



8 February 2021

Dear Birgit Sippel MEP,
HE Ambassador Nuno Brito on behalf of the EU Council,
Dear Commissioner Ylva Johansson,

We are writing to you to call on you to find an agreement on the Temporary Derogation to the ePrivacy Directive without further delay, which effectively allows the continuation of current practices to detect known and new child sexual abuse material, and grooming.

The Commission's Regulation proposal for a Temporary Derogation to the ePrivacy Directive was adopted last September 10th; the EU Council adopted its negotiating mandate on October 28th and we voted a clear mandate during the plenary session of the European Parliament on December 2020. We voted last December a clear text to ensure that online services like instant messaging and email can continue to use technology to specifically detect child sexual abuse images and videos, and grooming. These technologies work by filtering all communications in search for patterns of possible child sexual abuse, in the same way as similar technologies are used to detect malware and spam. Therefore, a prohibition to systematically search all communications would de facto prevent the continued use of current technologies to detect child sexual abuse online.

Given the lack of agreement in trilogues in December, some companies have already stopped using these technologies to detect, report and remove child sexual abuse online. In just 3 weeks following the 21st of December, the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) reported a drastic 46% drop in the reports of EU-related child sexual abuse online cases.

We are following with deep concerns the development of the current negotiations, given that the lack of an agreement is putting children in severe jeopardy. Every day counts, because every day without the adoption of the temporary derogation, means that countless number of children are left unprotected, because tech companies can no longer detect their abuse online and police can no longer save them, with also impunity of perpetrators.

Child's safety online and the best interest of the child should always be a primary consideration. We therefore urge you to find an agreement on the temporary derogation that restores the *status quo* prior to 21 December and which effectively allows the continuation of current practices to detect known and new child sexual abuse material, as well as grooming.

We count on you to protect children and bring perpetrators to justice.

Sincerely,

Hilde Vautmans MEP (Renew Europe), *Co-Chair of the Intergroup on Children's Rights, Renew Europe Spokesperson on the FEMM Opinion to the Temporary Derogation to the ePrivacy Directive and Renew Europe Coordinator in the AFET Committee*

David Lega MEP (EPP), *Co-Chair of the Intergroup on Children's Rights*

Antonio Lopez Isturiz MEP (EPP), *Vice-Chair of the Intergroup on Children's Rights and Secretary General of the EPP*

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Dita Charanzová MEP (Renew Europe), *Vice-President of the European Parliament*

Kati Piri MEP (S&D), *Vice-President of the S&D Group*

Helene Fritzon MEP (S&D), *Vice-President of the S&D Group and Head of the Swedish S&D Delegation*

Johan Van Overtveldt MEP (ECR), *Chair of the Budget Committee*

Brando Benifei MEP (S&D), *Head of the Italian S&D delegation*

Lena Duepont MEP (EPP), *EPP Deputy Coordinator in the LIBE Committee*

Alice Bah Kuhnke MEP (Greens/EFA), *Head of the Swedish Greens/EFA delegation*

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