsibly;*

#### **Amendment 24**

**Motion for a resolution**

**Recital E i (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ei. whereas prevention and digital literacy should be actively promoted as a public good, integrated into lifelong learning strategies, and guided by expert-led approaches to healthy screen time, including age-appropriate limits, thresholds for device use, and parental presence during device use, for children's well-being;***

## **Amendment 25**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E j (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***E j. whereas the protection of minors online should not only focus on preventing harm, but should also include proactive exposure to enriching, diverse and culturally relevant content;***

## **Amendment 26**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E k (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ek. whereas the promotion of high-quality cultural and educational content represents a positive alternative to potentially harmful content, and European cultural institutions can play a crucial role in providing appropriate and enriching online content for minors;***

## **Amendment 27**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E l (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***El.*** *whereas cooperation with the European creative industries to protect minors online should be championed and self-regulatory measures encouraged; whereas the significance of European digital platforms and video games for Europe's competitiveness and cultural diversity must be properly acknowledged and safeguarded;*

**Amendment 28**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E m (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Em.*** *whereas the freedom of expression and of information, as guaranteed by the AVMSD and the DSA, does not impede the adoption of effective measures for the protection of minors online;*

**Amendment 29**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E n (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***En.*** *whereas empowering young people and children in the digital world is not only a matter of safety, but also of citizenship; whereas young people and children should not be passive technology consumers, but be actively in control of*

*the technologies they use; whereas media and digital literacy are simultaneously key enablers of children's active, creative and civic participation online, equipping them with the skills to navigate, contribute to and shape the digital world responsibly and confidently, beyond mere risk prevention;*

## **Amendment 30**

### **Motion for a resolution Recital E o (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Eo. whereas in order to ensure safe online experiences and foster digital empowerment and active participation, it is crucial to promote digital education and enhance the digital skills and competencies, including media and critical literacy, of young people and children, as well as of parents and educators, particularly from vulnerable groups, in line with the AVMSD, the Charter, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles for the Digital Decade<sup>1a</sup>, the 2030 Digital Compass and the BIK+ strategy; whereas the first evaluation of the BIK+ strategy highlights emerging risks such as harmful content, online scams, privacy violations, adverse effects on mental health, and the monetisation of minors' online activities; whereas the evaluation stresses the need to enhance inclusivity and empower young users, while adults raise concerns about cyberbullying, misinformation and excessive screen time, pointing to the need for parents, caregivers and teachers to be better prepared to address the challenges of social media, AI and algorithmic exposure;*

## Amendment 31

### Motion for a resolution Recital E p (new)

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ep. whereas the AVMSD recognises the protection of minors as a key policy objective of the Union and brings additional value, complementing the DSA, by providing specific rules that apply to video-sharing platform providers of all sizes, to protect minors from programs, user-generated videos and audiovisual commercial communication that may impair their physical, mental or moral development;***

## Amendment 32

### Motion for a resolution Recital E q (new)

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Eq. whereas the AVMSD requires video-sharing platforms to implement a feature allowing users to indicate whether uploaded content contains commercial communications, product placement or sponsorship, and sets out advertising quality requirements, notably banning surreptitious or subliminal audiovisual commercial communications, as well as imposing restrictions on audiovisual commercial communications for alcoholic beverages aimed at minors or communications likely to cause physical, mental or moral harm, including by exploiting minors' inexperience or credulity or depicting them in dangerous***



*situations;*

### **Amendment 33**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E r (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Er. whereas the freedom of expression and of information, as guaranteed by the AVMSD and the DSA, does not impede the implementation of effective measures for the protection of minors online;*

### **Amendment 34**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E s (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Es. whereas the Commission should submit an ex post evaluation of the impact of the AVMSD and its added value, accompanied, where appropriate, by proposals for its review;*

### **Amendment 35**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E t (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Et. whereas the effectiveness of these rules depends on consistent implementation and enforcement across the Member States, as underlined in the*

**Amendment 36**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E u (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Eu.*** *whereas algorithmic transparency and external auditing should be emphasised to enforce AVMSD provisions effectively;*

