

Independent Expert Commission on the Safety of Children and Young People in Digital Environments

Hearing 4: International perspectives and EU developments

OECD Secretariat – Written Statement

This document provides a response from the OECD Secretariat to a request for a written statement in advance of the above hearing. Please note that as an International Organisation, many of the questions asked are not applicable (i.e. they call for domestic examples or experience in a domestic context). For this reason, this response provides information in response to a limited subset of the questions.

I Principles and legal interests

1. Legal interests and guiding principles

In your opinion, which principles and legal interests are at the heart of digital child protection policy?

The [*OECD Recommendation on Children in the Digital Environment*](#) (the Recommendation) provides guidance to governments and other stakeholders on setting conditions for a safe and beneficial digital environment for children. Five main themes run through the Recommendation, which provide an overview of the different main policy considerations for children online. These are:

- **Ensuring policy coherence**, and co-ordinating responses across government, as well as in multi-stakeholder efforts.
- **Taking a balanced approach**, and paying specific attention to promoting the benefits of the digital environment for children, while providing for their safety and privacy,
- Ensuring **child participation**, direct engagement with children (where appropriate) and implementing child focussed measures
- Recognising that **digital service providers play an essential role** in providing a safe and beneficial digital environment for children and taking appropriate policy measures.
- Recognising that the complexity of the digital environment means that **parents and teachers need support** in protecting their children and fulfilling their duties.

How are conflicting goals resolved in your country?

Not applicable

2. Understanding of regulation

What role do the following play in your national model:

- the state's duty to protect,
- platform responsibility,
- empowerment of children and parents?

While the OECD cannot comment on the above in the national context, please note that the Recommendation specifically recognises the role of each of the above actors. It:

- *“Recognises that governments have a key role in responding to the needs of children in the digital environment, and that this requires policies and regulation which empower children to become confident and competent users of digital technology, foster their resilience, can reduce harms, and can establish a safer digital environment by design”*
- *“Recognises the essential role of Digital Service Providers in providing a safe and beneficial digital environment for children”*
- *“Recognises that parents, carers, and guardians have a fundamental role in protecting their children in the digital environment, and need support in this role”*

All following questions refer to the national context, and are not applicable to the OECD. The following pieces of OECD research may nonetheless be of interest to the Expert Commission:

- [*Typology of Risks for children in the digital environment*](#)
- [*Towards Digital Safety by Design for Children*](#)
- [*Transparency reporting on child sexual exploitation and abuse online 2023*](#)
- [*Transparency reporting on child sexual exploitation and abuse online 2025*](#)
- [*The legal and policy landscape of age assurance online for child safety and well-being*](#)
- [*Age assurance practices of 50 online services used by children*](#)