

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001006/25
to the Commission
Nikolaos Anadiotis (NI)
(7 March 2025)**

Subject: Screen addiction of minors and the disruption to their mental and emotional development

Experts have expressed serious concerns about the impact on the cognitive abilities, emotional development, mental health and general behaviour of minors caused by the excessive and ever-increasing exposure to screens and digital platforms ⁽¹⁾ — many of which take insufficient measures to limit or block minors' access to illegal goods and illegal and harmful content.

The Commission has taken action under the Digital Services Act (DSA). However, it is not clear whether and to what extent digital service providers are complying with the rules on the protection of child users ⁽²⁾ (which, it should be noted, have been mandatory for all since 17 February 2024). Under the Digital Education Action Plan, the Council Recommendation on improving the provision of digital skills through education and training, the Media Services Directive (AVMSD), Erasmus+ and SELFIE, digital skills should be enhanced and digital literacy promoted.

In view of the above, can the Commission answer the following:

1. Has it initiated new investigations and how exactly is it monitoring the implementation of the DSA and the compliance of providers/platforms?
2. As regards regulating content promoted through algorithms, does it plan to introduce additional measures to protect vulnerable groups/minors?
3. In addition to the above actions and initiatives, have guidelines been adopted with the aim of ensuring that children are 'digitally literate' in a safe, fair and transparent environment?

Submitted: 7.3.2025

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

The protection of minors online is a Commission priority. The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾ sets out an unprecedented standard for providers of online platforms' accountability regarding this protection.

Measures that manage the amount of screen time for minor users and the type of content they are exposed to may be a potential mitigation measure to ensure the DSA's high level of privacy, safety and security requirements for online platform providers accessible to minors.

The Commission is committed to swift DSA enforcement and has initiated proceedings against TikTok ⁽²⁾, Instagram, and Facebook ⁽³⁾ based on suspicions that they may have breached the DSA in areas related to the harmful effects on minors of their systems.

With Digital Service Coordinators ⁽⁴⁾, the Commission continues to monitor the situation across all online platforms. Moreover, the Commission is working on protection of minor guidelines to assist online platform providers DSA compliance ⁽⁵⁾.

The protection of young consumers will also be a Digital Fairness Act priority ⁽⁶⁾ addressing matters such as influencer marketing, addictive design, personalisation or dark patterns.

The European Strategy for a better Internet for kids (BIK+) ⁽⁷⁾ promotes responsible use of technology by supporting children, their carers and teachers through Safer Internet Centres and the BIK platform ⁽⁸⁾. Building on the BIK+ Strategy, the Commission is developing an action plan against cyberbullying.

¹ <https://www.ertnews.gr/video/ethismos-sto-diadiktyo-kai-paidia/>

² <https://lawyermagazine.gr/digital-services-act-%CE%BF-%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%BD%CE%B9%CF%83%CE%BC%CF%8C%CF%82-%CE%BF%CF%81%CF%8C%CF%83%CE%B7%CE%BC%CE%BF-%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%B1-%CF%84%CE%B9%CF%82-%CF%88%CE%B7%CF%86%CE%B9/>

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:4625430>

⁽²⁾ In 2024, following the opening of an investigation by the Commission, the provider of TikTok committed to permanently withdraw the TikTok Lite Rewards programme in the EU due to the potentially addictive feature of the app. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/tiktok-commits-permanently-withdraw-tiktok-lite-rewards-programme-eu-comply-digital-services-act>

⁽³⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/list-designated-vlops-and-vloses>

⁽⁴⁾ Digital Services Coordinators are responsible for enforcing Article 28 (1) in the Member States.

⁽⁵⁾ This non-exhaustive list of recommendations is aimed to be adopted by the Commission after a public consultation in 2025.

⁽⁶⁾ The Commission plans to propose in 2026.

⁽⁷⁾ COM/2022/212 final.

⁽⁸⁾ <https://www.betterInternetforkids.eu>

The Commission prioritises addressing social medias' mental health impact and screen time on young people and will launch an EU-wide enquiry to allow an informed debate ⁽⁹⁾.

Under the Digital Education Action Plan, the Commission published Guidelines ⁽¹⁰⁾ to help educators tackle disinformation and digital literacy. A new version will be rolled out this year to address artificial intelligence, social media, influencers and pre-bunking.

⁽⁹⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/b628b5a2-ac1e-4b9c-bbdd-35b82da0ac6b_en?filename=mission-letter-varhelyi.pdf

⁽¹⁰⁾ Guidelines published in 2022: <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/action-plan/action-7>