
Eurobarometer: 73% of EU citizens believe online child sexual abuse is “a widespread or very widespread problem”

A large majority of European citizens (73%) consider online child sexual abuse to be “a widespread or very widespread problem”. This is according to the latest Flash Eurobarometer survey on the Protection of Children against Online Sexual Abuse, released by the European Commission today. In addition, 92% of respondents agree that “children are increasingly at risk online”. In terms of protection responsibilities, 96% of respondents agree that the ability to detect child abuse is “as important or more important than the right to online privacy”. Only 2% believe that “the right to online privacy is more important than the ability to detect child abuse”. Online child sexual abuse materials and cases of “grooming” (manipulation and coercion of children into sexual abuse) “have risen at an alarming rate”. 82% of respondents agree that parental control is not enough to keep children safe online. If the legislation proposed in May 2022 by the European Commission is not implemented by August 2024, the EU’s interim regulation will expire, “making it illegal even to voluntarily detect this criminal content in online messages”. 78% of Europeans support the Commission's proposal to “fight child sexual abuse”. EU citizens also support the “detection of online child sexual abuse in messages such as e-mails and chats (87%) and in end-to-end encrypted messages (83%)”.

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