**Amendment 37**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E v (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ev.*** *whereas the ESPAD report highlights the fact that the online environment is not only a technological but also a social and an emotional space and the report links exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying and excessive screen time with increased anxiety, loneliness and sleep difficulties among 15- and 16-year-olds;*

**Amendment 38**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Recital E w (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ex. whereas excessive screen time and social media use negatively affect minors' physical, mental and social well-being, interpersonal relations and educational performance, and have been associated with stress, sleep disorders, depression, suicidal ideation, low self-esteem and negative body image;***

## **Amendment 39**

**Motion for a resolution  
Recital E x (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Ex. whereas many people, including minors, find it challenging to distinguish between true and false information in online news;***

## **Amendment 40**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 2**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

2. Urges the Commission to ***swiftly adopt ambitious and pragmatic*** guidelines on the protection of minors online in accordance with the DSA, and stresses that these guidelines should contain recommendations specifying how online platforms are to implement high levels of privacy, safety and security for minors online;

2. Urges the Commission to ***ensure swift implementation of the*** guidelines on the protection of minors online in accordance with the DSA ***and in compliance with other applicable EU legislation, notably the AVMSD and its implementation at national level;*** stresses that these guidelines should contain recommendations specifying how online platforms are to implement high levels of privacy, safety and security for minors online;

## Amendment 41

### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 6

#### *Motion for a resolution*

6. Recalls that the Commission and the Member States have a shared responsibility when it comes to the enforcement of the DSA; expresses concern that there are significant delays in designating and/or empowering Digital Services Coordinators (DSCs) in several Member States; welcomes the infringement procedures opened against a number of Member States that have failed to designate and/or empower DSCs; urges the Member States that have not yet done so to designate and empower DSCs without delay; calls on the Commission to ensure a harmonised approach to enforcement actions by Member States in order to prevent fragmentation in the internal market;

#### *Amendment*

6. Recalls that the Commission and the Member States have a shared responsibility when it comes to the enforcement of the DSA; expresses concern that there are significant delays in designating and/or empowering Digital Services Coordinators (DSCs) in several Member States; welcomes the infringement procedures opened against a number of Member States that have failed to designate and/or empower DSCs; urges the Member States that have not yet done so to designate and empower DSCs without delay; calls on the Commission to ensure a harmonised approach to enforcement actions by Member States in order to prevent fragmentation in the internal market, ***taking into account sector-specific rules, particularly those concerning the protection of minors under the AVMSD, as well as the margin of discretion granted to Member States in the transposition of these rules in the light of national specificities;***

## Amendment 42

### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 7

#### *Motion for a resolution*

7. Highlights the fact that there is currently a fragmented approach to age assurance and age verification across the

#### *Amendment*

7. Highlights the fact that there is currently a fragmented approach to age assurance and age verification across the

EU, and that this leads to fragmentation in the internal market; regrets the fact that the different national approaches may result in an uneven level of protection of minors in the EU;

EU **and across platforms**, and that this leads to fragmentation in the internal market; regrets the fact that the different national approaches may result in an uneven level of protection of minors in the EU;

#### **Amendment 43**

##### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 8**

###### *Motion for a resolution*

8. ***Calls on the Commission to put forward*** recommendations for effective age assurance or age verification mechanisms to protect minors online, in accordance with the DSA, as a first step, and to present appropriate legislative measures if ***necessary***;

###### *Amendment*

8. ***Notes the Commission's work towards an EU approach on privacy-preserving and reliable age verification, including releasing the blueprint on age verification and testing it in a pilot phase, and the recommendations and guidance*** for effective age assurance or age verification mechanisms ***in the guidelines*** to protect minors online, in accordance with the DSA ***and the AVMSD and in line with children's rights***, as a first step, and ***calls for the Commission*** to present appropriate legislative measures if ***gaps persist, particularly in the protection against risks of overuse, addiction, exposure to harmful content and commercial exploitation***;

