

EN

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Answer given by Mr Brunner
on behalf of the European Commission
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The Commission shares the serious concerns regarding the increasing online recruitment and online victimisation of children and has been taking steps to prevent and combat these threats, in close cooperation with Member States, the EU Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol) and other stakeholders.

These efforts are at the core of key EU legislation in this area, notably the Regulation to combat and prevent child sexual abuse¹ and the recast of Directive 2011/93/EU². These proposals aim to strengthen the EU legal framework for the prevention, detection, reporting and investigation of child sexual abuse. The Commission also pursues this objective in its enforcement of the EU Digital Services Act, including opening formal proceedings against Snapchat³.

At the operational level, Europol and national authorities launched the Operational Task Force GRIMM⁴ to combat recruitment of children. 280 suspects have already been arrested, including six high value targets.

Through its Internet Referral Unit, Europol works to identify online recruitment campaigns targeting minors so that Member States' authorities can refer them to digital platforms for removal.

The last Ministerial Meeting of the EU Internet Forum on 4 March 2026⁵ brought together online platforms, civil society and Member States to discuss how better to protect minors from harms and exploitation for the purpose of terrorism and violent extremism, child sexual abuse and organised crime.

Furthermore, the Commission is preparing an action plan on the protection of children from crime to promote a more coherent approach to protecting children, online and offline. It will aim to strengthen cooperation between Member States in preventing and combating crime against children, promoting child-centred approaches.

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 Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child sexual abuse material and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA (recast), COM(2024) 60 final.

³ Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a single market for digital services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act), OJ L 277, 27.10.2022.

⁴ <https://www.europol.europa.eu/how-we-work/operations/operational-taskforce-grimm>.

⁵ https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/networks/european-union-internet-forum_en#events.