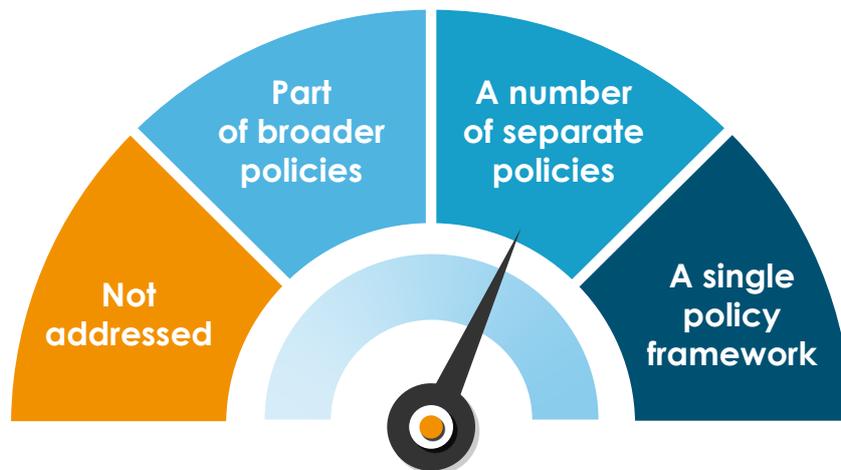# France

The Better Internet for Kids (BIK) Policy Map is a tool used to compare and exchange knowledge on policy making and implementation in EU Member States on the themes and recommendations of the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children (or BIK Strategy) first set out by the European Commission in May 2012. The third BIK Policy Map report (2020) examines the implementation of the BIK Strategy in 30 European countries, including all EU Member States, Iceland, Norway and the United Kingdom.

For each country in the BIK Policy Map study, we outline findings for Policy frameworks, Policy making and Policy implementation, and conclude by providing a selection of good practices.

Download the full BIK Policy Map report from the Better Internet for Kids website.

1. Policy frameworks

Policy frameworks refer to the organising principles and long-term goals for policies, guidelines, decisions and other statements made at the national level in the course of putting into practice the BIK Strategy.

In France, the European Strategy for a Better Internet for Children has featured in national policy debates on the subject of children's use of the internet. This topic is covered in a number of separate policies, principally through laws and regulations which address the four different pillars of the BIK Strategy. Some examples are given below.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

*   National Education Policy (Ministry of National Education) states that digital workplaces (DWS) are made available to teachers and pupils in every schools. The DWS are an integrated set of digital services which can be shared across multiple educational institutions. The use of digital workspaces and digital

textbooks are becoming increasingly widespread and are the big theme of ICT in French schools. Digital workspaces have become accessible via an interactive portal for all stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, management personnel, local authorities, local partners, government, and so on). Each student has access to a virtual office allowing online access to their schedule, their book of electronic text, notes, resource materials, or course elements provided by teacher.

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

- Media Literacy Plan (Ministry of Culture, Spring 2018) as part of the implementation of the law against the manipulation of information (adopted in December 2018), the Ministry of Culture has launched an ambitious media and information literacy plan. It aims to support young people in making good use of the media and deciphering the information disseminated massively on the internet and on social media. Such skills are considered to be essential to the exercise of enlightened citizenship. The media and information literacy plan has several components:

    a) The Ministry of Culture provides financial support to journalists' associations, community education organisations, and educational professionals working in the field of media and information literacy.

    b) As part of the *Ouvrir plus, ouvrir mieux* project for libraries, the plan also aims to extend opening hours for libraries (especially in rural areas) in order for youth and students to develop more interest in media and information. Volunteers have been recruited in five experimental territories before the plan is rolled out nationally.

    c) Public audiovisual media services carry out numerous media and information literacy actions.

- La malette des parents, led by the Ministry of National Education, is part of the Ministry's policy to strengthen the links between parents, children and schools. Their dedicated website contains resources intended for families and education professionals to support children together towards success. The website is managed by the Ministry and was launched in 2018.

Pillar 3: Creating a safer environment for children online

- General Data Protection Regulation and the Law on Informatique et Libertés from 6 January 1978, as amended by the Law from 20 June 2018 (taking into account GDPR) Law of 30 September 1986, as amended by the law from 5 March 2009 (transposing the Directive 2010/31/EU, the so-called AVMS Directive), provides rules for protecting minors in relation to on-demand video services and recommendations from the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel on extending the existing classification scheme for TV content to on-demand services' content (for

example, same age-restriction pictograms must be used for a film, on TV or on a video on-demand service).

