

Report on the Youth Policy Dialogue with Commissioner Glenn Micallef, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture, and Sport

“Action Plan against cyberbullying”

16 September 2025, European Commission in Brussels

Introduction

The Youth Policy Dialogue brought together 12 young people coming from 11 different countries in Europe to discuss about the upcoming Action Plan against cyberbullying with European Commissioner Glenn Micallef, responsible for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture, and Sport. Prior to the physical meeting, an online preparation meeting took place on 4 September 2025.

The Dialogue took place on 16 September 2025 in the Berlaymont building, in Brussels and was moderated by Myrto Vamvakoudi. The Dialogue's aim was for the participants to exchange views, voice their concerns, and make suggestions. Together, they explored how the European Union can develop a comprehensive Action Plan to combat cyberbullying.

Summary of the Youth Policy Dialogue

Commissioner Micallef opened the Dialogue and emphasised both the opportunities and risks of the digital age, noting that nearly all young people use the internet daily, with 1 in 6 reporting experiences of cyberbullying. He underlined the urgent need for collective solutions, grounded in three pillars: protection, empowerment, and participation.

He also mentioned how crucial the implementation of the Digital Service Act (DSA) is, particularly its provisions on minors' protection (age verification, age-appropriate content, parental controls). Regarding the Action Plan against cyberbullying, he laid out the general framework of the plan with a focus on prevention. It was also underlined that other key points of the Action Plan will include the creation of a EU common definition of cyberbullying, highlighting best practices of other countries that, promoting them with other States and encouraging people to report cyberbullying and seek help. At the end of his opening remarks, the Commissioner praised the work of the Safer Internet Centres, which already reach millions of people through awareness campaigns and support services. Commissioner Micallef also insisted on the need to work with the platforms to facilitate reporting.

The discussion tackled challenges and possible solutions related to online safety. Together, the participants explored how the European Union can develop a comprehensive Action Plan to combat cyberbullying.

The Dialogue was structured as a roundtable discussion, which gave space for open exchanges between participants on several takeaways.

The key takeaways

Overall, the discussion captured the concerns and perspectives expressed by many participants. This exchange of views, perspectives, ideas, and priorities resulted in several key takeaways.

The **key takeaways** from this Dialogue are:

- The **role of platforms** was a key topic of discussion, with most participants agreeing that it's essential to work with them to address online issues. Young people emphasised the need for greater transparency and responsibility from the platforms in preventing and reporting abuse, while also acknowledging that parents, schools and platforms must be empowered. The current reporting process was criticised for being lengthy and not very accessible, often taking significantly longer than to post hurtful comment. To address this, participants proposed simplifying the reporting process, potentially through a single EU-wide platform that provides meaningful follow-up. Additionally, robust age verification systems and stronger accountability measures were advocated for, whilst respecting user control over personal data.
- There is a need to improve **education and awareness** efforts on cyberbullying. Participants, who included also young teachers and students, emphasised the importance of embedding digital literacy and cyberbullying awareness in school curricula for both students and teachers. It was noted that teachers often lack training and resources, while children may not recognise bullying or know how to seek help. Parents were identified as a critical but hard-to-reach group. Regarding teachers' education, there is a need to include training on wellbeing and cyberbullying in the curricula. It should be addressed early on in Initial Education and Training, and it should include digital literacy, empathy, and life skills. Several students participating in the Dialogue also mentioned that schools should offer dedicated counselling and safe spaces for reporting incidents.
- The participants highlighted **mental health and support** as vital components to be incorporated into the Action Plan. The psychological impacts of cyberbullying were repeatedly highlighted as a major concern. Providing support was also deemed crucial in preventing the 'victim-to-aggressor cycle', where victims of cyberbullying may retaliate or become bullies themselves, perpetuating a cycle of harm. Means of **prevention and alternatives** were also mentioned during the Dialogue. Several young people advocated for healthy alternatives to excessive screen time, and for awareness campaigns that normalise reporting and build inclusive digital spaces. The Commissioner himself underlined the importance of encouraging healthy alternatives to screens.

- The **definition of cyberbullying** was a topic of discussion, with participants also disagreeing on whether it should fall under criminal law, particularly regarding minors. Participants noted that cyberbullying can have far-reaching consequences, extending beyond the online world and into real-life situations. The internet's anonymity can create a sense of impunity for bullies, projecting cyberbullying as a low-risk activity with minimal repercussions. To effectively address this issue, participants agreed that a comprehensive and holistic approach is needed. Collaboration amongst technology companies, schools, parents, educators, and children can tackle the root causes of cyberbullying, which are often rooted in broader societal problems that are reflected online.

The discussion continues with the public consultation for the Action Plan against cyberbullying still opened until 29 September 2025 and available in all EU languages. You can access it on the [Have Your Say portal](#). In addition, the conversation on the main takeaways of the Dialogue will continue online through the [Commission's Citizens' Engagement Platform](#) (CEP).