#### **Amendment 44**

##### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 9**

###### *Motion for a resolution*

9. Highlights the fact that several providers of online platforms have put in place mechanisms to control and/or verify

###### *Amendment*

9. Highlights the fact that several providers of online platforms have put in place mechanisms to control and/or verify

who can access their services; stresses that despite these mechanisms, minors are, to a large extent, viewing content that is not age-appropriate; stresses that the current mechanisms can be circumvented easily and that their use needs to be complemented by strong safeguards to guarantee a sufficient level of protection of minors online;

who can access their services; stresses that despite these mechanisms, minors are, to a large extent, viewing content, ***especially audiovisual content***, that is not age-appropriate; stresses that the current mechanisms can be circumvented easily and that their use needs to be complemented by strong safeguards to guarantee a sufficient level of protection of minors online; ***calls for a principled and child-centred approach and prevention strategies to ensure that digital platforms that are accessible to minors uphold the highest standards of safety, privacy and well-being;***

#### **Amendment 45**

##### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 9 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***9a. Welcomes Member States' initiatives assessing digital maturity and calls on the Commission to examine the possibility of setting an EU-wide digital maturity age;***

#### **Amendment 46**

##### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 10**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

10. Stresses that the DSA requires online platforms to ensure that effective safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable groups, such as minors; highlights the fact that providers of online platforms that are accessible to minors may

10. Stresses that the DSA requires online platforms to ensure that effective safeguards are in place to protect vulnerable groups, such as minors; highlights the fact that providers of online platforms that are accessible to minors may

put in place parental control measures to allow parents and guardians to help protect minors against the risk of exposure to harmful content; emphasises that online platforms should not use these tools as a ***reason to transfer*** their responsibility to protect minors online to parents;

put in place parental control measures to allow parents and guardians to help protect minors against the risk of exposure to harmful content; emphasises that online platforms should not use these tools as a ***means of transferring*** their responsibility to protect minors online to parents; ***recalls that the AVMSD sets out similar obligations for video-sharing platforms;***

## Amendment 47

### Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11

#### *Motion for a resolution*

11. Expresses concern that parents often ***lack adequate*** tools to monitor and manage minors' online activities ***or are unaware of the tools available to them;*** notes that even when parental control tools are used, minors can ***easily*** circumvent them; stresses the importance of ensuring that such tools are user-friendly, intuitive and easily understood by parents; urges the platforms to take greater responsibility in promoting and improving the effectiveness of parental control systems, and calls on them to publish relevant data on the effectiveness of these systems;

#### *Amendment*

11. Expresses concern that parents often ***are unaware of the*** tools ***available to them*** to monitor and manage minors' online activities; notes that even when parental control tools are used, minors can ***sometimes*** circumvent them; stresses the importance of ensuring that such tools are user-friendly, intuitive, ***accessible*** and easily understood by ***all*** parents ***and caregivers, including those with disabilities;*** urges the platforms to take greater responsibility in promoting and improving the effectiveness of parental control systems; ***encourages public authorities and the Member States to collaborate with platforms and other stakeholders to inform and educate parents, caregivers and teachers about parental tools,*** and calls on them to publish relevant data on the effectiveness of these systems; ***welcomes initiatives and relevant tools, such as parental control apps, available at national level, to help parents control their children's online activities;***

## Amendment 48

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**11a. Encourages platforms to adopt age-appropriate communication tools to explain risks and features to minors, their parents and caregivers and to provide support in cooperation with schools; stresses the importance of including parental control tools in platform design and opposes practices that pressure minors into oversharing personal data; calls on platforms, in this regard, to comply with the principles of minimal exposure and data minimisation, to be transparent and to offer routes for challenge and redress;**

**Amendment 49**

**Motion for a resolution  
Subheading 3 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Media and digital literacy and education***

**Amendment 50**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**11b. Recognises the central role of media and digital literacy in empowering minors, parents, caregivers, teachers and educators to navigate the digital environment safely and critically;**



*recommends the inclusion of media and digital literacy in national curricula and the development of continuous training programmes for teachers and educators; stresses that media literacy should be linked to basic skills, such as reading comprehension, and underlines the importance of AI literacy covering algorithmic bias, content moderation and data rights; stresses the need to assess both potential harms and available mitigation tools, while also exploring the positive role that digital environments can play in providing access to information, education and civic participation;*

