Question for written answer E-000012/2026
to the Commission
Rule 144
Jean-Paul Garraud (PfE)

Subject: Artificial intelligence to counter false claims by minor asylum seekers

Eurostat figures show that the European Union registered 234 670 first-time asylum seekers under the age of 18 in 2024 – 25.7 % of the total number. Of those, 15.9 % were unaccompanied minors[1].

A number of countries have found that a considerable proportion of minor declarations are not confirmed by assessments. Belgian authorities report that 2 345 asylum seekers in 2024 were self-declared unaccompanied minors. After assessment, 823 of those were classified as adults, although not all age assessments have been completed yet[2]. Of the applicants for international protection claiming to be unaccompanied minors, 86.1 % are boys.

In Austria, 489 age assessments were carried out in 2023; 275 (56.2 %) concluded that the applicant was not under 18. In 2024, 214 assessments were carried out, 111 of which concluded that the applicant was not under 18[3].

Given the extent of the issue, the UK Government plans to use artificial intelligence and facial recognition to estimate the age of migrants whose identity is not known. This quick and reliable technology is already used for online age checks.

1. Does the Commission collect or can it publish comparable EU-level statistics on age disputes and the outcome thereof?

2. Will the Commission propose a minimum EU standard (quality, timeframe, checks, channels for appeal) to prevent adults being placed with children?

3. Does the Commission intend to integrate artificial intelligence into checks on asylum seekers' ages?

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[1] https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Children_in_migration_-_asylum_applicants
[2] https://www.cgrs.be/en/news/asylum-statistics-survey-2024?
[3] https://asylumineurope.org/reports/country/austria/asylum-procedure/guarantees-vulnerable-groups/identification/?