



**Associations across Europe call on the Commission to chart a clear,
European course on child safety online**

Brussels, 11 September 2026

As the European Commission prepares to set out its legislative priorities for the year ahead, we, trade associations representing companies of all sizes operating across Europe's digital economy, call on President von der Leyen to use the State of the Union address as an opportunity to provide the regulatory clarity that young Europeans, their families, digital services, and Member States urgently need on child safety online.

The EU has the unique opportunity to offer a fully harmonised, and unambiguous rulebook for protecting children online. Yet, several Member States are legislating in parallel to the EU process, creating diverging national rules that undermine the Single Market and dismantle the harmonisation established by existing EU legislation such as the Digital Services Act.

The Commission must communicate clearly to Member States that the EU framework is the right vehicle for child safety online. National measures that go beyond or conflict with it will not make children safer but rather make Europe more fragmented. We firmly believe that a fully harmonised European approach will deliver better child safety outcomes, greater legal certainty, and a framework flexible enough to evolve as technology progresses.

To genuinely improve the online experience for children and adults across the EU, the goal should be to ensure its regulatory and non-regulatory instruments and initiatives, taken

together, deliver a coherent, enforceable, and evidence-based framework. Building on the existing legal framework will allow the EU to deliver on its simplification agenda and ultimately produce a more effective rulebook that upholds fundamental EU internal market and country-of-origin principle. We stand ready to contribute to that effort.

Finally, children's rights must be considered in their entirety. Safety is essential, but it should be pursued alongside children's rights to privacy, access to information and the digital environment, freedom of expression, participation, education and play. Measures designed to protect children should therefore be proportionate, evidence-based and carefully assessed to avoid restricting the opportunities that the internet provides to young people.

The EU should build on the comprehensive rights-based framework already set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its guidance for the digital environment. Keeping the full spectrum of children's rights at the heart of policymaking will help Europe deliver rules that protect children from harm while enabling them to learn, connect, participate and thrive online.

Signatories (in alphabetical order):

- ACT, Association for Competitive Technology
- Adigital
- AFNUM, Alliance Française des Industries du Numérique
- Anitec-Assinform
- ASIC, Association des Services Internet Communautaires
- BVDW, Bundesverband Digitale Wirtschaft
- CCIA, Computer and Communications Industry Association
- Developpers' Alliance
- DOT Europe
- eco, Association of the Internet Industry
- EuroISPA, European Internet Service Providers Association
- ITI, Information Technology Industry Council
- .PT, DNS.PT Association
- techUK