

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

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**.
- It is **covered by broader policies rather than separate dedicated policies** that address protection, empowerment, and participation of children and the digital environment.
- The 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:**

- Child safety in the digital environment is one of the priority areas of the Slovenian [Programme for Children 2020– 2025](#). The document is based on the recommendations contained in the Council of Europe strategy for the Rights of the Child 2016–2021 and considers the needs and quality of the lives of children in Slovenia. This document also addresses media and digital literacy, which enable children to understand and follow authentic information. Slovenia translated Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil children’s rights in the digital environment.
- [DIGITAL SLOVENIA 2030 Strategy](#) is the overarching strategy for the digital transformation of the country by 2030 and is the response of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia to the development challenges of digitalisation.
- [The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027 \(ANDI\)](#) sets out a vision of digital education in Slovenia as an established education and training system that prepares an individual for high-quality life in a digital and green society comparable to the most successful countries.
- [The Programme for Children 2020–2025](#) aims to improve children’s well-being and create equal opportunities and more inclusive early childhood education and care (ECEC) and school education.

- **General Act on the Protection of Children in Audiovisual Media Services** This General Act defines programming content that could cause grievous harm to the physical, mental, or moral development of children or minors.
- **The Promotion of Digital Inclusion Act (2022)** implements the key measures of the Strategic Council for Digitisation. According to the Government, the bill will be the first comprehensive law that regulates the field of acquiring digital skills and knowledge, fulfilling the goal set by the Digital Compass for 80% of adults to have at least basic digital skills by 2030.

### 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.

- **Surveys of children’s digital activities are undertaken but only irregularly.**
- **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:**

- Implementing the Child Participation Assessment Tool carried out by the Institute of Social Welfare of the Republic of Slovenia (IRSSV)
- Safe.si SID 2024 survey: Online peer violence among teenagers
- Safe.si SID 2023 survey: The impact of online pornography on teenagers
- Safe.si SID 2022 survey: The impact of the Internet on the well-being and mental well-being of teenagers
- Young people, privacy and trust in Slovenia (2022), conducted by conducted by Zavod Vsak, the Digital Education Initiative.
- Digital life of children during the corona crisis (KiDiCoTi), Safe.si (2020)
- The Education Research Institute carried out the ICILS 2023 research among the seventh-grade children of the primary school; the results of the ICILS 2023 research will guide policy development and further research. This international study measures international differences in students' computer and information literacy (CIL).
- The Strategic Council for the Prevention of Hate Speech, established in 2023, monitors and proposes activities to prevent hate speech, evaluates ministries' performance, advises on policies and regulatory changes, coordinates working groups, and assesses the effectiveness of relevant authorities.

**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.

- The **lead ministry, public agency or regulatory authority is an informal arrangement** depending on the requirements at a particular point in time.
- **Coordination happens more informally** across the different departments and entities which contribute to government policies, guidelines and programmes relating to children and the digital environment.

- **There is a defined national action plan for children and the digital environment** with accountabilities 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

For coordination of digital education, the Digital Education Service at the [Ministry of Education](#) was established in 2021. The Digital Education Service closely participates with various stakeholders (public and private as well as non-profit institutions) and is responsible for implementing the ANDI ([The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027](#)).

With the establishment of the [Ministry of Digital Transformation](#) in 2023, digital transformation in the country and society has gained greater political priority. It acts as the national coordinator for digitalisation and strongly cooperates with other ministries on digitalisation.

The main coordinating body in the field of children and families is the [Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities](#) (the ministry responsible for family affairs). Based on the [SI Family Code](#), adopted in 2017, also the new Council for Children and Families was established in 2023.

### 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.

- **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 regularly and routinely consulted** as part of the policy development process.
- **Children are actively involved in designing policies related to their participation in the digital environment**, and specially designed structures are in place for this purpose.
- **Politic 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 new **Strategic Council for Preventing Hate Speech**, established in 2023 at the Prime Minister’s office, is designed to work also as a forum for multi-stakeholder involvement and for contribution to policy development.

In 2017, the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Children and the Family was established. It is a permanent consultative body of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, whose members are representatives of non-governmental Organisations and professional institutions in the field of children and families and representatives of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. In 2021, the Council paid special attention to children in the digital environment.

## 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:*

- In line with [Audiovisual Media Services Directive \(AVMSD\)](#) provisions, the Slovenian AVMS Act (Art. 38b) regulates the protection of minors from programs, user-generated videos and audiovisual commercial communications which may impair their physical, mental or moral development on VSPs.
- Codes of practice/codes of conduct for digital service providers at the country level regarding children's online safety, e.g., related to Art28b AVMSD, are in development.
- Legislation for implementing the [Digital Services Act \(DSA\)](#) is in development. The [Agency for Communication Networks and Services of the Republic of Slovenia \(AKOS\)](#) is designated as the competent authority (DSC) to monitor enforcement for Slovenia.

