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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(7.7.2025)

The protection of minors and children's fundamental rights online is a Commission priority. The Digital Services Act (DSA)¹ sets out an unprecedented standard for providers of online platforms' accountability in this area.

The minimum age requirement of 13 years old for (most) social media platforms is a requirement set by the providers. The providers of online platforms may adjust the minimum age requirement, as long as they comply with relevant EU and national laws.²

Under the DSA, providers of very large online platforms and search engines need to ensure that minors and their fundamental rights are protected. The Commission has initiated proceedings against TikTok³, Instagram, and Facebook⁴ based on suspicions that they may have breached the DSA in areas related to addiction and other harmful effects on minors. Currently, the Commission is preparing guidelines on the protection of minors that will assist all providers of online platforms in providing a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors on their service.⁵

Other Commission initiatives addressing the points raised by the Honourable Member are the European Strategy for a better Internet for kids (BIK+)⁶ which promotes the responsible use of technology, the Guidelines of the Digital Education Action Plan⁷ that tackle disinformation and digital literacy and the upcoming Action Plan on Cyberbullying⁸ and the Digital Fairness Act.⁹

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

² For example, under Art.8 of General Data Protection Regulation, Member States can set a minimum user age for platforms to process their data, provided it is over 13.

³ 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>.

⁴ The Commission opens formal proceedings against Facebook and Instagram under the Digital Services Act | Shaping Europe's digital future <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/news/commission-opens-formal-proceedings-against-facebook-and-instagram-under-digital-services-act#:~:text=The%20European%20Commission%20has%20opened%20formal%20proceedings%20to,may%20have%20breached%20the%20Digital%20Services%20Act%20%28DSA%29>.

⁵ EU Consultation: Digital Services Act-protection of children https://eu-for-children.europa.eu/activities-news/latest/consultation-eu-digital-services-act-protection-of-children_en#:~:text=Organisations%20and%20stakeholders%20are%20invited%20to%20share%20their,%28DSA%29.%20The%20consultation%20closes%20on%2010%20June%2C%202025.

⁶ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52022DC0212>.

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

⁸ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0117#:~:text=The%20upcoming%20action%20plan%20against,worl%2C%20while%20reducing%20negative%20effects>.

⁹ The Commission is expected to propose this in 2026.

Lastly, the Commission will carry out an EU-wide inquiry with the aim of having an evidence-based debate on the broader impacts of social media and excessive screen time on people, especially young people, and their wellbeing and mental health.¹⁰

¹⁰ [b628b5a2-ac1e-4b9c-bbdd-35b82da0ac6b_en.](#)