## **Amendment 51**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**11c.** *Stresses the importance of age-appropriate awareness campaigns in schools to help minors identify and report online risks; calls for EU-funded training and awareness initiatives for parents, caregivers, teachers and educators, including on the effects of excessive use of social media, exposure to harmful content, and online addiction; recalls that the most vulnerable children offline are also often the most vulnerable online, particularly those who may lack parental oversight, and highlights the need for targeted support for vulnerable children, including those from low-income backgrounds or with disabilities; advocates age-appropriate literacy support for minors acting as digital content creators, with guidance for teachers and youth workers, and ethical guidelines for children's images and narratives online;*

## **Amendment 52**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 d (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11d. Highlights the need for adequate resources, and calls for structured cooperation between education systems, digital platforms and regulatory authorities to deliver high-quality digital and media literacy programmes; calls on the Commission to encourage exchange of best practice and cross-border cooperation to ensure safe and responsible online environments;***

## **Amendment 53**

### **Motion for a resolution Paragraph 11 e (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11e. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to address the effects on health of excessive screen time, smartphone use and addictive design, through research, awareness campaigns and balanced measures that protect cultural and educational access; welcomes, in this regard, the upcoming EU-wide inquiry into the impact of social media on health and well-being; welcomes initiatives to reduce screen time in schools and recalls the role of parents in safe gaming, while stressing the need to promote a safe gaming environment and encouraging awareness of Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) ratings and parental controls;***

**Amendment 54**

**Motion for a resolution  
Subheading 3 b (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Culture and cultural preservation***

**Amendment 55**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 f (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11f. Acknowledges the role of public service media in providing diverse, high-quality content for minors, to counter negative trends and reinforce educational and cultural objectives;***

**Amendment 56**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 g (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11g. Supports the creation of safe and interactive digital environments for minors through partnerships with online platforms, museums, libraries and educational institutions, highlighting European cultural heritage;***

**Amendment 57**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Paragraph 11 h (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11h. Urges digital platforms to promote cultural diversity and educational materials, particularly from European creators and public institutions;***

**Amendment 58**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Subheading 3 c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***Involving young people***

**Amendment 59**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Paragraph 11 i (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11i. Stresses the importance of involving, and encouraging close cooperation among, developers, researchers, psychologists, teachers and educators, parents and caregivers, youth organisations, cultural and civil society actors, to ensure the development and implementation of digital spaces and experiences that are safe, inclusive, empowering and supportive of young people's well-being;***

**Amendment 60**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Paragraph 11 j (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**11j. Call, furthermore, on the Commission and the Member States to support programmes enabling minors and families to understand manipulative design features and to resist addictive behaviour, in order to strengthen resilience and informed digital use, while ensuring a balanced approach that preserves access to educational and cultural digital content and maintains innovation;**

**Amendment 61**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Subheading 4 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**Implementation of the AVMSD and the BIK+ strategy and overall efficiency and coherence of the EU framework**

**Amendment 62**

**Motion for a resolution**  
**Paragraph 11 k (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**11k. Recalls that the Member States must protect minors from content that impairs their physical, mental or moral development;**

**Amendment 63**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 l (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11l. Stresses the need for coherence between the DSA, the AVMSD and the overarching BIK+ strategy and for enhanced cross-border cooperation to ensure that the regulations are implemented consistently on video-sharing platforms and to address violations in their application, in order to guarantee effective child protection; underlines the need to complement regulatory efforts under the DSA with educational measures at EU and national levels;***

**Amendment 64**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 m (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11m. Calls on platforms to implement swiftly the recommendations of the guidelines on protection of minors under Article 28 DSA, and, in particular, to simplify terms and conditions, provide clear reporting processes and offer guidance for younger users;***

**Amendment 65**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 n (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11n. Calls on the Commission, the European Board for Digital Services and national authorities to monitor how online platforms protect minors, and to consider how current legislation can be better applied to ensure a safer digital environment for children;***

**Amendment 66**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 o (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11o. Notes the need for sufficient resources for national media regulators and EU-level support for smaller Member States;***