- Article 5 of the Law Pour une école de la confiance inscribes the right to harassment-free schooling in the Education Code. This Article provides a legal basis for the many preventive actions carried out by the Ministry and sends a strong signal to the entire educational community to increase mobilisation against bullying among students (cyberbullying). The law is complemented by a series of measures aimed at combating harassment in schools. These measures include training for teachers, extended working hours for the helpline Netécoute, and so on.

- Self-regulatory initiatives such as Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité's Code for ethical standards in advertising includes specific recommendations with regard to advertising to children.

- As part of broader policies, an agreement between various stakeholders was set up under the aegis of the Secretary of State to oversee the implementation of the National Child Protection Strategy. The agreement focuses on the deployment and promotion of parental control systems, in particular through setting up of a common information portal of parental control systems; measuring the use of control devices through the development of relevant indicators and assessing the level of use of parental control tools. A telecom regulator ARCEP and audiovisual media regulator CSA are in charge of monitoring the implementation of participating stakeholders.

Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation

- The French Criminal Code, Article 227-23 (transposed the Directive 2011/93/EU) states "*Taking, recording or transmitting a picture or representation of a minor with a view to circulating it, where that image or representation has a pornographic character, is punished by five years' imprisonment and a fine of €75,000. When that image or representation regards a minor under fifteen years of age, these offences are punished, even if they were not committed with a view to circulating the image or representation. The same penalties apply to offering or distributing such a picture or representation by any means, and to importing or exporting it, or causing it to be imported or exported. The penalties are increased to seven years' imprisonment and a fine of €100,000 where use was made of a communication network for the circulation of messages to an unrestricted public in order to circulate the image or representation of a minor. Obtaining access, habitually or in return for payment, to a service of online communication to the public displaying such a picture or representation, acquiring or possessing such a picture or representation by any means in punished by two years' imprisonment and a fine of €30,000. The offences set out in the present article are punished by ten years' imprisonment and by a fine of €500,000 where they are committed by an*

organised gang. Attempting to commit the offences set out in the present article is subject to the same penalties. The provisions in the present article shall also apply to pornographic images of any person whose physical appearance is that of a minor, unless it is proven that the person was over eighteen years of age on the day the image was taken or recorded."

- Self-regulatory initiatives such as Autorité de Régulation Professionnelle de la Publicité's Code for ethical standards in advertising includes specific recommendations with regard to advertising to children.

- Law no 2004-575, "For Confidence in the Digital Economy" (La loi pour la confiance dans l'économie numérique- LCEN) stipulates that all hosting providers, whether normal persons or legal entities, should contribute to the fight against child sexual abuse material (as well as terrorist propaganda), as a type of illegal and harmful content. The primary positive obligation which relies upon them may be found at article 6 – I, paragraph 7: "*[...] As such, they must put in place a visible and easy-to-access reporting tool which allows any person to bring to their attention the existence of such content. They also have the obligation, on the one hand, to promptly inform the competent public authorities of all illicit activities mentioned in the previous paragraph, should they be reported to them [...].*"

2. Policy making

Policy making refers to the general process by which policies are developed within each country, including how coordination and oversight is managed, the extent to which the policy agenda is informed by an evidence base, and whether there are arrangements for young people to be involved in the policy process.

2.1 How are policies coordinated?

In France, more than one ministry, agency or body is responsible for coordinating policies addressing the BIK Strategy with four to six ministries involved in the process.

- Government ministries or agencies are involved in the making of policies for children's use of the internet; the coordination process takes place through internal consultation procedures. Regarding the policy making or legislation process, one ministry will be appointed as project leader and work with other relevant ministries/public administrations through dedicated working groups. For other relevant activities, such as official communication campaigns, public agencies or NGOS will implement their actions under the supervision of one or several relevant government ministries (for example, the Non au harcelement campaign which has been coordinated by the Ministry of National Education).

2.2 Who is primarily in charge of policy coordination?

Responsibility for coordination of BIK-related policies varies by each respective pillar of the BIK Strategy.

- The Ministry of National Education has primary responsibility for both Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people and Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment; the regional organisations for media literacy have a key main role.

