

# JOINT STATEMENT

## COOPERATION ON ONLINE SAFETY AND PROMOTING CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

The European Parliament Intergroup of Children's Rights is a cross-party and cross-national group comprising over 120 members of the European Parliament, and 26 child-focused organisations. The eSafety Commissioner is Australia's regulator for online safety.

The Co-Chairs of the Intergroup on Children's Rights and the eSafety Commissioner share a sense of urgency in promoting the safety and rights of children in the digital environment and seek to end and prevent all forms of violence and exploitation against children online.

There's no doubt that access to the digital environment continues to unlock extraordinary opportunities for children. It is an essential aspect of all our lives – yet it also presents new risks and harms.

Children can engage with harmful and violent content, and experience interactions that cause them harm, including bullying, grooming, sexual exploitation and abuse. These harms are increasingly prevalent, and worsened by the speed, scale, and scope of digital technologies. Rapid developments in generative AI and immersive technologies are bringing us to an entirely new frontier.

The online world was not built with children in mind – nor was it designed with safety at the core. This needs to change.

There needs to be adequate safeguards that protect all users from online harms and to promote safer, more positive online experiences, where children can learn, create, play and explore the online world safely without fear of exploitation, and where their best interests are upheld.

Australia and the EU are global leaders, with ground-breaking pieces of legislation aimed at making the internet safer, including for children and young people.

We understand the need to set the rules of the digital road, so that everybody, including those most at risk of online harms, can navigate them safely and reap the rewards of digital connectivity. However, while progress has been made, more needs to be done.

The undersigned share the commitment to promote children's rights in the digital environment and ensure a better internet for every child, leaving no one behind. Recognising the importance of international collaboration, they have jointly decided to closer cooperation in the following priority areas:

### **1. Coordination and dialogue**

Developing a structural dialogue and regular consultations on matters related to child safety online. This includes promoting the participation of the eSafety Commissioner in hearings and exchanges of views related to online safety and the promotion of children's rights in the digital environment at the European Parliament. It also seeks to promote participation of the Co-Chairs of the Child Rights Intergroup or their representatives at high-level meetings and events held and led by the eSafety Commissioner.

The undersigned will also actively listen to children and young people on their aspirations for the digital environment, by connecting eSafety's Youth Council with the EU Children's Participation Forum, as well as other activities of the Better Internet For Kids (BIK+) strategy.

## 2. **Communications and education**

Increasing synergies between respective approaches to online safety education and the resources available to children, their families, communities, and educators, with a focus on diversity and inclusion. This includes the online safety of children of minorities and other children in vulnerable situations, such as, but not limited to, children with disability, LGBTI children, children of LGBTI parents, migrant children, children in care, children in institutions, among others, who are particularly exposed to online harm and disproportionately experience violence and abuse online.

## 3. **Technical support**

Sharing best practices and information on the latest technologies, in particular, but not limited to, age-assurance, age verification and other key Safety by Design tools, within a child rights' approach. This could include hosting training sessions and other technical support on the implementation of Safety by Design tools, the functionality of reporting mechanisms, and the development of educational materials with a focus on new threats raised by emerging technologies, including AI-generated child sexual abuse material.

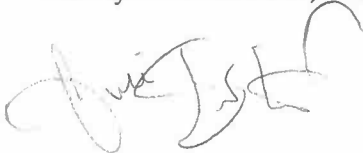
## 4. **Awareness raising and advocacy**

Raising awareness and advocating on child safety online and promote children's rights in the digital environment with the European Union institutions, relevant Governments and Parliaments as well as international, regional or sub-regional organizations, the tech industry and civil society organisations.

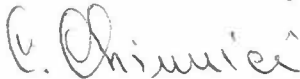
Signed

**Julie Inman Grant**

**eSafety Commissioner, Australia**



**MEP Caterina Chinnici, Italy**



**MEP David Lega, Sweden**



**MEP Catharina Rinzema,  
Netherlands**



**MEP Milan Brglez, Slovenia**

**Co-chairs of the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights**