Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor Country Profile 2024: CZECH REPUBLIC

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Monitor is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States, Iceland and Norway on the pillars and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (BIK+ strategy). The 2024 edition of the BIK Policy Monitor report examines the implementation of the BIK+ strategy in 29 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, and Norway.

The country profile outlines findings about the implementation of the BIK+ strategy based on BIK policies and BIK+ actions across the strategy's three pillars as surveyed in the BIK Policy Monitor (as per February 2024). Download the full BIK Policy Monitor report 2024 from the Better Internet for Kids website.

BIK policies

Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks describe the overarching approach for a better internet and establish the underlying goals, principles and guidelines that shape individual policies within this area.

- This topic **is an important and emerging policy priority**, with children's online protection, digital empowerment, and digital participation partially covered in national/regional laws, regulations and policies.

- There are **separate, dedicated policies which address the topic of children and the digital environment** (protection, empowerment, and participation).

- The BIK / BIK+ strategy **is not explicitly referred to in national policies** but has informed policy development on children and the digital environment.

- **Children's rights in the digital environment are not explicitly recognised** in national policy documents but receive implicit support in policies dealing with children's digital activity.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Coverage of BIK+ issues in national policies		X		
Integration of policy provision		X		
Influence of the BIK+ strategy		X		
Recognition of children's rights		X		

Table 1: Topic summary - policy frameworks

Key national policy frameworks are:

- The strategic digital education framework Digital Czech Republic lays out the newly established approach to digital education, including a strong focus on digital skills development, cybersecurity and safe internet use.

- The Long-term Plan for Education and the Development of the Education System of the Czech Republic 2023–2027 provides integrated measures to support digital well-being and cybersecurity in schools.

- In addition, the Strategy for the Education Policy of the Czech Republic up to 2030+ is a strategy to support reaching the target of 80% of the population with basic digital skills by 2030.

- The Ministry of the Interior, together with Palacký University in Olomouc, has produced a methodological guide on the prevention of risky behaviour among children and youths online created for local authorities and police as well as for other target groups in the school environment t('Cyber Academy for municipal staff, municipal police and other target groups in the school environment').

- The Czech Police has also created an educational preventive programme, "Your Journey Online".

Policy design

Policy design asks whether evidence and research support BIK-related policies and whether systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating those policies.

- Quantitative data on some aspects of children's digital activity **is collected regularly as part of broader surveys**.

- **Information is regularly gathered to inform policies on children and the digital environment**. However, this relies primarily on third-party sources, and there are limited opportunities to commission new data on children's digital activity.

- However, **little or no dedicated funding is available** for research on children and the digital environment.

- **Policies are monitored and evaluated but not systematically**. It depends on the needs at a particular time or when policies are being considered.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Regular data collection		X		
Other information supports		X		
National research fund			X	
Monitoring and evaluation		X		

Table 2: Topic summary - policy design

Recent national research studies include:

- The Czech Republic participates in the European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (ESPAD), which also measures children's online activity. The most recent edition was in 2023.

- Perception of cybercrime among pupils at the second level of primary schools (2023) was carried out within the framework of the project "Regions for a Safe Internet". It was initially conducted in 2018 and has now been repeated

five years later to compare the results. The status at the end of 2023 showed that pupils still have insufficient awareness of what they can or cannot do online or what behaviour is considered a cybercrime.

● The National Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Addictions issues the annual Report on Digital Addictions in the Czech Republic, part of which is dedicated to children and adolescents. The report is included in the information package of annual reports on the situation of addiction in the Czech Republic.

Policy governance

Policy governance examines how policies are coordinated at the governmental level, whether other implementation bodies are involved in their delivery, and whether structured mechanisms are available to guide their implementation.

● **Policy development sits across a range of ministries, and no lead is specifically assigned responsibility** for developing government policies, guidelines, and programmes related to children and the digital environment.

● **Coordination happens more informally across the different departments and entities** contributing to government policies, guidelines, and programmes regarding children and the digital environment.