- Under Pillar 3: Tools and regulation for an online safe environment, the Ministry of Culture is the ministry with responsibility for policy coordination.

- In Pillar 4: Legislation and law enforcement against child sexual abuse and exploitation, the Ministry of Justice has the primary responsibility for policy coordination.

Inter-departmental communication mechanisms include a working group of the Safer Internet France consortium including the joint CSA and ARCEP monitoring committee relating to the 'protection of minors against online porn'. Both NRAs are jointly assessing how information society/internet access/app service providers are implementing voluntary-based commitments to reduce children's access to porn content online (including through appropriate control parental systems).

2.3 Data collection in the last three years

Data collection to support policy making related to the BIK Strategy includes national and regional surveys with quantitative data specifically focused on children's use of the internet, quantitative data on some topics of children's use of the internet collected as part of a broader survey, and qualitative research specifically focused on children's use of the internet. Examples include:

- Hadopi, a government agency, has implemented a number of studies on digital leisure.

- CNIL launched a public consultation on minors' rights in the digital environment in April 2020.

- Internet Sans Crainte conducted a survey for Safer Internet Day.

- Other studies were carried out by NGOs such as Generation numérique and Quelles protections pour les mineurs dans l'audiovisuel à l'ère d'Internet?(What are the protections for minors in the audio age of the internet?).

2.4 Involvement of young people in policy making

The involvement of young people in policy making is described as one whereby young people's interests are considered indirectly (for example, through analysis of existing

surveys or data collections). Relevant organisations involved in supporting youth participation in policy making include:

- Young people are directly involved in the policy-making process on children rights (Défenseur des enfants). The Parlement des enfants project (the Children's Parliament project) allows schoolchildren, through the practice of dialogue and democratic debate, to discover the role of the legislator during class work carried out during the school year on an annual theme relating to current societal subjects. Topics may include policies related to children's use of the internet. Youth councils get children involved on a local level.

3. Policy implementation

Policy implementation refers to the involvement of the relevant stakeholders in the delivery of initiatives and the spread of activities as envisaged under each of the four pillars of the BIK Strategy.

Pillar 1: High-quality content online for children and young people

Activities under Pillar 1 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role. Examples include:

- The Ministry of National Education supports the development of innovative content for schools. The ministry launched several programmes to fund and support digital content for education such as BRNE (Banque de Ressources Numériques Educatives) for teachers to access free resources from primary school to high school, P2IA (Partenariat d'Innovation Intelligence Artificielle) to support the introduction of AI (artificial intelligence) within educational programmes for primary school children.

- Centre national de l'Audiovisual (CNC) provides support for creative quality French content.

- TRALALERE, operator for Internet Sans Crainte (the awareness centre of the French Safer Internet Centre) developed several online resources for digital education, from Vinz et Lou to the Code-decode platform.

Overall, there is a lack of support for quality content for children, progressively replaced by a support for innovation rather than content. Initiatives to encourage youth learning to code were launched within the Programme d'investissements d'avenir pour l'éducation numérique with the launch of big national programmes including Capprio, Class'Code, D-clics, Code-decode. A study by Serge Tisseron for CNC showed the importance of implementing standards for quality online content but no large initiative is accessible. The French awareness centre produces several educational resources promoting positive use of the internet, with some of them supported and disseminated by the Ministry of Education.

Summary of Pillar 1 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Initiatives to stimulate the production and visibility of quality content for children	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to encourage children's creativity and to promote positive use of the internet	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to implement standards for quality online content for children	☐	☐	☑
Other relevant activity (please specify)	☐	☐	☐

Pillar 2: Stepping up awareness and empowerment

Activities under Pillar 2 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role. Examples include:

- The Ministry of National Education, the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Interior (police and gendarmerie) have been involved in raising awareness for students, parents and professionals for many years. They provide resources for Vinz et Lou and InfoHunter for example, as well as running awareness-raising campaigns (Non au harcèlement) and distribution of awareness-raising kits.

- The Ministry of Territories is involved in a digital inclusion and mediation strategy.

- Industry participates by granting financial aid for awareness-raising programmes for children and teenagers. Examples include Samsung, MAE and Axa Prévention.

- The Ministry of National Education is increasingly taking ownership in this area and integrates its content in the basic learning and training of professionals. There are still significant needs in the field and private-public partnership should be further developed to address needs. The Ministry of Culture has recently become involved in information/media literacy. New funding has been made available for themes linked to fighting against radicalisation.

