Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy monitor country profile 2025: LATVIA

The BIK Policy monitor country profiles summarise findings about the implementation of the BIK+ strategy's three pillars (protection, empowerment, participation) across each of the EU's Member States as well as Iceland and Norway. Download the full BIK Policy monitor report 2025 from the BIK Policy monitor on the new BIK Knowledge hub and access the Latvian country profile online on the BIK Knowledge hub.

Introduction

The Latvian Safer Internet Centre (SIC) is operated by three organisations — the Latvian Internet Association, the Child Protection Centre and the Latvian Local Government Training Centre — with the common goal of ensuring that the Internet is a better and safer environment for children and young people.

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 that address children and the digital environment** (protection, empowerment, and participation).

- **The BIK+ strategy is an important influence on policy development on children and the digital environment** (i.e., it informs and guides national policies even if they do not directly refer to BIK+).

- **Children's rights in the digital environment are implied rather than explicitly recognised in** policies regarding children and the digital environment.

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
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 topic is covered in a range of national laws, regulations and policies, including the Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027 development areas 'Digital skills and education' and 'Digital security and trust' and includes the task "Ensure the public's awareness and education on child safety online, provide the opportunity for everyone to consult on violation situations and receive advice on more effective problem- solving, and develop materials (including educational materials for schools) on online safety and improving digital literacy".

- Latvia's Child Protection Centre closely collaborates with the SIC. The Child Protection Centre organises creative workshops, visits educational institutions, and shares up-to-date information annually. Additionally, discussions are held, such as 'Smart Devices in the Crib—Childhood in the Digital Age', which addresses children and the use of smart devices.

- To promote its helpline and essential questions about online safety, the Latvian Child Helpline organised a call for children and adolescents to become Trusted Phone Ambassadors and to inspire and encourage other children and teenagers for encouraging children and teenagers to seek advice and support in online safety.

- Active specialist education, policy adaptation, and implementation of the Digital Services Act (DSA) is provided by Latvia's Consumer Rights Protection Centre.

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.

- **Currently, there is no research at the country level on children's experiences** of risks, online harms and their well-being in relation to the digital environment

- **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.

- **There is currently no funding available for research** on children and the digital environment.

- **Policies undergo systematic and regular monitoring and evaluation** to assess the effectiveness of actions in different contexts (e.g., to take account of new technologies or emergent risks).

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Regular data collection			X	
Data on risks, harms and digital well-being				X
Information systems		X		
National research fund				X
Monitoring and evaluation	X			

Table 2: Topic summary - policy design

- The Ministry of Health has conducted surveys on cyberbullying, while the Ministry of Culture has researched media literacy among young people. However, statistical data is not collected systematically.

- Policies relating to children and the digital environment are evaluated in the framework of a broader assessment of a broader assessment of respective policy branches, such as regular evaluation of the implementation of national policy planning documents (e.g. children and family policy guidelines; policy guidelines on digital transformation). The responsible ministries are obliged to develop a report to the cabinet on the implementation of the respective policy planning document.

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 no specific leadership in policy development** on this topic.

- **Coordination happens more informally across the different departments and entities** that contribute to government policies, guidelines and programmes relating to children and the digital environment.

- **There is a defined national action plan on children and the digital environment** with accountabilities such as defined timelines, assigned responsibilities or key performance indicators (KPIs).

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Lead ministry for policy development				**X**
National coordination body		**X**		
National action plan or strategy	**X**			

Table 3: Topic summary - policy governance

- There is no national coordination body or agency. However, in the framework of the EU co-funded project a Safer Internet Centre has been set up that serves as a centre of expertise on children and the digital environment.

- The Digital Transformation Guidelines for 2021-2027 serve as a key national action plan in this area. The Guidelines outline Latvia's strategic framework for advancing digital development across various sectors. Adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers on July 7, 2021, this policy document aims to foster a modern, inclusive, and digitally empowered society and economy. Improving digital literacy among citizens, training educators and public sector employees, and providing advanced digital education tailored to specific industries such as healthcare, research, and public administration are among its key aims.

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 for BIK topics.

- **Children's interests are considered indirectly** (e.g., through analysis of existing surveys or data collections).

	High	Medium	Low	Not present
Stakeholder forum	X			
Consulting the public on BIK topics	X			
Involvement of young people			X	

Table 4: Topic summary - Stakeholder involvement

- A platform for discussions between policy makers and society, established by the Ministry of Welfare, Council for Cooperation on Matters Concerning Children, has been established.

- The Safer Internet Centre has established a youth consultative group. Different types of child and youth participation measures are used including at the local level, especially in the school system. The Youth Council of the Latvian Safer Internet Centre has been active since May 2009 and plays a key role in reaching children and youth audiences, preparing informational materials, and planning our activities in Latvia. The Youth Council meets once a month, either in person or remotely. It consists of 13 active and enthusiastic young people aged 14 to 19 from various regions of Latvia.