● Several ministries and agencies undertake supportive measures and activities; however, **there is no cross-governmental action plan on children and the digital environment**.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Lead ministry for policy development			X	
National coordination body		X		
National action plan or strategy				X

Table 3: Topic summary - policy governance

Four governmental bodies share responsibilities across the three pillars of BIK+:

1. The Office of the Government oversees European policies, including implementing the BIK+ strategy.

2. The Ministry of Interior and Police is responsible for the safety and prevention of criminality, including criminality in cyberspace.

3. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports is in charge of digital skills and education of youth.

4. The National Cyber and Information Security Agency develops educational and preventive programs for children, youth and parents in the field of cybersecurity.

Furthermore, the Committee for Digital Education is responsible for the coordination of relevant stakeholders in the area of digital education under the Government Council for the Information Society. The Committee consists of representatives from several ministries, state institutions, the private sector, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders. Topics related to the BIK+ strategy, including well-being and cybersecurity in the context of digital skills development and efforts in relation to the national strategic plan Digital Czech Republic are the main focus areas of the Committee.

Another more informal coordinating platform is the Safer Internet Centre, which has developed a broad network of important and active stakeholders in the field.

The Republican Committee for Crime Prevention and Coordination and Cooperation in the Prevention of Cybercrime ('Cybercommission') is a formal coordination body that focuses its efforts on current trends, the implementation of the Crime Prevention Strategy, the coordination of training events, and provision of support for new projects. The Cybercommission also regularly invites guests to its meetings if they are affected by the issues discussed.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires about how different stakeholders can participate in the policy development process. Children's involvement in policy-making is one such key issue. Additionally, international knowledge exchange about children's digital participation is also relevant to this topic.

- **Various ad hoc multistakeholder groups exist** across different branches of government, in which stakeholders may contribute to policy deliberation and development.

- **Members of the public are consulted on occasion** in the course of the development of new policies. However, this is not always the case.

- **Children are listened to directly in the policy development process** (e.g., through hearings, consultations, specific surveys) but are not formally involved in decision-making.

- There are **occasional opportunities** for policymakers to participate in international knowledge exchange on digital policies for children.

	High	Medium	Low	Other
Stakeholder forum		X		
Public consultation		X		
Involvement of young people		X		
International knowledge exchange		X		

Table 4: Topic summary - Stakeholder involvement

Various NGOs, companies, and universities work on prevention, intervention, and awareness in the area of children's use of the internet. Those organisations are coordinated by the Czech Safer Internet Centre, led by the association CZ-NIC. CZ-NIC's projects strive to improve awareness about the safety of children on the internet.

At the regional level, the Association of Regions (Asociace krajů) runs its own awareness and high-quality content project, Regions for Safer Internet, which

consists of e-learning courses for children, students, parents, teachers and other groups such as police officers, social workers.

Regarding stakeholder involvement, the Advisory Board (for adults) and Youth Panel (for children) within the Safer Internet Centre act as important opportunities for knowledge exchange. The Youth Panel is current being restructured to make it more effective and responsive to the needs of children in the digital environment and the needs of the CZ with links to EU policies.

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – safe digital experiences

Safe digital experiences refer to actions taken to protect children from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact, and risks as young consumers and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment created in a way that respects children's best interests.

Responses to EU laws:

- The finalisation of the law implementing the Digital Services Act (DSA) is currently underway. The Czech Telecommunications Office has been designated as the Digital Services Coordinator in the Czech Republic, and the Office for Personal Data Protection will be designated as the competent authority for articles 26 and 28 of the Digital Services Act. No competent authority will be designated specifically for children's online safety.

Addressing harmful online content:

- There is no explicit legal definition of harmful online content in national legislation. Specific examples including hard pornography, animal pornography or child pornography are illegal and fulfil the elements of offences under Sections 191 and 192 of the Criminal Code. However, harmful content may also include videos shared with the potential to incite minors to self-harm.

- The Safer Internet Centre operates a "STOP online" line where harmful/addictive content can be reported and which is further acted on by the Czech police.