**Amendment 67**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 11 p (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

***11p. Notes that divergent implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation<sup>1a</sup> (GDPR) across Member States may undermine efforts to ensure a safe and age-appropriate online environment for children; underlines that the AVMSD sets crucial obligations for video-sharing platforms to protect minors from harmful content and to ensure transparency in advertising; recalls that the consistent application of these provisions is vital for safeguarding the physical, mental and moral development***

*of children online; stresses the need for closer coordination of and support for Member States to guarantee consistent child protection standards, especially for national media regulators and for smaller Member States;*

**Amendment 68**

**Motion for a resolution  
Subheading 6 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*Disinformation, online radicalisation and cyberbullying*

**Amendment 69**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 a (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

*18a. Stresses that minors are particularly vulnerable to online disinformation, on account of their developmental stage and the evolving nature of their media literacy and critical thinking skills;*

**Amendment 70**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 b (new)**



*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**18b. Urges the Member States to coordinate strategies between schools, families, youth organisations and platforms, providing teachers with appropriate training on cyberbullying awareness and prevention and providing children with age-appropriate reporting channels and psychological support, building on current practices, in particular within the network of Safer Internet Centres and in civil society organisations;**

#### **Amendment 71**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 c (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**18c. Underlines that cyberbullying and online hate speech, affecting minors in particular, often lead to stigmatisation, exclusion and mental health issues;**

#### **Amendment 72**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 d (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**18d. Calls on the Commission to develop common guidelines and tools, including fact-checking techniques and source analysis, to counter disinformation aimed at minors, including by labelling content and removing harmful online content, false information and hate speech, to enable users to recognise**

*credible sources and to prevent radicalisation;*

**Amendment 73**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 e (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**18e. Warns of the dangers posed by minors being targeted by radicalising narratives online and calls for comprehensive and balanced prevention strategies that focus on early warning, critical thinking and digital mentorship;**

**Amendment 74**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 18 f (new)**

*Motion for a resolution*

*Amendment*

**18f. Calls for a European research initiative dedicated to understanding how children and teenagers behave online and how they are exposed to disinformation and harmful content, in order to enhance evidence-based prevention and ensure platform accountability;**

**Amendment 75**

**Motion for a resolution  
Paragraph 30**

*Motion for a resolution*

30. Highlights how the AI Act is addressing the systemic risks posed by AI systems, including those used in content generation, recommendation systems and user interaction on online platforms; calls for the swift implementation of the transparency obligations arising from the AI Act, in particular with regard to the effective watermarking of AI-generated content on online platforms;

*Amendment*

30. Highlights how the AI Act is addressing the systemic risks posed by AI systems, including those used in content generation, recommendation systems and user interaction on online platforms; calls for the swift implementation of the transparency obligations arising from the AI Act, in particular with regard to the effective ***detection, labelling and*** watermarking of AI-generated content on online platforms;

## **ANNEX: DECLARATION OF INPUT**

The rapporteur for opinion declares under his exclusive responsibility that he did not include in his opinion input from interest representatives falling within the scope of the Interinstitutional Agreement on a mandatory transparency register<sup>1</sup>, or from representatives of public authorities of third countries, including their diplomatic missions and embassies, to be listed in this Annex pursuant to Article 8 of Annex I to the Rules of Procedure.

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<sup>1</sup> Interinstitutional Agreement of 20 May 2021 between the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union and the European Commission on a mandatory transparency register (OJ L 207, 11.6.2021, p. 1, ELI: [http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree\\_interinstit/2021/611/oj](http://data.europa.eu/eli/agree_interinstit/2021/611/oj)).