Summary of Pillar 2 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Teaching online safety in schools"			
Strategies to include teaching online safety in schools	☐	☑	☐
Activities to reinforce informal education about online safety	☐	☑	☐
Activities to provide for online safety policies in schools	☐	☑	☐
Activities to ensure adequate teacher training in online safety	☐	☑	☐
Activities to support public-private partnerships in online safety	☐	☑	☐
"Digital and media literacy activities"			
Activities to support young people's technical skills required to use online media content and services	☐	☑	☐
Activities to encourage critical thinking around media industries and evaluating content for truthfulness, reliability	☐	☑	☐
Activities that encourage interaction, engagement and participation in the economic, social, creative, cultural aspects of society through online media	☐	☑	☐
Activities that promote democratic participation and fundamental rights on the internet	☐	☑	☐
Activities that challenge radicalisation and hate speech online	☐	☑	☐
"Scaling up awareness activities and youth participation"			
National support for public awareness-raising campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing national campaigns	☐	☑	☐
Involvement of children when developing legislation with an impact on their online activities	☐	☐	☑
Activities or initiatives to match the Commission's support for the national Youth Panels	☐	☐	☑

Industry funding and technical support for NGOs and education providers	☐	☑	☐
Industry dissemination of awareness material either online or at the point of sale	☐	☑	☐
"Simple and robust reporting tools for users"			
Mechanisms for reporting content and contacts that may be harmful for children such as cyberbullying or grooming	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to facilitate cooperation between helplines and law enforcement	☐	☑	☐
Initiatives to monitor the effective functioning of reporting mechanisms at a national level	☐	☐	☐

Pillar 3: Creating a safe environment for children online

Activities under Pillar 3 are led by government ministries. Public agencies have a complementary role.

- The Agence du Numérique acts in a coordinating role. It has been transformed and reassigned to the Ministry of Territories with greater focus on issues of mediation and digital inclusion. Safer Internet France must therefore cooperate with several ministries and several public agencies on the subject. The involvement of industry is starting, among others under incentives from public authorities and a recent change in legislation (such as GDPR and the AVMS Directive).

- For video games, relevant initiatives include PEGI and Pedagojeux initiative which communicates on age selection and settings.

- GDPR and other legilslation (AVMS Directive) has had an impact on industry's attitude towards child protection. Social networks have started to introduce new communications and services toward families. A study was conducted by CNC (Centre National du Cinéma) on age group issues within the audiovisual sector.

- The last CNC report on the issue of age rating explored the possibility of encompassing classification scheme for all content (films, TV, video games).

Summary of Pillar 3 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
"Age-appropriate privacy settings"			
Activities to ensure the implementation of EU legislation	☐	☑	☐
Self-regulatory measures by industry about age-appropriate privacy settings	☐	☑	☐
Awareness-raising activities regarding age-appropriate privacy settings	☑	☐	☐
"Wider availability and use of parental controls"			
Activities to promote the availability of parental control tools	☐	☑	☐
Tests and certification for parental control tools	☐	☐	☐
Efforts to support industry implementation of parental control tools	☑	☐	☐
"Wider use of age rating and content classification"			
Activities to promote the adoption of age rating and content classification among relevant stakeholders	☐	☑	☐
A complaints process for the effective functioning of such systems	☐	☑	☐
"Online advertising and overspending"			
Activities at the national level to ensure that legislation regarding online profiling and behavioural advertising is observed	☐	☐	☐
Support industry in developing codes of conduct regarding inappropriate advertising	☐	☑	☐
Monitor implementation of codes of conduct at the national level	☐	☑	☐

Pillar 4: Fighting against child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation

Activities under Pillar 4 are led by government ministries. NGOs have a complementary role. Examples include:

- The DMISC (Délégation ministérielle aux industries de sécurité et à la lutte contre les cybermenaces), a ministerial delegate for security industries and the fight against cyberthreats, was established within the Ministry of the Interior in early 2017 (see decree n. 2017-58 of 23rd January 2017). Child sexual abuse material (CSAM) is listed among the most aggravated forms of cybercrime.

- France established its own database of CSAM in 2003 called CNAIP (Centre national d'Analyse des Images Pédopornographiques), which sits with the French Gendarmerie with express agreement from the French Police and which groups together investigators from the French Police and the Gendarmerie.