Addressing harmful online conduct:

- Laws to protect children and young people from intimate image abuse, sometimes called 'revenge porn' or 'the non-consensual sharing of intimate images' are covered under the Criminal Code.

- Regarding cyberbullying, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports has issued methodological recommendations for prevention.

Age verification and digital identity systems:

- There are currently no specific national/regional laws, technical standards or policies regarding age verification mechanisms to restrict minors from accessing adult online content services. This is under consideration, however.

- Regarding codes of conduct for commercial content, a self-regulatory body, the Platform of Professional Communication, has published an Influencers' Code of Conduct.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
DSA legislation enacted		X		
Codes of practice of digital services				X
Consumer code of practice	X			
Definition of harmful content				X
Children's complaints mechanism	X			
Bodies can order content removal				X
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws	X			
Age verification for adult content		X		
Digital identity systems		X		

Table 5: Topic summary - pillar 1: safe digital experiences

Pillar 2 – digital empowerment

Digital empowerment incorporates actions so that all children, including those in vulnerable situations, acquire the necessary skills and competences to make sound choices and express themselves in the online environment safely and responsibly.

Supports in formal education:

- One of the central measures since 2022 has been the implementation of a new curriculum in primary and secondary education, with new classes focusing on digital skills development and ICT. This comprehensive plan is backed by various measures, including RRF funding for purchasing digital equipment and teaching aids for schools, with a particular focus on supporting disadvantaged students to ensure an inclusive digital transition. Stakeholders and scientists also give courses to introduce AI in schools, focusing on preventing its misuse. The topic of healthy and secure use of technologies and internet is emphasised in the revised curriculum. Source: State of the Digital Decade 2024 Czechia.

- Innovations in education in the context of digitalisation are implemented through the National Recovery Plan, which is implemented by the National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic. It includes training in online communication and cooperation (development of digital competences and a new concept of the educational field of informatics).

- The National Recovery Plan includes activities to train teachers in this area. The National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic has different projects, such as teacher training, webinars for educators, platforms for exchanging experiences between schools, and consultancy activities. The Institute also creates educational podcasts called kybcast.

Informal education:

- In 2022, Czechia's police launched an educational prevention initiative called 'Your Journey Online.' The first part focuses on educating children and young individuals on how to present themselves on social media and underlines the importance of securing their devices and personal accounts. The second part

of the programme concentrates on navigating online information, stressing
the need for fact-checking, especially amid widespread misinformation, and
being aware of common cyber fraud tactics. Source: State of the Digital
Decade 2024 Czechia.

- A key stakeholder in this field is the CZ.NIC Association, which, in cooperation
  with other organisations, operates the national Safer Internet Centre.

- The "First Mobile" guide is for parents who are about to get their children
  their first smartphone. It has been prepared by the Safer Internet Centre in
  cooperation with the Police of the Czech Republic, the O2 Foundation and
  mobile operators Vodafone and T-Mobile. The guide contains a number of
  recommendations on how to set up a smartphone correctly and introduces
  the most common risks children can face when using it.

Empowering through digital skills:

- In 2022, the Ministry of Industry and Trade launched the Mobile Technology
  Classroom project, aiming to spark students' interests in new technologies
  and technical areas. A converted truck goes around the country and serves as
  a mobile classroom where eighth and ninth graders can learn about new
  technologies, gaining practical knowledge, skills and competencies. Students
  can try 3D printing and augmented and virtual reality and receive career
  counselling. Source: State of the Digital Decade 2024 Czechia.

- The Czech Digital Skills and Jobs Coalition´s (Digikoalice) project has an
  online catalogue that provides children with a wide range of educational
  activities. Currently, more than 140 activities and courses created by different
  entities and organisations are easily accessible to children, their parents, and
  their teachers.

- The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports cooperates with National Cyber
  and Information Security Agency on educational projects and activities for
  young people in related fields.

