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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(13.2.2026)

The Commission has taken note of the views expressed by Signal on the proposal for a Regulation laying down rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse¹. The Commission recognises that encryption and other cybersecurity measures play an important role in protecting information systems from espionage and disruption and securing communications, privacy and personal data². The availability of end-to-end encrypted interpersonal communications services is therefore important, and it would be regrettable if such legitimate service providers were to cease offering services in the EU.

Legal measures to combat child sexual abuse, currently under negotiation, should safeguard the fundamental rights at stake outlined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights³, including by addressing need to effectively prevent and combat such crimes which violate victims' fundamental rights, and the need to safeguard the right to respect for private and family life.

The Commission has launched an Expert Group to assist the Commission to elaborate a Technology Roadmap on Encryption⁴. The group is asked to identify technical options to address encryption challenges in the context of criminal investigations and assess their suitability while ensuring observance of fundamental rights, including privacy and data protection, and without undermining cybersecurity. When assessing the impact of such technologies on cybersecurity, the roadmap should examine among other elements risks posed by sophisticated threat actors, also including nation state actors.

Where no tools currently exist, the roadmap should provide recommendations on their development and on how to both ensure compatibility with the EU legal framework and guarantee cybersecurity.

¹ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down rules to prevent and combat child sexual abuse. COM/2022/209 final.

² See Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Roadmap for lawful and effective access to data for law enforcement. COM(2025) 349 final. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52025DC0349>.

³ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:12012P/TXT>.

⁴ <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupID=4005>.