

“A Safer Internet for Minors”

Statement of Purpose Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online

WHY DO IT

The expanding world of the internet and the development of digital technology has the potential to play a hugely positive role in the lives of minors across the European community and more broadly.

That these dynamic changes are happening at an incredible pace presents our societies with the challenge of how best to embrace this progress while providing a safe environment for minors and protecting their rights and freedoms.

To address these new and real risks and embrace opportunities, and in response to a call for action from the European Commission, the Alliance to Better Protect Minors Online (*“the Alliance”*) has been formed. The Alliance, open to new members, is a coalition that brings together a broad value chain of industry actors, all with a strong and demonstrable record of success in delivering safe and engaging digital experiences to minors.

The Alliance decided to focus on three categories of risks:

- [Harmful content](#) (e.g. violent or sexually exploitative content)
- [Harmful conduct](#) (e.g. cyberbullying)
- [Harmful contact](#) (e.g. coercion or sexual extortion)

We recognise that risks can change over time, with the emergence of new services, and changes in online behaviour.

The stated purpose of the Alliance is to identify possible areas, within the categories above, that can benefit from a coordinated approach between the Parties and other stakeholders in these areas, bolstering efforts towards achieving a model of innovation that places the safety of minors and their rights at the heart of our activities.

Both the Alliance and the European Commission recognise the importance and obligations in ensuring that minors can remain an active part of this new connected digital environment.

In addition, all parties recognise that our efforts are only part of a broader, multi-stakeholder solution. We emphasise the role of parents and families, those of educators, civil society, (inter)national organisations and public authorities and the need for supportive awareness-raising and education around the actions we launch here. We also recognise the importance of academia and research to underpin and ground the work of the Alliance.

SCOPE

We refer to minors throughout the document, and mean any person under age of eighteen (18) as in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

It is acknowledged that significant progress has already been made through existing initiatives in this field. Notable examples are the ICT Coalition for Children Online, the GSMA Mobile Alliance against Child Sexual Abuse Content, the Pan-European Games Information system, and the WePROTECT Global Alliance to End Child Sexual Exploitation Online.

This initiative is designed to complement companies' existing efforts in this area. As such, this cooperation will build on the experience gained from the CEO Coalition to make the Internet a Better Place for Kids and should not preclude companies from taking separate actions and continuing to fulfil their commitments as individual companies or as part of their membership within existing self-regulatory initiatives.

We also recognise other initiatives that aim to combating risks that all individuals, both adults and minors, may face online, such as the Code of Conduct on countering illegal hate speech online agreed in May 2016 by the European Commission and by a number of IT companies.

This initiative *may* also prepare the ground for the self-/co-regulatory mechanisms foreseen the Commission's proposal for a revised Audio-visual Media Service Directive (AVMSD), without prejudice to the ongoing legislative process.

The Action Plan indicates the areas the Alliance will address.

It should be noted that the areas referenced are wide-ranging and given the varying natures of the businesses they represent, not all Parties can contribute to resolving all potential issues. Accordingly, differing sets of responsibilities will result, with regard to the identified risks. Nevertheless, all can play a part in meeting the overall objective of improving online safety of minors, whether by integrating new technology solutions and techniques, sharing expertise or raising awareness of the risks.

We are setting ambitious goals which require appropriate commitment from all stakeholders. We are conscious that there may be different ways to achieve these goals.

METHOD

According to their business activity, where appropriate, the Parties of the SoP agree to work in a collaborative manner together with NGOs, civil society, academia, European, national or local authorities and international organisations to continue their efforts to protect and empower minors online.

We will state clearly what our goals are and how we propose to achieve them and how we will report and seek feedback on our execution. These principles can be realised in various ways. We will take stock of our progress, hear contributions from other interested and relevant parties and shape our future work programs appropriately, as they are necessary to achieve the announced goals.

ACTION PLAN

We have decided to focus our efforts to achieve pragmatic and sustainable solutions to real problems in the scope of the above-mentioned areas, addressing gaps on:

User-empowerment:

1. Identifying and promoting best practice for the communication of data privacy practices;
2. Providing accessible and robust tools that are easy to use and to provide feedback and notification as appropriate;
3. Promoting users' awareness and use of information and tools to help keep themselves safer online and of their responsibility and duty to behave responsibly and respectfully towards others and foster trust, at the same time promoting minor's digital empowerment;
4. Promoting the use of content classification when and where appropriate;
5. Promoting the awareness and use of parental control tools.

Enhanced collaboration:

6. Intensifying cooperation between ourselves and with other parties such as Child Safety Organisations Governments, education services and law enforcement to enhance best practice-sharing;
7. Identifying emerging developments in technology such as connected devices and with the support of the Commission, engage with other parties who also have a role to play in supporting child safety online.

Awareness raising:

8. Supporting the development of awareness-raising campaigns about online safety, digital empowerment, and media literacy through both ad hoc and ongoing initiatives;
9. Promoting children's access to diversified online content, opinions, information and knowledge.

Members of the Alliance should not be restricted as to how they best achieve these goals, and should be free in their choice of measure and technology.

Members of the Alliance will submit a list of specific commitments and timeline for implementation to the European Commission within three months of endorsing the Alliance Statement of Purpose.

Members of the Alliance and the European Commission agree to assess the Statement of Purpose and its impact on a regular basis, and after 18 months from the endorsement, to assess the implementation of commitments through a transparent and independent review process.

ANNEX

Company signatories (in alphabetical order)

ASKfm, BT Group, Deutsche Telekom, Disney, Facebook, Google, KPN, The LEGO Group, Liberty Global, Microsoft, Orange, Rovio, Samsung Electronics, Sky, Spotify, Sulake, Super RTL, TIM (Telecom Italia), Telefónica, Telenor, Telia Company, Twitter, Vivendi, Vodafone

Associated (in alphabetical order)

BBFC, Child Helpline International, COFACE, eNACSO, EUN Partnership, FfTelecoms, FOSI, FSM, GSMA, ICT Coalition, NICAM, Toy Industries of Europe, UNICEF