

## Awareness early warning meeting 24<sup>th</sup> June 2026

1. Sara Brojka	Albania
2. Tea Čičić	Croatia
3. Libor Manda	Czechia
4. Ella Airola	Finland
5. Frieda Groschup	Germany
6. Elfa Dögg S. Leifsdóttir	Iceland
7. Jane McGarrigle	Ireland
8. Debbie Plein	Luxembourg
9. Kelly Busuttil	Malta
10. Davinia Marie Muscat	Malta
11. Anne Everloo	The Netherlands
12. Simona Levi	North Macedonia
13. Lotte Wevelstad	Norway
14. Marián Hamada	Slovakia
15. Renáta Michrinová	Slovakia
16. Elias Carlberg	Sweden
17. Charlie Benson	UK
18. Dillan Fangoo	European Commission
19. Eleanor Linsell	European Commission
20. Karl Hopwood	Insafe/EUN

### Apologies

1. Julia Piechna	Poland
2. Marko Puschner	Slovenia

A recording of the meeting can be found here <https://youtu.be/-j7xEjLe1iw>

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 1100 CEST. You can use this link to join the meeting and please feel free to post any updates to the chat in between meetings. [Awareness centres early warning meeting | Meeting-Join | Microsoft Teams](#)

Albania	The SIC is receiving reports of CSAM on Telegram. Many of these do not originate in Albania and so are being forwarded to respective hotlines. Telegram is not responding and the Insafe coordinator has also been reaching out to them for support. A new awareness campaign to help children in the digital world has been launched.
Croatia	There has been an increase in gossip profiles on social media platforms. These tend to start when the summer holidays begin. The SIC has concluded an elective course on digital literacy and is now waiting for evaluation results.
Czechia	There is a plan to introduce a nationwide restriction on phone use in schools during lessons and breaktimes from September 2027. This has been submitted to parliament as a government backed proposal. Before this, schools were able to decide their own policy.

	<p>Social media restrictions have gained more attention from the Prime Minister. The SIC was involved in a round table with the government. The PM supports the phone restrictions but is open to expert and public opinion and views on the social media ban for under 16s. Academics and online safety experts oppose a ban for under 16s and want stronger platform enforcement. There is greater support for education and awareness.</p> <p>The SIC raised the issue of DSA implementation as this has not been introduced in CZ yet and so CZ is in breach. The SIC believes that the DSA is very important for effective enforcement. The DSC also participated in this roundtable.</p> <p>The SIC sent a letter to the PM about the importance of funding for prevention and support services and this was also raised with Commissioner Micallef last year. The helpline notes that there is increasing contact with strangers which quickly moves to end to end encrypted platforms.</p> <p>The hotline reports that the highest number of reports they are handling concern CSAM, fraudulent e-shops and pornographic content.</p> <p>Recent research findings on sexting and social media algorithms.</p> <p>93% of 13–17-year-olds understood that social networks personalise content based on previous activities.</p> <p>47% only skim terms and conditions.</p> <p>53% were aware that the creation of sexual images of under 18s is illegal.</p> <p>38% of girls regularly talk to an AI chatbot.</p> <p>14% find it easier to confide in AI than with another person.</p> <p>51% use some form of e-health application.</p>
Finland	<p>The Ministry of Education and Culture alongside the Finnish Arts and Culture agency (SIC) has published <a href="#">national policy guidelines</a> on media literacy and education with three main objectives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To strengthen agency</li> <li>2. To develop competence</li> <li>3. To promote sustainability</li> </ol> <p>A total of 21 measures are proposed. The original guidelines were published in 2019 and the update responds to a rapidly changing media environment. The SIC will prepare an implementation plan in the autumn.</p>
Germany	<p>Research conducted by the Berlin Senate found that there was increasing amounts of violence in schools since the pandemic and this includes bullying and cyberbullying. The research was carried out with 14000 pupils and 2500 teachers. An action plan is needed.</p> <p>Research into antisemitic incidents shows the occurrence is high with around 8725 cases in 2025. There is concern around the rise of far-right rhetoric.</p> <p>An expert commission from the German government has presented <a href="#">recommendations on the protection of children and young people online</a>. The two main political parties have already announced their positions on the topics even before the recommendations were published. One approach to bring in a social media ban for under 14s with special versions for 14–16-year-olds which would ban features that are harmful. The other position is no ban and this would depend on the specific app or platform.</p>
Ireland	<p>The SIC is hearing more about the Com network. There appears to be a cluster of activity in the SW of the country. A social care agency issued information for youth groups in that area. The SIC is doing an awareness raising webinar which will be invite only or social workers and youth groups. This will share information about the Com and how people are targeted.</p>

