

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001408/26
to the Commission
Giuseppe Antoci (The Left)
(8 April 2026)**

Subject: Protecting children from the aggressive promotion on social media of skincare products for adults

In recent months, a worrying phenomenon has spread across Italy and various Member States: the promotion, via social media platforms and digital marketplaces, of skincare products designed for adults and containing active ingredients, which are also portrayed as being a necessity for young girls and pre-teens.

This commercial practice, which is often amplified through child content creators and micro-influencers, is helping to make unrealistic aesthetic patterns the norm at a very early age, thus fuelling the insecurities and anxieties that stem from girls assimilating commercially-induced beauty standards.

In addition to the potential dermatological risks to children, this phenomenon raises serious questions in terms of compliance with EU consumer legislation, the protection of minors online and the transparency of commercial communications ⁽¹⁾.

Given the responsibilities incumbent on economic operators ⁽²⁾ who use child influencers to promote products intended for an adult public, can the Commission answer the following questions:

1. What steps will the Commission take to strengthen the protection of minors against the aggressive marketing of cosmetics on social media (e.g. binding EU guidelines or harmonised guidelines)?
2. Does it not see a need to strengthen the application of the Digital Services Act and EU consumer law to platforms that amplify beauty product content targeting minors?
3. Will it promote, together with the Member States, specific digital education and body image literacy initiatives with a view to the prevention and monitoring of the phenomenon of aesthetic pressure being applied at an early age?

Submitted: 8.4.2026

**Answer given by Mr McGrath on behalf of the European Commission
(23 June 2026)**

The Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD) ⁽¹⁾ prohibits misleading and aggressive commercial practices, particularly when they target vulnerable consumers such as minors.

Direct exhortation to children to buy products or persuade their parents to buy such products for them is prohibited. Member States' authorities and courts are responsible for the enforcement of the UCPD.

The planned Digital Fairness Act ⁽²⁾ aims to put emphasis on the protection of children as consumers and to address the identified gaps in consumer protection rules, including regarding influencers.

The Digital Services Act ⁽³⁾ requires online platforms accessible to minors to provide them with a high level of privacy, safety and security.

The Guidelines on the protection of minors ⁽⁴⁾ serve as an enforcement benchmark regarding this obligation and include measures to shield minors from certain commercial practices.

The Influencer Legal Hub ⁽⁵⁾ is an online knowledge resource for the influencer marketing sector developed by the Commission. It comprises resources about the influencers' obligations under consumer law.

¹ Particularly the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive (UCPD), along with the Digital Services Act (DSA) and the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

² <https://www.agcm.it/media/comunicati-stampa/2026/3/PS13110>.

⁽¹⁾ Directive 2005/29/EC, <http://data.europa.eu/eli/dir/2005/29/oj>.

⁽²⁾ For more information on the Digital Fairness Act that the Commission plans to propose in the fourth quarter 2026, see: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/14622-Digital-Fairness-Act_en.

⁽³⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj/eng>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C_202505519. The guidelines include e.g. measures to tackle 'rabbit-holes' of harmful content, which can include content promoting negative body image or eating disorders.

⁽⁵⁾ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/consumers/consumer-rights-and-complaints/influencer-legal-hub_en.

Strengthening digital skills and literacy is a priority under the Digital Education Action Plan ⁽⁶⁾. The Commission has published Guidelines for teachers on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy.

The updates of 2026 ⁽⁷⁾ further address topics such as responsible use of social media platforms and influencers. The Commission will adopt in 2026 the Education Package that will also focus on strengthening digital skills and literacy.

The Commission is also preparing an EU-wide inquiry into the broader impact of social media on mental health and wellbeing, especially for children and young people, to inform a debate on the matter.

⁽⁶⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/actions>.

⁽⁷⁾ <https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/digital-education/actions/plan/guidelines-for-teachers-to-foster-digital-literacy-and-tackle-disinformation>.