Combating sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography

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The Council discussed the proposal for a directive on combating the sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. Ministers focused on Articles 1-13 (with the exception of Art. 10) of the current version of the text.

Almost all member states agreed on the current wording of these articles. Only two delegations maintained their reservations on Art. 4(3), which concerns situations where children knowingly attend pornographic performances.

Articles 1-13 (with the exception of Art. 10) specify, among other things, the scope of offences and the level of penalties in the following areas:

- sexual abuse, sexual exploitation of children and child pornography;
- solicitation of children for sexual purposes by means of information and communication technology ('grooming');
- instigation, aiding and abetting, attempt.

They also concern provisions on aggravating circumstances, the liability of and sanctions on legal persons as well as the possibility not to prosecute or impose penalties on the child victims.