

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-001790/26
to the Commission
Afroditi Latinopoulou (Pfe)
(30 April 2026)**

Subject: Age verification app, the DSA and risks to privacy and freedom of expression

The Commission recently announced, in the context of the Digital Services Act, that the age verification app, aimed at protecting minors, is ready for use.

However, organisations such as the Electronic Frontier Foundation and European Digital Rights warn that even privacy-by-design solutions may lead to loss of anonymity, metadata leaks and mission creep, especially if integrated into the European Digital Identity Wallet (EUDI).

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

1. How does it ensure, in practice, that the application does not end up becoming mandatory for accessing digital services?
2. What specific technical and legal measures guarantee that it will not be possible to track or create user profiles through metadata?
3. How does it intend to prevent use of the system being extended beyond the protection of minors, so as not to undermine freedom of expression and anonymity online?

Submitted: 30.4.2026

**Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(29 June 2026)**

The Digital Services Act (DSA) ⁽¹⁾ requires all providers of online platforms accessible to minors to ensure a high level of privacy, safety, and security for them.

The guidelines on the protection of minors ⁽²⁾ under the DSA set out clear guidance on how online platforms can meet this obligation, including concrete guidance on the specific conditions under which age assurance technologies should be deployed for the effective protection of minors online.

The guidelines specify that age verification should only be used where there are no less restrictive measures available to ensure the privacy, safety, and security of minors on an online platform. The Commission is enforcing the DSA on this basis.

The DSA aims to make the Internet safer and more secure while preserving fundamental rights, including children's rights and freedom of expression for all users. Furthermore, the principle of online anonymity, as established in the e-Commerce Directive ⁽³⁾, remains unchanged by the DSA.

The EU's Age Verification Blueprint is privacy-preserving and has been developed in line with guidance from the European Data Protection Board ⁽⁴⁾.

To ensure that sensitive personal data are not exposed, stored or misused, the system uses zero-knowledge proofs, letting users prove their age without sharing their identity or personal details.

Platforms receive only a cryptographic confirmation (no raw data), which ensures unlinkability and no centralised storage of data is carried out.

Strict compliance with data protection rules is enforced via contractual obligations on implementers (Member States or private providers) which include mandatory data protection impact assessments.

⁽¹⁾ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2022/2065/oj/eng>.

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C_202505519.

⁽³⁾ See Recital 14 of the e-Commerce Directive, 'this directive cannot prevent the anonymous use of open networks such as the Internet'. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2000/31/oj/eng>.

⁽⁴⁾ https://www.edpb.europa.eu/our-work-tools/our-documents/statements/statement-12025-age-assurance_en.