#### *Addressing harmful online content:*

- Harmful online content is covered by different national laws implementing relevant EU legislation (General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Media and Audiovisual legislation, Criminal Directives and Regulations, etc.) For example, the National Criminal Code does not provide an exact definition of harmful online content, but it covers different criminal offences, including sexual abuse of children (also for online offences; Art. 143 (personal data), Art. 173. (sexual assault on a person younger than fifteen years of age), Art. 173a (solicitation of persons under fifteen years of age for sexual purposes).

- Slovenian Media and AVMS legislation do not currently define harmful online content. The general act on the protection of children in AVMS is used only for AVMS and defines content which may impair the development of different age groups of children.
- The SI Information Commissioner has published awareness-raising materials and guidelines on advertising and privacy: '[An informed consumer – who is allowed to process my personal data and why?](#)'

### ***Addressing harmful online conduct:***

- The Slovenian Police actively cooperates with the [Spletno oko](#) hotline. Cooperation. The hotline notifies the police of detected incidents reported by individuals to the Spletno oko reporting facility. Incidents can relate to an individual (victim) or to websites that show sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of children.
- Non-consensual sharing of intimate images is covered under the framework of sexual offences and criminal legislation.
- The inclusion of cyber security topics, including cyberbullying, online hate speech, etc., in primary and secondary school curricula is one of the goals of the Cyber Security Strategy (introduced in 2016) and even more for the new Cyber Security Strategy, planned to be adopted in 2024.

### ***Age verification and digital identity systems:***

- Activities regarding age verification mechanisms to restrict minors from accessing adult online content services are currently in development.
- According to national legislation, [AKOS](#) has the full power to monitor and sanction compliance with legal provisions on the protection of minors accessible via on-demand AVMS (Programs that could seriously impair the physical, mental or moral development of children and minors may only be accessible via on-demand AVMS and have to be limited by technical protection in a manner that ensures that children and minors will normally not be able to hear or see them).



- Digital identity systems available to minors are in place. The special 'digital identity' for participants in education is already enabled and its further implementation is under development. The digital identity is assigned by **Arnes** (username and email address) also for pupils who, for example, enter online classrooms or use other digital services at school.

	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:

- The teaching of online safety has been incorporated into the national/regional school curriculum. Within the framework of the National Recovery and Resilience Plan of the Republic of Slovenia (NRRP), further curriculum reform

is underway by the National Education Institute and the Centre for Vocational Education and Training.

- In Slovenia, there is no national/regional strategy to support online safety policies in schools, especially on expected behaviour, smartphone use, dealing with cyberbullying incidents, and the like. However, this issue is addressed in [The Digital Education Action Plan 2021-2027](#) (ANDI).
- A Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) dedicated to [online safety](#) has been offered by ARNES since 2015; more than 15,000 teachers and other professionals have already participated. The courses (MOOCs) "My Digital Identity" and "Safe Use of the Internet and Devices" are also implemented in the ongoing project "Digitally Competent Teacher."

### ***Informal education:***

- Activities to reinforce informal education (i.e., lifelong learning opportunities outside the formal education system) about online safety are in place. The [Action Plan of the Digital Public Services Strategy 2030](#) contributes to digitisation and will have the greatest impact, along with the broader ecosystem of related stakeholders.

### ***Empowering through digital skills:***

- Activities to develop and promote peer-to-peer training and support programmes in online safety are in place.
- In 2023, the Ministry of Education launched four experimental projects (as part of NRRP; 2023-2026) for comprehensive enhancement and assessment of digital competences and fundamental computer science and informatics topics.
- The Digitally Competent Teacher project (2023-2026; already launched) is planned within a learning community at the national level in Slovenia, as well as learning communities at most educational institutions in Slovenia by 2026 for mutual (peer-to-peer) training and reflective activities.

- External stakeholders (e.g., Galerija Kapelica, Zavod 404, and national/international companies, especially in the EdTech sector) are also active in enhancing digital competencies and skills in team problem-solving.
- The [Awareness Centre Safe.si](#) has developed various educational resources aimed at helping teachers, parents and careers, children and young people to discover the online world safely, including a focus on media literacy.
- As part of the [Action Plan for Digital Education](#), activities for the development of media literacy on digital platforms are envisaged, primarily from the perspective of enhancing digital competencies, critical thinking, etc.
- The website for the promotion of media and information literacy – [MiPi](#) created in 2023 by [AKOS](#) - plays a key role in enhancing media and information literacy and positioning itself as one of the pioneering European National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) in this domain.
- In 2023, the [Strategic Council for Preventing Hate Speech](#) was established and plays a key role in fostering digital civil courage. The Strategic Council actively considers Recommendation 11, focusing on how public support measures and private sector initiatives contribute to the realisation of key digital rights and principles, with a specific emphasis on creating a protected, safe, and secure digital environment.

	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:

- Youth participation is strongly promoted through the [Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth \(URSM\)](#) and the [Ombudsman of the Republic of Slovenia](#). The National Children’s Parliaments are a programme, led by the NGO Slovenian Association of Friends of Youth.
- Youth participation is promoted through URSM, and young are involved in the public consideration of the different governmental legislative proposals etc.. Young people are systematically consulted and informed through [URSM web page](#), introduced for the central youth information and communication in Slovenia.
- Two children from the Network for Children's Rights are also proposed as members of the Council of the Republic of Slovenia for Children and Family.

