

Notes to Editors

Leading experts from around the world urge support for the EU Regulation to prevent and combat child sexual abuse

The attached letter in support of the proposed EU Regulation to prevent and combat child sexual abuse has 169 signatories drawn from leading organizations and individuals in over 30 countries including almost every EU Member State.

Among other things it reminds everyone that if the Regulation does not pass then, as things stand, on 3rd August next year it will become illegal for any internet company operating within the EU to use technical tools to detect child sexual abuse online in communication services. These are the very services most used by offenders to exchange child sexual abuse material and groom children.

The letter references nationally representative [Opinion Polls](#) taken in 8 EU Member States. These were commissioned through ECPAT International and showed strong support for the Regulation among the general public.

The signatories to the letter cover a broad spread of interests and professions with a shared concern for children's safety, welfare and rights. The signatories have been set out under three headings: Technologists, Academics and NGOs and advocates. Some people could have appeared under all three headings so, inevitably, decisions about where exactly to place them may seem somewhat arbitrary. For that I apologize.

The first signatory shown on the letter is Professor Hany Farid of Berkley as he was the key developer of PhotoDNA. This started being used in 2009, forming the basis of what is still the most widely used proactive tool used to detect child sexual abuse images online. The emergence of PhotoDNA triggered the development of other tools which can detect other forms of child sexual abuse.

After Professor Farid's signature everybody else is listed alphabetically within their categories.

I acted as the co-ordinator for gathering in the signatures but otherwise no single organization or interest can claim ownership of it. It is the product of a truly co-operative international effort.

John Carr

9th September 2023