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION

<b>Date adopted</b>	24.9.2025
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+ : 26 - : 0 0 : 1
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Nikolaos Anadiotis, Zsuzsanna Borvendég, Laurence Farreng, Gabriela Firea, Sunčana Glavak, Esteban González Pons, Catherine Griset, Hannes Heide, Lara Magoni, Eleonora Meleti, Nikos Pappas, Hristo Petrov, Giusi Princi, Sabrina Repp, Diana Riba i Giner, Nela Riehl, Manuela Ripa, Sandro Ruotolo, Joanna Scheuring-Wielgus, Marco Squarta, Zoltán Tarr, Eugen Tomac, Ivaylo Valchev, Annamária Vicsek, Bogdan Andrzej Zdrojewski, Milan Zver
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Maria Guzenina

**FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL  
BY THE COMMITTEE ASKED FOR OPINION**

26	+
ECR	Magoni Lara, Squarta Marco, Valchev Ivaylo
ESN	Borvendég Zsuzsanna
NI	Anadiotis Nikolaos
PPE	Glavak Suncana, González Pons Esteban, Meleti Eleonora, Princi Giusi, Ripa Manuela, Tarr Zoltán, Zdrojewski Bogdan Andrzej
PfE	Griset Catherine, Vicsek Annamária
Renew	Farreng Laurence, Petrov Hristo, Tomac Eugen
S&D	Firea Gabriela, Guzenina Maria, Heide Hannes, Repp Sabrina, Ruotolo Sandro, Scheuring-Wielgus Joanna
The Left	Pappas Nikos
Verts/ALE	Riba i Giner Diana, Riehl Nela

0	-

1	0
PPE	Zver Milan

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention

## INFORMATION ON ADOPTION IN COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

<b>Date adopted</b>	16.10.2025
<b>Result of final vote</b>	+: 32 -: 5 0: 9
<b>Members present for the final vote</b>	Peter Agius, Alex Agius Saliba, Jeannette Baljeu, Laura Ballarín Cereza, Arno Bausemer, Biljana Borzan, Anna Cavazzini, Stefano Cavedagna, David Cormand, Henrik Dahl, Dóra Dávid, Adnan Dibrani, Regina Doherty, Kamila Gasiuk-Pihowicz, Maria Grapini, Elisabeth Grossmann, Maria Guzenina, Svenja Hahn, Anna-Maja Henriksson, Virginie Joron, Kateřina Konečná, Katrin Langensiepen, Piotr Müller, Denis Nesci, Christel Schaldemose, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Dimitris Tsiodras, Inese Vaidere, Adina Vălean, Kim Van Sparrentak, Marion Walsmann
<b>Substitutes present for the final vote</b>	Marc Angel, Jaroslav Bžoch, José Cepeda, Johan Danielsson, Gaetano Pedulla', Paulius Saudargas, Sabine Verheyen, Stéphanie Yon-Courtin, Kosma Złotowski
<b>Members under Rule 216(7) present for the final vote</b>	Csaba Dömötör, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Hristo Petrov, Pascale Piera, Volker Schnurrbusch

## FINAL VOTE BY ROLL CALL BY THE COMMITTEE RESPONSIBLE

32	+
NI	Kateřina Konečná
PPE	Peter Agius, Dóra Dávid, Regina Doherty, Kamila Gasiuk-Pihowicz, Dan-Ștefan Motreanu, Paulius Saudargas, Andreas Schwab, Tomislav Sokol, Dimitris Tsiodras, Inese Vaidere, Adina Vălean, Sabine Verheyen, Marion Walsmann
Renew	Jeannette Baljeu, Stéphanie Yon-Courtin
S&D	Alex Agius Saliba, Marc Angel, Laura Ballarín Cereza, Biljana Borzan, José Cepeda, Johan Danielsson, Adnan Dibrani, Maria Grapini, Elisabeth Grossmann, Maria Guzenina, Christel Schaldemose
The Left	Gaetano Pedulla'
Verts/ALE	Anna Cavazzini, David Cormand, Katrin Langensiepen, Kim Van Sparrentak

5	-
ECR	Piotr Müller, Kosma Zlotowski
ESN	Arno Bausemer, Volker Schnurrbusch
Renew	Svenja Hahn

9	0
ECR	Stefano Cavedagna, Denis Nesci
PPE	Henrik Dahl
PfE	Jaroslav Břoch, Csaba Dömötör, Virginie Joron, Pascale Piera
Renew	Anna-Maja Henriksson, Hristo Petrov

Key to symbols:

+ : in favour

- : against

0 : abstention