- Media education is part of the Comprehensive Education Programme and a cross-cutting area. The complex revision currently underway plans to emphasise and develop this topic.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Teaching online safety		X		
Online safety policies in schools				X
Adequate teacher training	X			
Informal education about online safety	X			
Peer-to-peer training in online safety			X	
Support for digital literacy skills	X			
Children's media literacy		X		
Challenge hate speech/digital civil courage		X		

Table 6: Topic summary - pillar 2: digital empowerment

Pillar 3 – active participation, respecting children's rights

Active participation, respecting children's rights, refers to actions which give children and young people a say in the digital environment, with more child-led activities to foster innovative and creative safe digital experiences.

Active participation:

- In the Committee for Digital Education under the Government Council for Information Society under the Digital Czechia Strategy, the Czech Children and Youth Parliament represent the voices of children. They are encouraged to contribute to debate and discuss the policies in the field of digital education.

- There are no laws, regulations or policies in place that mandate youth participation in decision-making bodies at the national or regional level.

- There are limited activities to promote awareness of children's rights such as the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) Amendment to the Act on Social and Legal Protection of Children, Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Inclusivity:

- In 2022, MoLSA continued participating in the Council of Europe's Participation of Children in Europe project, Strengthening National Frameworks and Activities for Child Participation. The project aimed to assess the level of child participation in the Czech Republic using the Council of Europe's Child Participation Indicator Toolkit and the new Child Participation in National Activities methodology.

- The Ombudsman's Office, as part of its Strengthening the Ombudsman's Activities in the Protection of Human Rights project, held its first Children's Conference in June and published the Convention on the Rights of the Child in a child-friendly text.

Digital creativity:

- There is a regional activity to stimulate the production and visibility of positive digital content and services for children and parents called Regions for Safer Internet. Non-governmental actors as Czech Safer Internet Centre are also active in that area and have many supportive digital materials related to that topic.

- The National Recovery Plan - Innovation in Education in the Context of Digitalisation also contains a funding programme focused on implementation of digital tools and support for schools to use digital tools and develop digital creativity and the use of digital technologies by children.

- Since the Czech Republic's Presidency of the Council of the EU, a project called Czech Digital Week has been established to promote digitalisation and bring together stakeholders in the Czech Republic's digitalisation field.

	In place	In development	Not in place	Other
Activities to promote active participation		X		
Laws that mandate youth participation			X	
Awareness raising on children's rights			X	
Inclusiveness regarding active participation	X			
Child-friendly versions of policy documents			X	
Positive digital content	X			
Activities encouraging digital creativity	X			

Table 7: Topic summary - pillar 3: active participation, respecting children's rights

Best practices

AI ten

AI ten is a newly developed information leaflet highlighting the basic rules of working with Artificial Intelligence (AI), discussing potential risks for children and adult users. The leaflet was developed by the Ministry of the Interior together with experts from pgr.ai, a Czech group of academics from the Czech Technical University, Charles University, and the Czech Academy of Sciences, and CZ.NIC, the operator organisation of the Czech hotline node of the Czech Safer Internet Centre.

10 tips to stay safe online

10 tips to stay safe online is a booklet that provides ten basic rules to stay safe online on social media platforms. The booklet advises in a fun and engaging way on 'the do's and don'ts' for using online social networks. Its included 'boomer version' is aimed at educators, parents, prevention officers, and anyone interested in

actively supporting children's and young people's safety online. The Ministry of the Interior developed the booklet in cooperation with the National Pedagogical Institute of the Czech Republic.

Regions for a Safe Internet (KPBI)

The public institution Regions for a Safe Internet (KPBI), supported by the Ministry of the Interior for many years, brings together all regions of the country to coordinate work in the field more effectively. The KPBI facilitates a range of educational projects for children, parents, seniors and educators. Furthermore, KPBI organises an educational quiz competition annually, in which, most recently, 55.000 children and young people participated.

Safe in Cyber!

Safe in Cyber! provides an extensive online course collection developed by the National Cyber and Information Security Agency in collaboration with experts and partners. The courses cover topics such as staying safe on social networks, sexting, cyber grooming, online gaming, and many more.

