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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen

On behalf of the European Commission

(3.1.2025)

The Commission takes the impact that social media and excessive screen time can have on young people's well-being and mental health very seriously.

The Commission has already taken action in this area under the Digital Services Act (DSA) by opening formal investigations under the Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ against Tik Tok² and Meta's Facebook and Instagram³ based on suspicions that their algorithms may stimulate behavioural addictions in young people and create so called 'rabbit-hole effects'. The Commission also continuously monitors the compliance of all very large online platforms and search engines with the DSA and may launch new investigations if necessary. Moreover, the Commission is developing guidelines to help providers of online platforms ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security of minors on their service, scheduled for adoption in 2025.

In 2023, only 56% of people aged 16-74 possessed at least basic digital skills in the EU whereas the target is 80% by 2030. The Digital Education Action Plan⁴ aims to equip individuals with digital skills, which includes developing guidelines on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy through education and training⁵. The Council Recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills and competences in education and training⁶ is another key instrument with guidelines for educators on high-quality informatics education as a first deliverable, due to be published in 2025. Since 2021, Erasmus+ has funded 674 projects addressing media literacy and tackling disinformation. The Commission also developed 'SELFIE', a free self-assessment tool which helps schools assess their digital readiness⁷. Moreover, the Audiovisual Media Services Directive⁸ requires Member States and video-sharing platforms to promote media literacy.

¹ 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).

² <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/list-designated-vlops-and-vloses#ecl-inpage-tiktok>

³ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-opens-formal-proceedings-against-meta-under-digital-services-act-related-protection>

⁴ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan>

⁵ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan/action-7>

⁶ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan/action-10>

⁷ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/selfie/about-selfie>

⁸ Directive 2010/13/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 March 2010 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) (Codified version).