Targeted public consultation on the protection of minors guidelines under the Digital Services Act

> Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

The objective of this survey is to offer stakeholders the opportunity to share their insights and contribute to the development of the protection of minors guidelines pursuant to Article 28 of the Digital Services Act (DSA).

These guidelines aim to support online platforms accessible to minors in ensuring a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors as required by the DSA.

The guidelines will apply to providers of online platforms that are accessible to minors, including very large ones with over 45 million monthly users in the EU. However, micro and small enterprises will be exempt, pursuant to the DSA.

The guidelines adopt the same risk-based approach that underpins the DSA, recognising that different platforms pose varying levels of risks to minors. This ensures that platforms can tailor their measures to their specific services, avoiding undue restrictions on children's rights.

The draft guidelines outline a non-exhaustive list of measures that providers of online platforms can implement to protect minors in the following areas:

Risk review

- Risk review

Service Design

- Age assurance
- Registration
- Account settings
- Online interface design and other tools
- Recommender systems and search features
- Commercial practices

- Moderation

Reporting, user support and tools for guardians

- User reporting, feedback and complaints
- User support measures
- Tools for guardians

Governance

- Governance (general)
- Terms and conditions
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Transparency

This survey is structured in three parts. Part 1 focuses on collecting information about you as a respondent to the survey. Part 2 collects your overall views on the draft guidelines. Part 3 gives you the opportunity to provide detailed feedback on one or several of the sections listed above.

Opening: 13 May 2025
Closing: **15 June 2025**, midnight

The questions in this survey relate to the draft guidelines on measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors online pursuant to Article 28 of the Digital Services Act that you can download here.

Article_28_DSA_Guidelines_-_Final_Version_For_Public_Consulation_-_13.05.2025.pdf

Part 1: About you

* Language of my contribution
We will use a machine translation of your contribution if you submit it in another language than English".

- ○ Bulgarian
- ○ Croatian
- ○ Czech
- ○ Danish
- ○ Dutch
- ● English
- ○ Estonian
- ○ Finnish
- ○ French
- ○ German
- ○ Greek
- ○ Hungarian
- ○ Irish
- ○ Italian
- ○ Latvian

○ Lithuanian
○ Maltese
○ Other
○ Polish
○ Portuguese
○ Romanian
○ Slovak
○ Slovenian
○ Spanish
○ Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as
○ Academic/research institution
○ Company/business
◉ Business association
○ Consumer organisation
○ EU citizen
○ Non-EU citizen
○ Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
○ Public authority
○ Trade union
○ Other

* First name

Giulia

* Surname

Cereseto

* Email (this will not be published)

gcereseto@actonline.org

Name of organisation
255 character(s) maximum
255 character(s) maximum

ACT | The App Association

* Nationality / country of origin of the organisation
○ AT - Austria
◉ BE - Belgium
○ BG - Bulgaria
○ HR - Croatia
○ CY - Cyprus

○ CZ - Czechia

○ DK - Denmark

○ EE - Estonia

○ FI - Finland

○ FR - France

○ DE - Germany

○ EL - Greece

○ HU - Hungary

○ IE - Ireland

○ IT - Italy

○ LV - Latvia

○ LT - Lithuania

○ LU - Luxembourg

○ MT - Malta

○ NL - Netherlands

○ Other - Other

○ PL - Poland

○ PT - Portugal

○ RO - Romania

○ SK - Slovak Republic

○ SI - Slovenia

○ ES - Spain

○ SE - Sweden

* Is your organisation one of the entities designated as very large online platform (VLOP) or search engine (VLOSE) pursuant to article 33 of Regulation 2022/2065, or representing the interests of one of those entities?

○ Yes

◉ No

* Are you an online platform or other intermediary (non-VLOP/VLOSE) with less than 45 million active users in the EU, or representing the interests of one of those entities?

◉ Yes

○ No

Transparency register number

Add the number if your organisation is on the transparency register. It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

> 72029513877-54

***Privacy settings for your contribution**

The Commission may publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

○ **Anonymous**

If you choose this option, we would publish the type of respondent that you represent, your country of origin or nationality if you have replied as a citizen, and the contribution you have submitted. Your name and email would not be published. Please make sure you do not include any personal data in the contribution itself.

◉ **Public**

If you chose this option we would publish your name, the type of respondent that you represent, your country of origin/nationality and the contribution you have submitted.

* This survey is carried out by the Digital Services Unit at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology. The Digital Services Unit is the operational controller and can be contacted at CNECT-F2@ec.europa.eu.

◉ I agree with the personal data protection provisions.

