

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-000640/25
to the Commission
Veronika Cifrová Ostrihoňová (Renew)
(12 February 2025)**

Subject: Harmful and dangerous online content for minors

The Center for Countering Digital Hate recently published a report ⁽¹⁾ on YouTube's recommending videos on eating disorders to young girls in the EU. One of its many findings is the fact that YouTube is failing to remove harmful content; almost three out of four recommended videos showed eating disorder or weight loss content. Furthermore, researchers found that YouTube's mitigation measures, which Google committed to in its DSA risk assessment report entitled *Report of Systemic Risk Assessments*, ⁽²⁾ are either lacking or incomplete.

How is the Commission responding to the findings that measures to remove harmful and dangerous online content for minors from the YouTube platform appear to be inconsistent with the commitments stated in the YouTube risk assessment included in Google's *Report of Systemic Risk Assessments*?

Submitted: 12.2.2025

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(4 April 2025)**

The protection of minors online is a priority area for the Commission. Due to their extended reach YouTube has been designated as a very large online platform under the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾, and has to comply with the strictest DSA obligations including risk assessments and effective risk mitigation measures to ensure a high level of security and safety of minors.

The Commission is actively monitoring YouTube's DSA compliance, also taking into account research on the matter and is developing guidelines on the protection of minors online to support DSA enforcement ⁽²⁾.

The Commission has already sent a request for information ⁽³⁾ (RFI) to YouTube to provide more information on the measures they have taken to comply with their obligations related to the protection of minors, including on risk assessments and mitigation measures, in particular with regard to the risks to mental and physical health, and on the use of their services by minors.

Through another RFI ⁽⁴⁾, the Commission requested more information on how YouTube assesses and mitigates risks stemming from their recommender systems, including risks for the mental health of users and the dissemination of harmful content arising from the engagement-based design of these algorithms. In cases where the Commission has suspicions of DSA non-compliance, it may initiate formal proceedings.

The Commission Communication on mental health ⁽⁵⁾ supports youth mental health including in the digital sphere ⁽⁶⁾. The Commission will conduct an EU-wide inquiry on the impact of social media on mental health and wellbeing, focusing on young people.

The European Strategy for Better Internet for Kids (BIK+) ⁽⁷⁾ supports and complements the DSA ensuring that every child is respected, protected and empowered online.

¹ https://counterhate.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/YouTubes-Anorexia-Algorithm_EU_2025-2.pdf.

² https://storage.googleapis.com/transparencyreport/report-downloads/dsa-risk-assessment_2023-8-28_2023-8-28_en_v1.pdf.

⁽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) (Text with EEA relevance).

⁽²⁾ In line with Article 28 of the DSA.

⁽³⁾ In November 2023, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-sends-requests-information-tiktok-and-youtube-under-digital-services-act>.

⁽⁴⁾ Sent in October 2024, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-sends-requests-information-youtube-snapchat-and-tiktok-recommender-systems-under-digital>

⁽⁵⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/promoting-our-european-way-life/european-health-union/comprehensive-approach-mental-health_en

⁽⁶⁾ https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/6317c605-5f5d-4d4f-9c8a-d5c93e869814_en?filename=ncd_tracking-framework-mh_en.pdf

⁽⁷⁾ <https://better-Internet-for-kids.europa.eu/en>