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

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 is **one main overarching policy framework** that addresses 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.

- National/regional policies and policy documents **explicitly recognise children's rights in the digital environment**.

	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:

- Act relating to the protection of minors against harmful audiovisual programmes (2015): This Act covers the protection of children relating to harmful audiovisual programmes, including television broadcasts and on-demand audiovisual services. The regulation does not cover video-sharing platforms or social media.

- Act relating to the control of marketing and contract terms and conditions (2009): This Act contains provisions to protect children in relation to marketing, commercial practices and contract terms and conditions in consumer relations.

- Various sections of the Penal Code prohibit possession and distribution of pictures of child sexual abuse, or depictions sexualising children, i.e. individuals who are or appear to be under 18. The Penal Code also prohibits the sharing of image, film or audio recording of an offensive or obviously private nature, for example of someone's sexual life or intimate body parts, someone who is subjected to violence or other humiliation, or someone who is themselves in a very vulnerable or exposed situation.

- Digital skills in the national curriculum: Digital skills is one of five fundamental skills in the national curriculum.

- **The National Strategy for a safe digital upbringing** (Rett på nett) (2021) establishes important principles for the authorities' further work for children and young people's digital lives and covers a broad range of topics, including online protection, privacy, digital competence and participation.

- **The National Strategy for a coordinated effort on the prevention of internet-related abuse against children** (2021) is part of the Government's broader efforts to promote safe digital childhood.

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.

- **There is a regular (e.g., annual or bi-annual) nationally representative survey** specifically focused on children's digital activity which informs national policies on this topic.

- **Systems are in place at the government level to gather information** on children and the digital environment (e.g., dedicated research units, think tanks or commissions).

- **Existing national research funding is available for research** on children and the digital environment but this is not explicitly specified.

- **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 Norwegian Media Authority collects data on children and young people's everyday media life every other year.

- Ungdata.no is an online survey that is conducted every three years in the vast majority of Norwegian municipalities. The survey is carried out in schools and includes pupils at secondary and upper secondary levels. The survey covers the following thematic areas: quality of life, friends, parents, school, local environment, future, media, organized leisure time, physical activity, health, drug use, rule breaking and violence and harassment.

- The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs has a long-term plan for research and evaluation. The Research Council of Norway has programs where you can apply for support for research. This includes programs about children and young people.

- In 2024 the Norwegian Media Authority granted funding for a research project about young people's lives on digital platforms.

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.

- There is **one central body (e.g., central ministry office, public agency, or regulatory authority) that is formally mandated to lead and develop policies, guidelines, and programmes** related to children and the digital environment, if necessary in consultation with other departments.

- A **clearly defined coordination function is in place**, involving all relevant stakeholders and encompasses the cross-cutting policy issues relating to children and the digital environment.

- **One or more programmes of action are underway** to support children's online safety and participation in the digital environment. However, these

lack accountability mechanisms such as defined timelines, assigned responsibilities, or key performance indicators (KPIs).

	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

The Ministry of Children and Families has the overall coordinating responsibility for the field of safe digital upbringing. The responsibility involves leading the work on ministry level, be the driving force behind policy development in the field and coordinate with the departments concerned.

The Norwegian Media Authority has the coordinating responsibility for safe digital upbringing at directorate level. An action plan is currently being drawn up to coordinate the work at directorate level, and a collaborative body between the directorates has been established to coordinate efforts on the field children and the digital environment.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement enquires how different stakeholders can participate in policy development. 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.

- **There is a designated multi-stakeholder forum in place** which facilitates the involvement of all relevant stakeholder groups.

- **Members of the public are regularly and routinely consulted** as part of the policy development process.

- **Children are actively involved in the design of policies related to their participation in the digital environment.** There are specially designed structures in place for this purpose.

- **Policy makers actively participate in various EU-level** and other international inter-governmental groups related to 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

The Norwegian Media Authority has a Safe Use network, where relevant actors in the field are invited to give input in connection with policy development.

Several White papers emphasise the Government's obligation to conduct child rights assessments when the authorities carry out new policies or make new laws. A part of this is conducting youth panels. Each ministry is responsible for initiating, establishing, selecting, attending and using youth panels. The Ministry of Children and Families has prepared guidance on how this can be done.

Most relevant public actors carry out youth panels, amongst others the 'Digiung' programme under the Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (digitisation of services for young people). The Norwegian Media Authority has also established a Youth Panel which have been involved with the work with the action plan for a safe digital upbringing.

BIK+ actions

Pillar 1 – safe digital experiences

Safe digital experiences refers 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 Ministry of Culture and Equality is currently working on new legislation to give effect to Art 28b Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) relating to the protection of minors on video-sharing platforms. The provision will be implemented into the Broadcasting Act. The measures deemed to be appropriate to protect minors on video-sharing platforms will likely be further specified in the regulations.

- The Digital Services Act (DSA) is considered relevant in the European Economic Area (EEA) and is currently under consideration in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries for incorporation into the EEA Agreement. As for now, four authorities are likely to be appointed status as competent authorities. A digital services coordinator has yet to be appointed.

