

# France bans under 15 from accessing social media, after formal opinion by the European Commission

**IRIS 2026-7:1/9**

*Eric Munch  
European Audiovisual Observatory*

A draft piece of French legislation proposing to ban children under the age of 15 from accessing social media had prompted a formal opinion from the European Commission, stating that it overlapped with the Digital Services Act (DSA). The opinion required French lawmakers to revise the bill and negotiate a compromise between the first version of the bill, approved by the National Assembly (*Assemblée Nationale*), and the second version, adopted by the Senate.

The National Assembly's version proposed a broad ban that applied to all "social network services online provided by a platform" while the Senate's amended proposal introduced a system that would create two categories of platforms: those considered harmful and to be placed on a blacklist, and other non-harmful platforms, which were meant to remain accessible subject to approval from a parent.

Thomas Regnier, spokesperson for Tech Sovereignty, Defence, Space, Research and Innovation at the Commission stated that, while the Commission shared France's concern with regard to the protection of minors, its formal opinion aimed to ensure that national measures remain effective and in line with EU law, thus limiting fragmentation to a minimum and preventing legal uncertainty.

The French Government, which had warned the Senate that parts of the bill could be incompatible with EU law, had initially hoped for the law to come into force in time for the start of the school year in September 2026.

On 21 July, the National Assembly and the Senate reached an agreement on a draft law from which the distinction between harmful and non-harmful platforms has been removed, making no platform exempt from the ban.

These developments echo EU-wide discussions on social media bans or "social media delays" for children, as the European Commission's President Ursula von der Leyen had already expressed support for a potential ban at the EU level earlier in the year. On 13 July, she reiterated her support, stating that children should have "phased and gradual access to social media", adding that a legal proposal would come in the second half of the year, with restrictions expected to be outlined as early as September.

***La Commission européenne appelle la France à revoir sa proposition de loi interdisant les réseaux sociaux aux moins de 15 ans***

[https://www.franceinfo.fr/internet/reseaux-sociaux/la-commission-europeenne-appelle-la-france-a-revoir-la-copie-de-la-future-loi-interdisant-les-reseaux-sociaux-aux-moins-de-15-ans\\_8096678.html](https://www.franceinfo.fr/internet/reseaux-sociaux/la-commission-europeenne-appelle-la-france-a-revoir-la-copie-de-la-future-loi-interdisant-les-reseaux-sociaux-aux-moins-de-15-ans_8096678.html)

*The European Commission is calling on France to review its proposed legislation banning social media for under-15s*

***Statement by President von der Leyen with the co-chairs of the special panel on child safety online***

[https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement\\_26\\_1590](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/statement_26_1590)

***Proposition de loi visant à protéger les mineurs des risques auxquels les expose l'utilisation des réseaux sociaux (dépôt le mardi 18 novembre 2025)***

[https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/17/dossiers/proteger\\_mineurs\\_reseaux\\_sociaux\\_17e](https://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/dyn/17/dossiers/proteger_mineurs_reseaux_sociaux_17e)

*Draft law for the protection of minors from the risks posed by the use of social media (tabled on Tuesday 18 November 2025)*

