Prioritise completing the EU KIDS Act over pursuit of national measures, trade associations urge all 27 EU Member States

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We, trade associations representing companies of all sizes across Europe's digital economy, call on EU Member States to prioritise agreeing a harmonised approach to online child safety under the EU KIDS Act, before pursuing further national measures. This should continue even after the 12-month 'standstill periods', imposed by the European Commission, expire.

The proposed EU KIDS Act reflects the main request of our September joint statement: establishing a harmonised, EU-wide framework for children's online safety to replace the growing patchwork of national measures. Such a consistent framework is essential to ensuring the same high level of protection for all minors across the EU.

Indeed, we welcome the Commission's recent decision, under the Single Market Transparency Directive, to trigger a 12-month standstill period for Austria's draft law restricting access to certain social media and video-sharing platforms for children under 14. We also fully support applying the same approach to other relevant notified national measures whose standstill periods are still running.

Because pending national measures were notified on different dates, their standstill periods will also expire at different times, potentially before the EU KIDS Act is adopted. Austria's standstill period, for example, is due to expire in July 2027.

The signatories therefore call on all 27 Member States to refrain from advancing national measures once their respective standstill periods expire and to await the adoption of the EU KIDS Act. This call also applies to Greece, which – in the spirit of European cooperation – should postpone the entry into force of its social media age-limit legislation, currently scheduled for January 2027.

We recognise that Member States are acting out of genuine concern for children's wellbeing and safety. However, with an EU-wide legislative framework now on the table, the appropriate course of action is to engage constructively in the European legislative process and refrain from pursuing divergent national approaches.

A patchwork of national laws would create different levels of protection for children across the EU, as well as potentially inconsistent treatment of their fundamental rights, including freedom of expression and the right to information. A child’s rights and online experience should not depend on which Member State they live in.

Such a patchwork would also fragment the Single Market, forcing businesses to incur significant costs and face legal uncertainty as they comply with different national rules, only to have to adapt their services and compliance measures again to meet the EU KIDS Act requirements.

A single, coherent EU framework is in the best interests of children. We stand ready to support the Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council in delivering that framework as swiftly and effectively as possible.