BIK+ index 2024: Czech Republic

The BIK+ index has been developed to provide an aggregated at-a-glance overview of the levels of implementation across the two dimensions, BIK policies and BIK+ actions, in Czech Republic compared to the EU27+2 average. Values are shown in per cent.
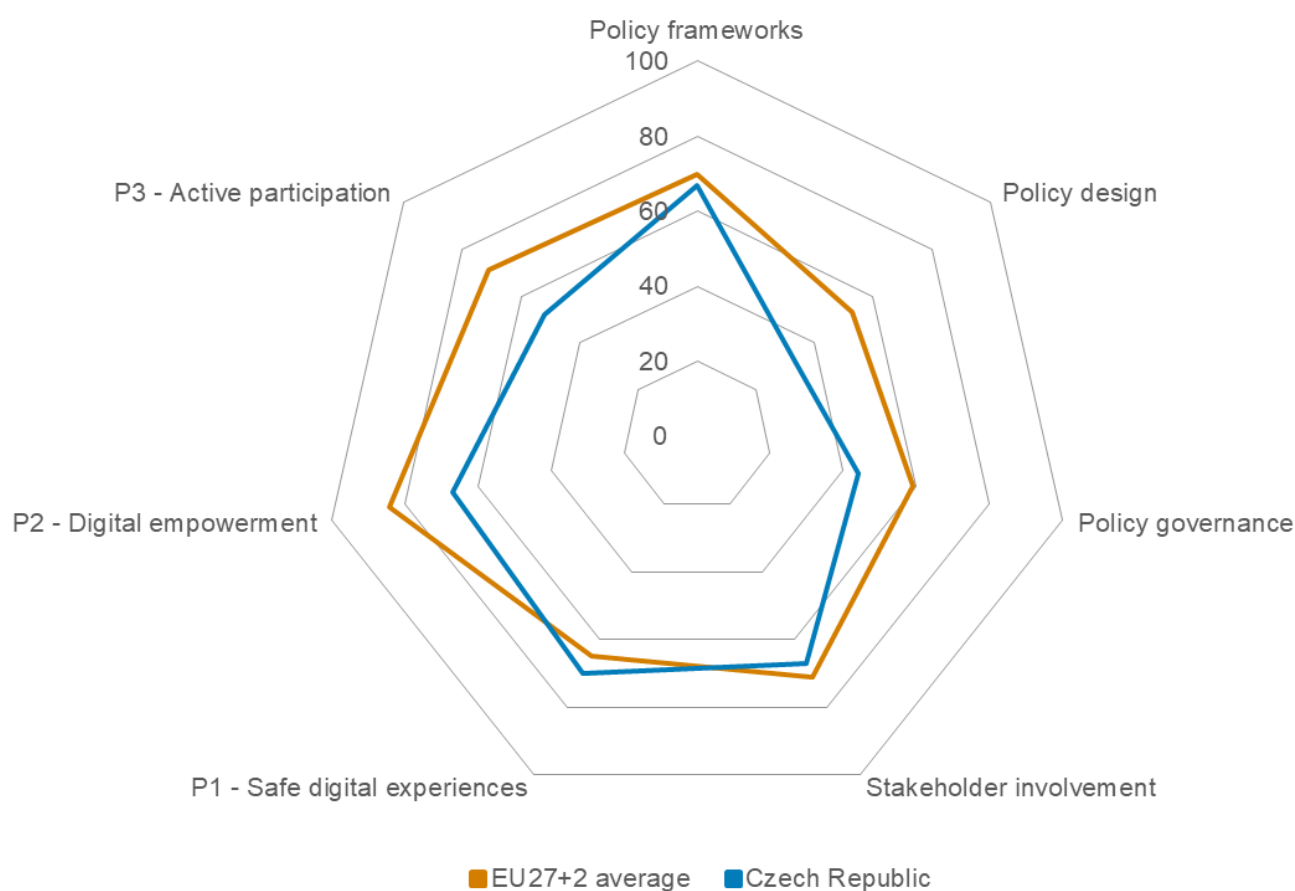

Figure 1: BIK+ index 2024: Czech Republic - EU27+2 average comparison

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