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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(6.10.2026)

The co-chairs of the special panel on child safety online¹ presented their report to the Commission on 13 July 2026. The panel provided independent expert input on the EU's child safety framework, with invitees from fields including health, neuroscience, psychology, computer science, child rights and digital literacy, as well as representatives from parent and family organisations. To ensure diverse perspectives, invited experts varied between each meeting of the special panel. This broad expertise allowed the co-chairs to present balanced, in-depth and robust recommendations.

The Commission considered these recommendations alongside all available data and evidence, including experience at national level across Member States. It took account of the European Parliament's report on the protection of minors online, which called for a harmonised European approach to minimum ages for access to social media². It also considered the growing number of Member States that are introducing, or considering, national legislation establishing a minimum age for minors to access certain online services. Against this background, the Commission remains mindful that divergent national approaches may increase compliance costs for companies operating across the EU. To avoid such fragmentation, the proposal for the EU KIDS Act³, which sets a harmonised EU approach for gradual exposure to autonomous social media use for minors, was adopted on the legal basis of Article 114 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

The Commission recognises the important role that parents play in keeping children safe online, as outlined in the guidelines on the protection of minors⁴ under the Digital Services Act⁵. The essential role of parents is furthermore emphasised in the report of the special panel and forms a key tenet of the EU KIDS Act which permits parents to set up accounts for minors above 13 with limited age-appropriate features and parental controls.

¹ https://commission.europa.eu/topics/digital-economy-and-society/special-panel_en.

² European Parliament resolution of 26 November 2025 on the protection of minors online (2025/2060(INI)), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-10-2025-0299_EN.html.

³ <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/proposal-eu-kids-act-eu-keeping-internet-digital-spaces-accountable-and-trustworthy>.

⁴ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:C_202505519.

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/digital-services-act.html>.