

Under Embargo until 6:00 CET on 1st June 2022

European Commission co-hosts WeProtect Global Alliance Summit 2022 reiterating importance of new EU legislation to combat child sexual abuse online

During the WeProtect Global Alliance Summit 2022, co-hosted by the European Commission, EU Commissioner Ylva Johansson is reiterating the European Commission's commitment to protecting children by stressing the importance of the newly proposed EU legislation to prevent and combat child sexual abuse online, and the establishment of an independent EU Centre on Child Sexual Abuse.

The Global Summit brings together leaders from governments, technology industry, intergovernmental organisations, and civil society, making it the ideal scenario for the European Commissioner and participating Ministers to have in-depth discussions with the key stakeholders that are working together to make the digital world safe for children.

In May, the European Commission proposed a [new EU legislation to prevent and combat child sexual abuse online](#). The proposal provides a uniform approach to detecting and reporting child sexual abuse, supports the work of public authorities, and seeks to boost EU efforts on prevention and assistance to victims.

The proposed regulation will oblige providers to detect, report and remove child sexual abuse material on their services. Providers will need to assess and mitigate the risk of misuse of their services, and the measures taken must be proportionate to that risk and subject to robust conditions and safeguards.

As part of the new suggested legislation, the European Commission also announced a new independent EU Centre on Child Sexual Abuse that, working closely with Europol, will have three major roles: supporting efforts on prevention, improving assistance to victims, and supporting the detection, reporting and removal of child sexual abuse online.

This new legislation builds on the [EU strategy for a More Effective Fight Against Child Sexual Abuse](#), launched in 2020, which sets out a comprehensive response to the growing threat of child sexual abuse both offline and online, by improving prevention, investigation and assistance to victims; and the [EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child](#), presented in March 2021, which proposed reinforced measures to protect children against all forms of violence, including abuse online.

Ylva Johansson, European Commissioner for Home Affairs said:

“Protecting children online and offline is our responsibility as adults, and my responsibility as a politician. I have tabled proposals that are clear, targeted, and proportionate. That means an obligation for providers to detect, report, remove and block child sexual abuse material; and an EU centre to help these efforts and support the victims.”

Markus Richter, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community and Commissioner for Information Technology of Germany said:

“The fight against sexual abuse of children is one of an international level. Therefore, we welcome the initiative of the EU to launch a new regulation to combat child sexual abuse as this will be a huge step not only for Europe, but for the world. The German government is putting this topic on top of the list of its presidency of G7. We will work together on how we can improve and develop more efficient networks and instruments to fight against this issue.”

Davor Božinović, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior of Croatia said:

“It is precisely due to the alarming situation when it comes to child abuse online that I am particularly thankful to the Commission for launching the new legislative proposal, which also sets ground for the establishment of the EU Centre on Child Sexual Abuse. In its implementation, we are ready to further enhance the cooperation with Internet service providers on a similar basis as to the one which we have already set in the context of the TCO regulation.”

Helen McEntee, Minister for Justice of Ireland said:

“Child sexual abuse is a truly disgusting crime, and we must use every tool we have to protect children and punish abusers. It is too important to allow internet companies voluntarily detect and remove appalling child sexual abuse material.

We welcome that these new rules recognise that the voluntary approach has failed. Internet companies such as social media platforms would now be obliged to detect, report, and remove child sexual abuse material. They will also have to assess how their platforms could be misused for child abuse - and they must act to reduce the risks of this happening.

We are always stronger when working together, and that is why the proposal for an EU Centre on Child Sexual Abuse is so important. It will ensure that internet companies comply with the new rules. It will help rescue children and bring perpetrators to justice by assisting national law enforcement, such as An Garda Síochána, and Europol. It will



allow member states to share knowledge and experience of how to best tackle criminals and help victims. And it will help victims ensure that the abuse material is taken down. These proposals have our full support.”

Ends

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