	<p>There are increasing numbers of incidents where AI images are being generated of pupils and teachers in schools. The SIC is considering the images that are used on the website and changes are being made to photo-sharing policies. Images are used that cannot be manipulated. A <a href="#">recent announcement</a> about this in the UK created a lot of debate in Ireland.</p> <p>With regards to social media bans, Ireland is keen to follow the EU approach and will not do anything on their own. The EU presidency starts on 1<sup>st</sup> July and there will be a focus on online safety with various events planned including a youth forum that the SIC facilitated.</p> <p><a href="#">Research has been published by Galway University</a> about the impact of social media. It suggests that the impact on teens is not significant with only small links between social media use and negative mental health outcomes. This is higher for girls than boys. There are higher levels of anger from boys along with alcohol and vaping problems – but again the links are very modest.</p> <p>Recommendations for policy suggest focusing on a broader range of factors than just social media as the primary cause of harm.</p> <p>The <a href="#">hotline annual report</a> has been published and shows a 325% increase in CSAM reports and intimate image abuse.</p>
Luxembourg	<p>The SIC is closely watching what happens with smart glasses- e.g. Meta Raybans – could this be the next tech trend? These have AI built in and can be used to identify others etc.</p> <p>A campaign in November will focus on doomscrolling and will support young people as well as the elderly. There are considerations around harmful content and screentime.</p> <p>A national action plan on violence in schools has been published. There is a dedicated section on cyberbullying that the SIC contributed to alongside CPAS, the national institution in charge of psychology in schools.</p> <p>AI swarms are a concern and there are implications for children and young people. This is different from botnets and further information can be found <a href="#">here</a> and <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>The SIC has launched three surveys – one with 12–17-year-olds, one with parents of 3–17-year-olds and one for 18–30-year-olds. The data is expected in August/September and the results will be published on SID. The questions include a section on awareness of the DSA as well as views on AI and social media restrictions.</p> <p>An <a href="#">AI compass</a> strategy has been launched.</p>
Malta	<p>The helpline has been working closely with the terrorist police department. They have to be notified as soon as any children and young people contact the helpline to speak about 764 or the Com as this is deemed to be related to terrorism. The police have said that the content they are dealing with is worse than any of the ISIS content that they have come across. It appears that Com groups are congregating online and becoming more organised. They are helping each other and the mission is to create chaos in the world.</p> <p>Klown and Klown is King have been mentioned. The police are planning to provide training for both the SIC and for teachers and the situation is being taken very seriously.</p> <p>In one case a 15-year-old boy was jailed and kept in solitary confinement for 22 days. It is thought that he was involved in the Com network.</p> <p>As discussed at the recent meeting with Thorn, it is difficult to determine whether this needs a law enforcement response or a safeguarding response. A child who is a perpetrator is also a victim.</p>