Addressing harmful online content:

- The Act relating to the protection of minors against harmful audiovisual programmes has legal definitions of harmful and seriously harmful content in audiovisual programmes. However, there is no legal definition of harmful online content as such, for example related to harmful use, algorithms etc.

- The Act requires the service providers to classify audiovisual programmes in different age categories (All, 6, 9, 12,15 and 18). Classification shall be based on an assessment of whether the content of the audiovisual programme may be harmful to persons under the given age limit and have to be undertaken on the basis of guidelines adopted by the Norwegian Media Authority.

- There is no process in place for children to complain to an administrative body about harmful online content as such. However, the Police has a chat service where children and young people can talk safely and securely with the police about problematic things they experience online.

- The Norwegian Consumer Protection Authority has issues a guidance on advertising in social media.

Addressing harmful online conduct:

- National/regional laws, regulations or policies in place to protect children and young people from intimate image abuse are covered under the Penal Code which prohibits depictions sexualising children, i.e. individuals who are or appear to be under 18 (section 311). The Penal Code also prohibits the sharing of image, film or audio recording of an offensive or obviously private nature, for example of someone's sexual life or intimate body parts, someone who is subjected to violence or other humiliation, or someone who is themselves in a very vulnerable or exposed situation (section 267 a).

- Regarding cyberbullying, the Education Act states that all pupils are entitled to a good physical and psychosocial environment conducive to health, well-being and learning. The Act enshrines that the school must have a zero tolerance for violations such as bullying (including cyberbullying), violence, discrimination and harassment. It also imposes an obligation on people working at the school to act against violations such as bullying, violence, discrimination and harassment.

- All counties have established a so-called "Bullying Ombudsman". The ombudsman shall provide support and guidance to children, pupils and parents to contribute to safeguarding children and pupils' right to a good psychosocial environment in kindergarten and school.

Age verification and digital identity systems:

- The Act relating to the protection of minors against harmful audiovisual programmes requires service providers of audiovisual on-demand media services under Norwegian jurisdiction to ensure that minors will not normally

have access to audiovisual programmes or related material with seriously harmful content such as intimate portrayals of sexual activity (hardcore porn).

- The Ministry of Culture and Equality is currently working on new legislation to give effect to Art 28b AVMSD relating to the protection of minors on video-sharing platforms. The provisions will require that video-sharing providers take appropriate measures to protect minors against harmful and seriously harmful audiovisual content. Appropriate measures may include creating and operating systems for age verification with respect to content that may be harmful to minors.

- Norway has different digital identity systems for minors, which are used in different settings:

  - The municipalities issue Feide to primary school students. Feide is used to access school systems and learning materials.

  - Young people can order MinID from the year they turn 13. They use it when applying to upper secondary school and for a number of different public digital services, like applying for a° student loans or tax services. Healthcare services and welfare services are not available with MinID, as it is not considered secure enough.

  - Young people can be issued a BankID at age 13, 15, or 18. Most banks have a 13—or 15-year-old limit; a few banks operate with an 18-year-old limit. BankID can be used for all public sector services and is the de facto standard eID for access to private sector services.

	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:

- Digital skills is one of five fundemental skills in the national curriculum in addition to, amongst others, reading and writing. This includes developing digital judgement by acquiring knowledge and good strategies for Internet use. According to The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, exercising digital judgement means following privacy rules and showing consideration for others online. It is about using strategies to avoid undesirable incidents and demonstrating the ability to ethically reflect and assess one's own role online and in social media.

- The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has developed competence packages to assist teachers and school owners in how to best ensure online safety in schools. Competence packages from 2023 include Artificial intelligence in schools, Inclusion and universal design in digital practice, and Privacy in learning technologies for owners and managers.

- Dubestemmer.no is an online resource from The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training and the Norwegian Data Protection Authority with assignments, films and facts about privacy, digital judgement and source criticism. Content for ages 9 to 18.

- A strategy to increase the digital competence of teachers and school leaders is in place. There are new strategies from 2023 both for the teacher's professional digital competence and for digital competence and infrastructure in kindergartens and schools.

Informal education:
- Together with Kors på halsen (Red Cross) helpline, the Norwegian Media Authority is Norway's Safer Internet Center (NSIC). NSIC carries out a number of activities to support informal education about online safety, amongst others public awareness campaigns, such as on safer Internet Day, where we held a digital event aimed at parents and adults working with children about children and harmful online content.

- The Norwegian Media Authority/NSIC carries out a number of activities to support digital literacy skills among parents, adults who work with children and children and young people themselves. Examples include learning resources such as Hekta, a game-based teaching programme, where the goal is to increase secondary school students' awareness of their own time spent online, and Deepfakes, a learning resource about critical media thinking in secondary school and upper secondary school.

- Faktisk.no is an independent newsroom for fact- checking the social debate and the public discourse in Norway. It is a collaboration between six of the country's largest and competing media houses as a response to the spread of

disinformation and fake news in the public debate. Think works with source awareness and critical media use in several different ways and arenas, and develop teaching resources for use in primary and secondary schools.