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.

Implementing EU laws

- Amendments to the Information Society Services Law came into force in June 2024, implementing the Digital Services Act (DSA) requirements into Latvian regulations. The Consumer Rights Protection Centre (PTAC) is designated as the Digital Services Coordinator in Latvia, tasked with performing all the functions designated to competent authorities under the DSA, including monitoring how intermediary service providers comply with the obligations set out in the DSA.

- With the amendments to the law, PTAC is granted the powers necessary to enforce and monitor compliance with the Digital Services Act.

Harmful online content

- There is no specific definition of harmful content included in national laws. However, there are some specific regulations in criminal law regarding offenses against children, such as violation of rules regarding pornographic performance and the circulation of pornographic material.

- This is also a question of the competence of the Ministry of Economy regarding Latvia's legislation implementing the EU's Digital Services Act and Digital Markets Act.

Harmful online conduct

- National laws and policies to protect children from cyberbullying are addressed under the legal regulations of emotional violence: emotional violence — harming the child's self-esteem or psychological influence (threatening him, cursing, humiliating him, violently treating his loved one in the presence of the child or otherwise harming his emotional development). Furthermore, the Law on the Protection of the Children's Rights (1998) prohibits violence against children.

- Laws to protect children from intimate image abuse include criminal law provisions for offenses against children regarding sexual integrity, violation of the rules of showing a pornographic performance, restricting entertainment of an intimate nature and circulation of pornographic material.

Age verification

- The Section 11 of the Latvian national regulation 'Regulations on Identity Documents' states that from the age of 14, eID cards include digital signature and identification certificates, allowing individuals from the age of 14 to sign and identify themselves electronically using the eID card. In accordance with this regulation and its specified age threshold, Latvia also plans to issue the European Digital Identity wallet to individuals aged 14 and above.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Codes of practice			X	
DSC implemented	X			
Definition of harmful content	X			
Bodies can order content removal			X	
Children's complaints mechanism	X			
Intimate image abuse laws	X			
Cyberbullying laws			X	
Age verification requirements			X	
Digital identity systems (EUDI)	X			
Consumer codes of practice				X
Mental health measures	X			
Addressing unfair commercial practices	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 for online safety education

- The Latvian Safer Internet Centre and Child Protection Centre provide a range of teaching and education regarding online safety, including teacher training. However, online safety itself is not incorporated into any national school curricula or initiatives.

- State Police officers visit schools and provide informative and educational lectures about safety, including online safety.

Empowering through digital skills:

- In Latvia, measures to support digital skills development and media literacy among children, as well as initiatives to combat hate speech, are currently being developed. In doing so, the Latvian Safer Internet Centre and the Child Protection Centre collaborate with non-governmental centres such as "DARDEDZE".

- There are further initiatives, including Riga TechGirls, Start IT, and AUGT foundation. The AUGT digital skills workshop programme for teachers provides both theoretical and practical knowledge about digital skills and tools used in everyday life.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Teaching online safety	X			
Online safety policies in schools			X	
Informal education about online safety	X			
Adequate teacher training	X			
Basic digital skills training			X	
Critical media literacy	X			
Creative digital skills			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

- To draw attention to the online risks faced by young people, such as cyberbullying, grooming, illegal content, manipulation, sexting and other issues, several advertisements resembling short stories or real-life situations depicting the challenges faced by young people were broadcast on national TV with the help of national media from December 14, 2023, to December 31, 2023.

- The "Let's Play" conference took place in a hybrid format on 11th May 2023, and the main idea was to highlight the positive aspects and benefits of computer games. Games have taken on a new form and essence, moving from the physical to the virtual realm, carrying both the opportunity to develop various skills and risks. Therefore, it was crucial to discuss and analyse this vital component of children's and youth's lives, finding both rational and beneficial aspects in it. Participants were senior students and educators from educational institutions.

Supporting children's rights

- The Law on the Protection of Children's Rights prohibits violence against children.

Digital inclusion

- According to the Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021-2027, the areas of 'Digital skills and education' and 'Digital security and trust' includes the action '4.2.4. Protection of the users of internet against harmful content' envisaging that every person in Latvia's digital space (including, for example, persons with disabilities) can access secure digital services and reliable digital media without any discrimination, as well as participate, express themselves, search for information, and exercise all of their rights in the digital environment.

	In place	In development	Other activity	Not in place
Promoting active participation and civic engagement			X	
Involvement in policymaking			X	
Awareness raising on children's rights	X			
Child-friendly versions of policy documents				X
Addressing digital inequalities				X
Supports for marginalised groups			X	
Positive digital content				X

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

Best practices

Example 1: Latvian Safer Internet Centre

The work of Latvian Safer Internet Centre (SIC) is coordinated by Latvian Internet Association with partners The Child Protection Centre and The Local Government Training Centre. The Latvian SIC promotes a safer and better internet and mobile technologies use among children and young people. It develops informative and educational activities, organizes awareness activities and ensures the work of the helpline and hotline.

