

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001748/25
to the Commission
Dan-Ștefan Motreanu (PPE)
(30 April 2025)**

Subject: Strengthening child protection through a harmonised European framework

The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) has highlighted urgent gaps in the protection of children's rights across the EU. In its latest report entitled 'Towards Integrated Child Protection Systems', the FRA notes that, despite a shared legal framework and political commitments, children do not benefit from equal protection in all Member States. Only 10 countries have a unified legislative framework, while elsewhere legal provisions remain fragmented and inconsistent.

Although the Commission adopted a recommendation in 2024 to support integrated child protection systems, practical harmonisation remains limited. Disparities persist in the provision of care, digital protection, children's participation in policymaking, and the collection of impact assessments on children's rights. Furthermore, many Member States lack sufficient resources, dedicated budgets and adequately trained professionals to ensure effective child protection.

In countries like Romania, significant efforts have been made to strengthen child protection, yet challenges related to resource allocation, institutional coordination and digital safety for children continue to underline the need for stronger European support.

Given the persistence of these challenges, compounded by digital risks, what measures does the Commission intend to propose to support the development of harmonised, well-resourced and child-centred protection systems across the EU?

Submitted: 30.4.2025

**Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(7 July 2025)**

The Commission Recommendation on integrated child protection systems ⁽¹⁾ reaffirms the EU's commitment to combating all form of violence against children and is driving a coordinated approach to strengthen child protection mechanisms through legislative enhancements, regulatory enforcement and strategic initiatives.

The Commission is working closely with Member States, stakeholders and civil society to move forward in the implementation of the recommendation, drawing on best practices and building on EU-level legislation, policy measures, and funding.

Through its Technical Support Instrument, Member States can strengthen their child protection systems to address persistent challenges such as mental health wellbeing and digital safety.

The EU's framework includes several legislative instruments to address digital threats. The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) ⁽²⁾, the Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽³⁾ and the Better Internet for Kids+ strategy ⁽⁴⁾ are at the core of the EU toolbox to protect and empower children online.

Under the DSA, the Commission has opened investigations regarding TikTok and Meta and more recently, commenced proceedings against four porn platforms.

The Commission is preparing a package to enhance the toolbox which includes, DSA protection of minors' guidelines ⁽⁵⁾, an Age Verification Solution ⁽⁶⁾, an Action Plan against Cyberbullying, an inquiry on social media and mental health, and an evaluation of the AVMSD.

The Commission is advancing the EU Strategy to combat child sexual abuse ⁽⁷⁾ including the recast of Directive 2011/93/EU ⁽⁸⁾ and a new Regulation to prevent and combat child sexual abuse ⁽⁹⁾. As announced in the Protect EU Strategy ⁽¹⁰⁾, the Commission will present an Action Plan on the Protection of Children Against Crime.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32024H1238>.

⁽²⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/audiovisual-and-media-services>.

⁽³⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/digital-services-act_en.

⁽⁴⁾ <https://better-Internet-for-kids.europa.eu/en/news/new-better-Internet-kids-strategy-out-introducing-bik>.

⁽⁵⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/commission-seeks-feedback-guidelines-protection-minors-online-under-digital-services-act>.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/eu-age-verification>.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52020DC0607>.

⁽⁸⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2024%3A60%3AFIN>.

⁽⁹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52022PC0209>.

⁽¹⁰⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52025DC0148>.