- The French Gendarmerie's digital crime-fighting unit C3N (in French, Centre de lutte contre les criminalités numériques) and the CyberGend network, have a renewed and strengthened mandate since November 2019 including the creation of a dedicated Pole national de lute contre les Cybermenaces.

- The French Data Protection Authority, the CNIL, supervises the application of the measures of blocking access to child sexual abuse material in the French territory.

- The French hotline, Point de Contact partner of the French Safer Internet Centre and a founding member of the INHOPE network, handles public reports and reports forwarded by the INHOPE network of manifestly CSAM, notifies the French ISPs, and ensures the prompt removal of CSAM.

- NGO/civil society organisation ECPAT France coordinates the programme Click@ble. The French hotline, Point de Contact, in partnership with Teach on Earth Association, developed a digital learning module on reporting illegal content online.

- The French broadcasting authority, Conseil supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (CSA) (and future ARCOM, as its mandate is being extended to include digital audiovisual services and the legal framework strengthened) on various aspects pertaining to the dissemination of false and manipulated information, and online hate speech on video-sharing platforms.

- French hosting providers and platforms (many of them are members of the French hotline, Point de Contact), under Article 6 of the LCEN, have committed to work on reporting child sexual abuse material found on their servers/services.

- The French Cybercrime Centre of Excellence (CECyF) is the French expert centre against cybercrime. Established in 2014, it enables law enforcement agencies, researchers across all sectors (from academia, industry to independent experts)

and educational institutions to meet and exchange their expertise in order to create projects that contribute to research and application against cybercrime. It was initiated as part of the European project 2CENTRE (Cybercrime Centre of Excellence Network for Training Research and Education).

Summary of Pillar 4 actions:

	Introduced in the last 12 months	Existent before last year	Not available
Increased resources for law enforcement bodies that fight against child abuse material online	☐	☑	☐
Effective safeguards in place to ensure democratic accountability in the use of investigative tools to combat child sexual abuse	☐	☑	☐
Activities to support the functioning and visibility of hotlines at the national level	☑	☐	☐
Activities to support the improvement of cooperation between hotlines and industry for taking down child abuse material	☑	☐	☐

4. Good practices

The following are selected examples of good practices in supporting children's use of the internet in France:

Resources for awareness raising

- FamiNum is an application designed by Internet Sans Crainte (coordinator of Safer Internet Day France) to ease the tense relations on the subject of screens, and help each family to tailor-make digital charters.

- InfoHunter organises workshops on information and fake news which helps children learn to decipher information and measure the impact of fake news.

- Code-decode is a programme to introduce young people to coding and digital culture such as making videos, or creating an app or shared digital platforms.

- Vinz et Lou is a collection of resources to tackle big society issues with primary school children's cartoons, interactive activities, digital lessons, comics, cards and quizzes.

- Partner resources such as, toolkits Permis Internet Gendarmerie, Incollables®.

Non au harcelement

National contest for Non au harcelement, a campaign organised by the Ministry of National Education for Safer Internet Day. It attracted a considerable number of participants and significant media coverage.

Videntifier

A White paper on best practice on handling reports and staff welfare: The White Paper "Child sexual abuse material and online terrorist propaganda. Tackling illegal content and ensuring staff welfare" is a shared set of best practices pertaining to the operational handling and processing of harmful and potentially illegal content which may endanger the physical safety and psychological well-being of professionals. It was co-written by the French hotline Point de Contact, public authorities and the private sector, and co-financed by the European Commission. The handbook is aimed at professionals from companies which publish and distribute online content, hosting providers and platforms, social media, domain name registrars, internet access and service providers, law enforcement authorities as well as all staff members whose responsibility and function is to tackle illegal content resulting from cybercrime activities. Showcased as a best practice paper by the INHOPE network and the ICT Coalition for Children Online, the English version is available here.

The French hotline Point de Contact has integrated the Videntifier technology of identifying videos and images of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) in an automated manner. Videntifier's patented technology can store the fingerprints of enormous amounts of video content and images, and can identify any of the referenced material within seconds. Videntifier technology is also used by INTERPOL in the fight against CSAM.

Point de Contact launched a reporting app which helps young users to detect and report suspected illegal content (available on iOS and Android).

Additionally, working in partnership with Teach on Earth Association, the hotline developed a digital learning module on reporting illegal content online.