Examples 2: Skills initiatives

Initiative of Riga TechGirls, Start IT and AUGT foundation: The programme 'Humanely about Technology' for teachers provides teachers with training in digital tools – both to prepare lessons more effectively and to use them meaningfully in their work with students in the classroom, thus inspiring students to become more digitally literate. The programme, developed in collaboration with Riga TechGirls and the IT Education Foundation, provides both theoretical and practical knowledge about digital skills and tools used in everyday life.

BIK+ index 2025: Latvia

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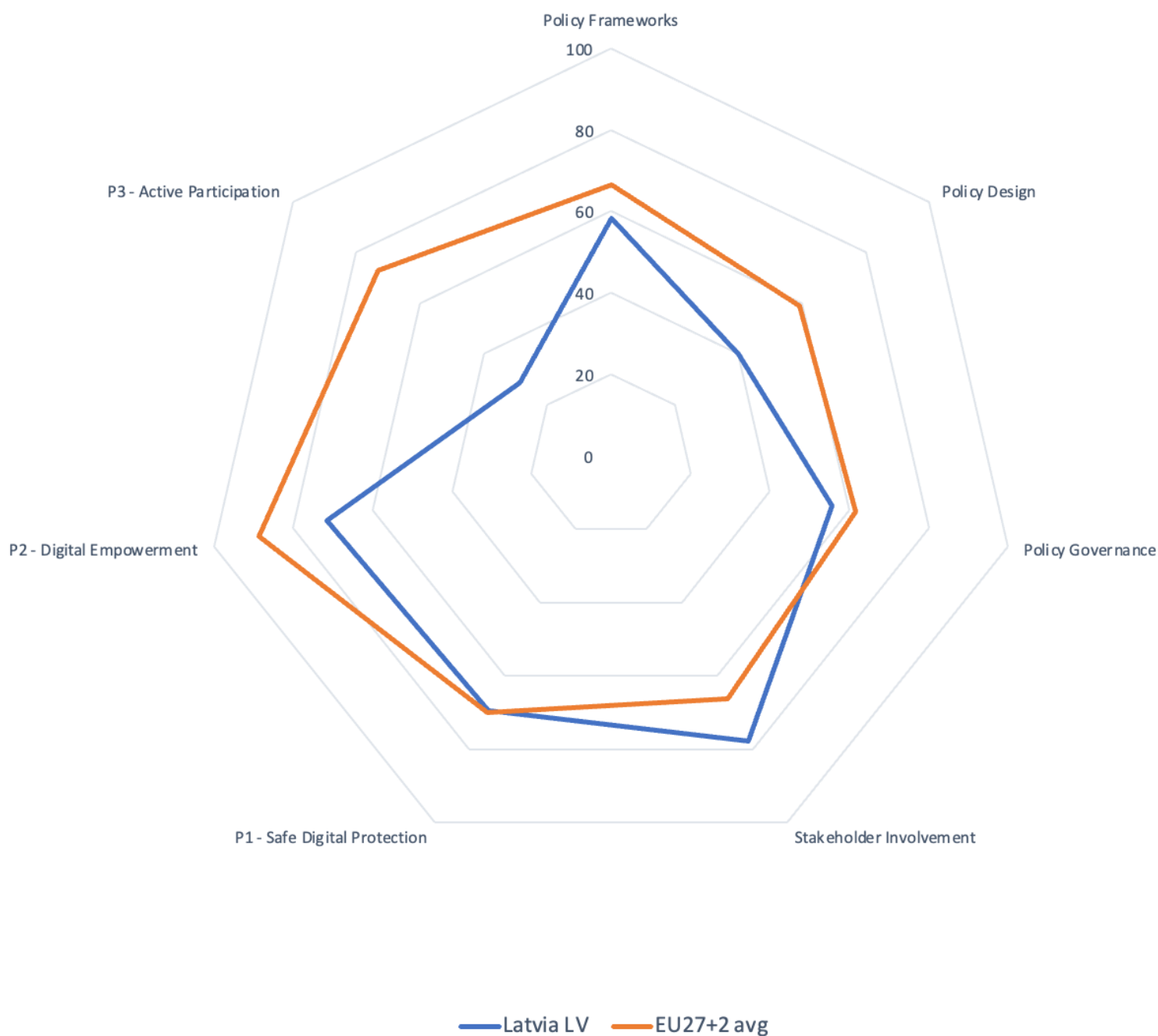

Figure 1: BIK+ index 2025: Latvia - EU27+2 average comparison

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