Part 2: General comments

In part 2 we seek your general feedback on the attached draft protection of minors guidelines. Please reserve your detailed feedback on specific sections of the guidelines to part 3 of this survey.

CLARITY

Overall, how clear is the structure of the proposed guidelines?

○ Very unclear

○ Somewhat unclear

○ Neutral

◉ Somewhat clear

○ Very clear

○ I do not know

Comments

2000 character(s) maximum

> The guidelines are thoughtfully structured but could be clearer in delineating responsibilities among platforms, app stores, and app developers. The length and prescriptive tone may make navigation and interpretation challenging, particularly for SMEs. The clarity would benefit from simplifying language, emphasising outcome-based principles, and providing clearer, service-specific use cases.

APPROPRIATENESS

Overall, how appropriate are the proposed measures to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors on platforms accessible to minors (as defined in the guidelines)?

○ Not appropriate

◉ Somewhat appropriate

○ Neutral

○ Appropriate

○ Very appropriate

○ I do not know

Comments

The proposed measures aim to enhance safety for minors online, but many are overly prescriptive and not fully risk-based. A more flexible and proportionate approach is essential. Responsibilities should align with the role and capacity of the actor in question. Age verification should occur as close as possible to the final user and be tailored to the actual risk profile. Assigning these tasks to intermediaries like app stores or apps, which do not have direct engagement with the end user, could result in ineffective or inappropriate implementation.

NOVELTY

Overall, to what extent do you think online platforms accessible to minors already comply with the recommended measures set out in these guidelines?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ Slightly
- ● Moderately
- ○ Largely
- ○ Fully
- ○ I do not know

Comments

Many platforms and developers, especially those working directly with minors, already apply measures aligned with the guidelines. However, there is significant diversity in how these measures are implemented. The guidelines should support existing effective practices, rather than encouraging a single, uniform approach.

COMPLETENESS

Are there any important aspects that are missing from the proposed guidelines?

The guidelines should more explicitly reflect the diversity of platforms, apps, and services. A one-size-fits-all approach is unsuitable, especially for SMEs. The scope should allow for more flexibility, focus on achieving meaningful outcomes rather than prescribing uniform solutions, and support context-specific measures.

CHALLENGES

What challenges do you foresee in the implementation of the proposed guidelines?

A key challenge is the risk of over-compliance at the platform or app store level, pushing uniform enforcement downstream. This could undermine app-level risk assessments and limit innovation, particularly for SMEs. Without flexibility, platforms may impose unnecessary burdens on low-risk services, reducing diversity and innovation.

SUGGESTIONS

What are your suggestions to improve the text?

> The text should reinforce the need for principle-based regulation that focuses on behaviour and outcomes, not specific technologies. Risk mitigation decisions should be made as close as possible to the service's actual use, so that safeguards are tailored to how the service is actually used in practice.. The guidelines should also clarify that app stores should not bear responsibility for risk assessments at the app level, and that proportionality must reflect the app's nature and audience.

Part 3: Comments per section

In the part 3 of the survey we seek your detailed feedback on specific sections of the guidelines. Please select 'Yes' for the sections on which you would like to provide feedback.

Risk review

RISK REVIEW
- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

1. APPROPRIATENESS
How appropriate are the proposed measures in this section to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors on platforms accessible to minors (as defined in the guidelines)?
- ○ Not appropriate
- ◉ Somewhat appropriate
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Appropriate
- ○ Very appropriate
- ○ I do not know

Comments
2000 character(s) maximum

> The risk review framework promotes proportionality, but the implementation risks becoming rigid and overly uniform. It should better acknowledge that many developers already implement responsible, risk-aware measures and use varied methodologies. Flexibility in recognising different service models and innovation paths is crucial to avoid unnecessarily constraining SMEs.

2. ADVERSE EFFECTS
2.a. Do you believe that any of the measures in this section could have adverse effects on the privacy, security and safety of minors?
- ◉ Yes
- ○ No

Comments
2000 character(s) maximum

If implemented without flexibility, the measures could unintentionally increase privacy and safety risks for minors. Platforms may impose intrusive data collection and limit access to beneficial services to minors. This could paradoxically reduce minors' security by weakening trust and transparency.

2.b. Do you believe that any of the measures in this section have an undue impact on other children's rights?

◉ Yes
○ No

Comments
2000 character(s) maximum

Uniform application of risk measures may restrict children's access to valuable online content or expressive tools. The right to information, participation, and education may be compromised, particularly if services prescribe overly restrictive measures based on theoretical risks.