Empowering through digital skills:

- A Stop hate speech (Stopphatprat), a youth movement against hate speech, is in place which amongst others recruit youth ambassadors to speak about how to combat hate speech. The movement receives funding from amongst others the Ministry of Culture through the State budget.

	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:

- The Norwegian Constitution and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (incorporated into Norwegian law through the Human Rights Act) establish

children's right to be heard in all matters that concern them. This also applies on a systemic level.

- Many important public actors carry out youth panels when working with issues related to children and the digital environment. For example, a youth panel was involved in all aspects related to the new action plan on a safe digital upbringing, which will be launched this year. The youth panel handed over their demands for a safe digital upbringing to the minister of children and families in 2023.

- The Ombudsperson for Children is an advocate for children and young people's rights, including their rights in the digital environment.

Inclusivity:

- Each ministry is itself responsible for initiating, establishing, selecting attending and using youth panels. The government has issued guidance as to how youth panels should be put together. It is stated that the youth panels should have a good gender balance and be broadly composed and diverse. It is an advantage if the participants have different social, ethnic, religious and geographical backgrounds.

- There is no government system for publishing child-friendly versions of documents relevant to the safe digital upbringing area. However, some white papers have published child-friendly versions of their recent reports, including the Freedom of Expression Commission's investigation NOU 2022:9 and The Children's Law Committee's report on the new Children's Act (NOU 2020: 14).

Digital creativity:

- The public broadcaster NRK offers a wide range of productions aimed at children and young people, including learning programmes, campaigns and news for children.

- There are public support schemes for content production and development aimed at children and young people. Content for children and young people is a prioritised area for both the Norwegian Film Institute and the Arts Council.

- "Lær Kidsa Koding" is a voluntary network that works for children and young
  people to learn to understand and master their own role in the digital society
  and focuses on helping children become creators with technology as a tool.

	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

Additional information

The Ministry of Children and Families is currently working on a White Paper on safe
digital upbringing for children and young people in collaboration with five other
ministries. The White paper includes both opportunities and challenges in the digital
lives of children and young people and will be presented in 2024.

The Ministry of Children and Families is also working on the follow-up of the white
paper NOU 2020: 14 New Children's Act, where the committee proposed a separate
provision on children's right to privacy. The proposal has been subject to
consultation, and the ministry is now considering how to follow up on the
committee's proposal. The aim is to submit proposals for a new Children's Act in the
spring of 2025.

As a follow-up to the computer game strategy, there will be established a competence centre for computer games. The Norwegian Film Institute will lead the work together with the Norwegian Media Authority and Kulturtanken.

The Norwegian government's action plan against problem gaming and gambling strives to make the video game arena safer and more inclusive for everyone, to avoid isolation and solitude among children and youth. Initiatives include providing funds for research projects about gaming, making available information about children, youth and gaming for parents and adults working with children, and producing teaching plans about gaming, in addition to campaign projects.

Best practices

Example 1

Ung.no is the government's information channel for young people. It offers information and guidance to young people through a website with public information and an inquiry service where young people can ask questions. The aim is that young people do not have to deal with each individual sector in the administration. The target group is young people aged 13–20. Ung.no is run by the Directorate for Children, Youth and Families (Bufdir) and collaborates with many other public services.

Example 2

The Norwegian Directorate of Health is currently working on a project which will be distributed through Ung. no. The project aims to deliver an easily accessible information and guidance service both for young people who want to explore sexual topics in a safe arena and also for young people who are worried about their own sexual thoughts and actions. The service aims to prevent problematic and harmful sexual behaviour by providing good information.

Example 3

The learning resource Hekta (Hooked) is a code chamber about your digital everyday life. This game-based learning resource aims to increase secondary school students' awareness of their own time spent online.

BIK+ index 2024: Norway

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 Norway compared to the EU27+2 average. Values are shown in per cent.
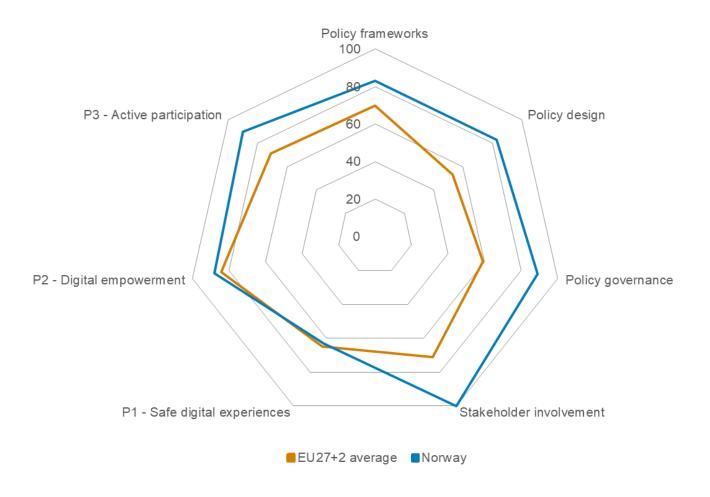

Figure 1: BIK+ index 2024: Norway - EU27+2 average comparison

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