

Joint Statement Calling for a Durable Legal Framework to Protect Children from Online Sexual Abuse in the EU

On 3 April 2026, interpersonal communication services operating in the European Union will lose the legal clarity that currently enables them to detect, report, and remove child sexual abuse (CSA) material. This is not a hypothetical risk. It is an immediate challenge for child protection, with consequences that will be felt from day one.

The signatories of this statement call on the EU to seize the opportunity to turn uncertainty into constructive action by working urgently toward a CSA Regulation that enables voluntary detection of child sexual abuse within online interpersonal communication settings.

2025 was the worst year on record for online child sexual abuse material found by the Internet Watch Foundation, with a [record-breaking number of URLs](#) actioned for removal and a 26,395% increase in [AI-generated child sexual abuse videos](#).

At a moment when this threat is accelerating, the EU risks becoming the only jurisdiction in the world where the legal ability of online services to detect and report such material is ambiguous. **We recognise the EU's commitment to privacy as a fundamental right, and we do not believe that commitment is in conflict with child protection.** Both rights are legitimate, both deserve protection, and a well-designed CSA Regulation can and must honour both. The path forward lies not in choosing between privacy and child safety, but in finding a framework that upholds each.

From 3 April, reporting volumes will likely drop, as demonstrated during the [2021 lapse](#), depriving law enforcement of vital intelligence used to identify victims, disrupt ongoing abuse, and prosecute offenders. The consequences will be felt across the world: fewer children safeguarded, fewer perpetrators held accountable, and offenders displaced to harder-to-reach environments may re-establish themselves on mainstream platforms.

These effects will not stop at EU borders. Reduced detection and reporting in the EU will weaken global efforts to combat child sexual abuse, with consequences for children, survivors, and investigations worldwide.

Protecting children online is a legal obligation, a moral imperative, and a clear expectation of EU citizens. **A gap in clarity will leave children exposed to preventable harm.**

We need a durable CSA Regulation with a clear framework for voluntary detection, ensuring that companies retain both the clear legal basis and the practical tools to identify and report child sexual abuse material. Without voluntary detection, effective protection cannot be sustained. Without a regulation, voluntary detection is not secure. The two are inseparable and urgent.

The Internet Watch Foundation invites further services and organisations to endorse this statement and join the call for the EU to act now and without equivocation.

SIGNED

1. Aylo
2. DOT Europe
3. CleanDNS
4. Cyacomb
5. Eastern Telecommunication Philippines, Inc. (ETPI)
6. Fastvue Pty Ltd
7. Internet Infrastructure Coalition
8. PikCloud PTE. LTD.
9. Qoria
10. StrawberrySocial Ltd

Other organisations wishing to support this call are welcome to join as signatories. Please fill in [this short form](#).