## Inclusivity:

- Various EU documents and regulations and guidelines from UNESCO, OECD, and the Council of Europe are relevant in SI and reflected in national policies or policy documents. For example, the Digital Slovenia 2030 strategy recognises the importance of the 'accessibility of user interfaces' and the importance of the 'terms of use of services for children'.

## Digital creativity:

- Within curricula and projects, the Ministry of Education promotes and encourages young people to use positive content and applications. For example, in 2023, the ministry upgraded 41 e-textbooks and developed more than 15 interactive e-learning materials.
- The project [Casoris](#) is an award-winning free online newspaper for children. It offers news children can trust – timely, relevant articles on current affairs. Information is put in context and presented in child-friendly language.
- In collaboration with other ministries, schools, and organisations, the [Ministry of Digital Transformation](#) carried out several activities in 2023 aimed at encouraging children to create, think critically, and solve challenges using new technologies while also highlighting the pitfalls of technology

	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

## BIK+ index 2024: Slovenia

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

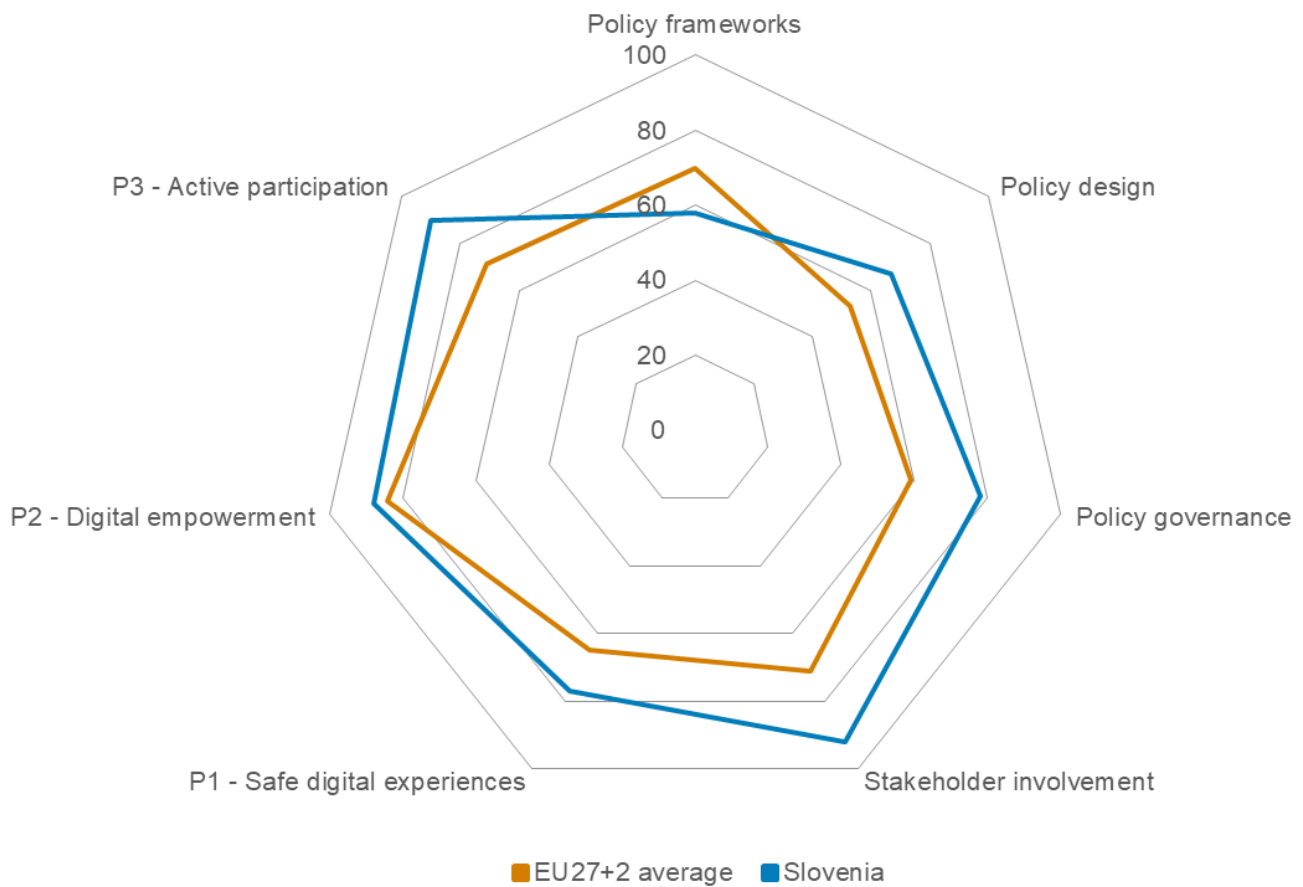


Figure 1: BIK+ index 2024: Slovenia - EU27+2 average comparison

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