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E-002427/2024

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.1.2025)

The Commission shares the key objective to protect and empower minors online¹.

The protection of minors is one of the main policy objectives of Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 (Digital Services Act) ('the DSA')², which fully harmonises rules for a safe, predictable and reliable online environment for intermediary services.

Article 28 DSA requires providers of online platforms to put in place appropriate and proportionate measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security of minors, on their service. The Commission is developing guidelines on this provision. The DSA also prohibits them from targeting advertising to minors based on profiling using their personal data.

Under the DSA, the larger service online platforms and search engines must assess systemic risks of their service, notably in relation to respect for the rights of the child, the protection of minors and serious negative consequences to the person's physical and mental well-being. Finally, the DSA requires that those service providers put in place reasonable, proportionate and effective and targeted measures to mitigate those risks, such as age verification, parental control tools and tools aimed at helping minors signal abuse or obtain support³. The Commission is developing a solution for age verification, based on the EU Digital Identity Wallet framework, to be deployed by Member States in 2025.

Member States are not allowed to adopt or maintain additional national requirements on matters covered by the DSA, to preserve the direct and uniform application of its fully harmonised rules.

The Commission will explore the remaining scope for strengthening digital consumer protection in the context of a Digital Fairness Act.

¹ Through the Better internet for children (BIK+) strategy, the Commission continues to foster child online safety, making more visible the support offered by the EU co-funded network of Safer Internet Centres.

² 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), OJ L 277, p. 1, available at <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R2065>.

³ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/funding/call-tenders-development-consultancy-and-support-age-verification-solution>