	A lot of content is normalising extreme violence, there are accounts on X which document ways of how to die. This de-sensitises young people.
The Netherlands	<p>A social media ban is being discussed at government level but the preference is to follow what the EU will do.</p> <p>In 2025 the ministry of health, welfare and sport published <a href="#">guidelines</a> on healthy screen time which included smartphones and social media. The challenge is how to put these into practice. <a href="#">Richtlijn gezond schermgebruik</a></p> <p>One approach is to encourage parents to use an app which provides them with control over their child's device. (<a href="#">Startphone</a>)The child can start with a basic phone to call and message but parents can unlock features as the child gets older. This is only available on Android at the moment as Apple has refused to put this into the app store.</p> <p>There are concerns around TikTok shops and the financial vulnerability of children and young people. The SIC is monitoring this.</p>
North Macedonia	<p>A declaration has been signed on the intent for the prevention of youth violence. A lot of government ministries have been involved in this and support it. The idea is to create safe school environments and promote non-violent communication. The SIC continues to deliver workshops to children and young people in schools to explain how they can use the internet safely and how to prevent online violence.</p> <p>There has been an increase in calls to the helpline. There were 284 contacts in 2025 but already 167 this year.</p>
Norway	<p>As part of the data donation project the SIC has gathered some new data on TikTok and discovered a new format. This is true crime storytelling. Someone talks with a plain background meaning that there is no dramatic image but they talk about very disturbing content which is much more difficult for a user or the platform to detect. Some of the content is very detailed and often focuses on violence, abuse, rape or death. Given the fact that many young people wear headphones when they are scrolling this can be difficult for parents to detect too.</p>
Poland	<p>For some time now, the SIC has been observing a new form of cyberbullying in which children and young people are "put up for sale" by their peers.</p> <p>Advertisements such as "friend for sale" have appeared on online marketplaces, including Vinted. These listings contain photos of teenagers accompanied by hurtful descriptions and a specific price. The degrading language often targets their appearance or their membership in a minority group based on sexual orientation. Photos of identifiable teenagers are published, accompanied by offensive and dehumanizing descriptions and hateful language, including insults related to appearance or sexual orientation. Assigning a "price" to an individual further objectifies and dehumanizes them.</p>
Slovakia	<p>A legislation process has started to ban social media from under 16s. The SIC is not in favour of this approach and it is viewed as a way to satisfy the public who are keen on a ban. The SIC has tried to include a transitional provision which would allow those with existing accounts to keep them. The key is raising awareness with various stakeholder groups.</p>
Slovenia	<p>There have been increasing numbers of Com network incidents involving teenagers. The police are involved in all of these.</p>
Sweden	<p>The government has proposed a minimum age of 15 for social media. This means that young people will be able to access social media in the year that they turn 15 so don't necessarily need to wait until their 15<sup>th</sup> birthday. The aim is to protect health and safety in digital environments. Under 15s won't be able to use logged in features but could browse content without an account. This will be implemented from January 2028 and banned apps will include TikTok, YouTube,</p>

	<p>Instagram and Snap. Political parties have welcomed this and 2026 is an election year. Whichever party wins will continue this policy.</p> <p>The Public Health Agency has issued recommendations on smartphone use. Research finds that most young people get their first smartphone at the age of 10 or 11. The recommendations set a minimum age of 13.</p> <p><a href="https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jun/01/sweden-urges-parents-to-restrict-phone-use-around-children">https://www.theguardian.com/world/2026/jun/01/sweden-urges-parents-to-restrict-phone-use-around-children</a></p>
UK	<p>The government has announced a social media ban for under 16s which will start in Spring 2027. There are lots of opinions on both sides of the argument. One YP was interviewed and said she would end up staring at the wall for hours if she couldn't use social media. Some adults are suggesting that this is not about keeping children safe but about creating compulsory digital ID for everyone. Childnet spoke to children in school who acknowledged the benefits of a ban but also felt sad and annoyed about the plans as it would make it more difficult for them to speak to their friends and would limit their self-expression. There was also concern about losing YouTube as a source of entertainment and education. Many SEND children who attend a school that is some distance from where they live spoke about social media being the only way that they were able to interact with their peers.</p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-media-to-be-banned-for-under-16s-in-landmark-government-move-to-givekids-their-childhood-back">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/social-media-to-be-banned-for-under-16s-in-landmark-government-move-to-givekids-their-childhood-back</a></p>

Eurobarometer research has recently been published [Special Eurobarometer on the Digital Decade 2026](#)