3. COMPLETENESS
Are there any important aspects that are missing from the proposed recommendations in this section?
1000 character(s) maximum

The guidelines should acknowledge that diverse, effective methodologies already exist and build upon these. A flexible, non-prescriptive framework should allow SMEs to build on existing practices. Recognition of different service models, risk levels, and user bases is essential.

4. SUGGESTIONS
What are your suggestions to improve the text in this section?
2000 character(s) maximum

Promote tailored risk assessments that reflect the service design and intended use and provide clear support for proportionality in application, especially for SMEs, without duplicating efforts or facing excessive compliance burdens.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
2000 character(s) maximum

ACT | The App Association welcomes the Commission's efforts to ensure a reliable and predictable online environment for minors and a risk-based approach that supports innovation, safety, and trust. Nevertheless, this approach should not evolve into a rigid, one-size-fits-all system. Protecting minors effectively requires context-sensitive solutions, practical flexibility, and a clear distinction between the roles of platforms, app stores, and app developers. We believe that the guidelines should avoid overburdening SMEs with excessive compliance burdens.

Age assurance

AGE ASSURANCE

- ⦿ Yes
- ○ No

1. APPROPRIATENESS

How appropriate are the proposed measures in this section to ensure a high level of privacy, safety and security for minors on platforms accessible to minors (as defined in the guidelines)?

- ○ Not appropriate
- ⦿ Somewhat appropriate
- ○ Neutral
- ○ Appropriate
- ○ Very appropriate
- ○ I do not know

Comments

1000 character(s) maximum

> The proposed age assurance measures are appropriate for certain high-risk services but must not be applied indiscriminately. They should remain risk-based, flexible, and proportionate. Age assurance should not be mandated at the app store level, where no direct user relationship exists. A fragmented, overly prescriptive approach risks burdening services that do not pose significant risks to minors.

2. ADVERSE EFFECTS

2a. Do you believe that any of the measures in this section could have adverse effects on the privacy, security and safety of minors?

- ⦿ Yes
- ○ No

Please explain which measures and why.

1000 character(s) maximum

> If implemented uniformly and without differentiation, age assurance requirements may result in privacy-invasive data collection or exclusion of minors from beneficial, low-risk services. Placing age verification duties on platforms that are far from the end user may weaken minors' privacy protections by encouraging unnecessary data sharing and fragmentation of accountability.

2.b. Do you believe that any of the measures in this section have an undue impact on other children's rights?

- ⦿ Yes
- ○ No

Please explain which measures and why

1000 character(s) maximum

> Strict or inflexible risk measures may restrict children's access to valuable online content or expressive tools. Overly broad requirements may create disproportionate barriers to entry for educational and creative services, particularly those offered by SMEs.

3. COMPLETENESS

Are there any important aspects that are missing from the proposed recommendations in this section?

1000 character(s) maximum

> The guidelines should better account for the diversity of digital services and avoid mandating approaches that only suit large platforms. A wider range of complementary and privacy-preserving methods should be encouraged. Age assurance must be implemented as closely as possible to the end user.

4. SUGGESTIONS

What are your suggestions to improve the text in this section?

2000 character(s) maximum

> Endorse a wider range of age assurance tools, including estimation and user-declared data. Avoid enforcing rigid procedures.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

2000 character(s) maximum

> ACT | The App Association supports efforts to enhance age-appropriate design and accountability, but warns against blanket age verification mandates that bypass the contextual risk posed by the app. Risk decisions should remain as close as possible to the end-user. Fragmentation and over-enforcement could make children less safe and limit innovation across the app economy.

Registration

REGISTRATION
- ○ Yes
- ● No

Account settings

ACCOUNT SETTINGS
- ○ Yes
- ● No

Online interface design and other tools

ONLINE INTERFACE DESIGN AND OTHER TOOLS
- ○ Yes
- ● No

Recommender systems and search features

RECOMMENDER SYSTEMS AND SEARCH FEATURES

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

Commercial practices

COMMERCIAL PRACTICES

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

Moderation

MODERATION

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

User reporting, feedback and complaints

USER REPORTING, FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

User support measures

USER SUPPORT MEASURES

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

Tools for guardians

TOOLS FOR GUARDIANS

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

Governance (general)

GOVERNANCE (GENERAL)

- ◯ Yes
- ⦿ No

Terms and conditions

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

◯ Yes

◉ No

Monitoring and evaluation

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

◯ Yes

◉ No

Transparency

TRANSPARENCY

◯ Yes

◉ No

Additional contribution

Please upload any file you wish to share here (one document).

Contact

Contact Form