Resolution on child sexual abuse online

2015/2564(RSP) - 11/03/2015 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 606 votes to 4 with 67 abstentions a resolution on child sexual abuse online.

The resolution was tabled by the S&D, EPP, ECR, EFDD and ALDE groups. It strongly emphasised that protecting children and ensuring a safe environment for their development was one of the primary objectives of the European Union and its Member States. Members noted that according to information provided by NGOs concerning web pages containing child abuse material, more than 80 % of the victims were under 10 years of age. They stressed the **need for a comprehensive and coordinated European approach** encompassing the fight against crime together with fundamental rights, privacy, data protection, cybersecurity, consumer protection and e-commerce.

Parliament noted that the measures taken by Member States to prevent illegal online content had **not always been effective enough**. It called for:

- steps to ensure that any illicit content was promptly removed and reported to law enforcement authorities, and sufficient legal instruments for investigating and prosecuting offenders;

- the Commission and all interested parties to take an active role in raising awareness of **cyber grooming through defined guidelines**, the exchange of best practices, the creation of social platforms for cooperation and the exchange of information;

- **awareness-raising campaigns** on responsible behaviour in the social media, and encouraging major search engines and social media networks to take a proactive approach to protecting child safety online;

- Member States' law enforcement authorities and Europol to be provided with the **necessary funds, human resources, investigative powers and technical capabilities** to seriously and effectively pursue, investigate and prosecute the offenders, including appropriate training to build capacity in the judiciary and police units and to develop new high-tech capabilities to address the challenges of analysing vast amounts of child abuse imagery, including **material hidden on the 'dark web';**

- an effective partnership approach between law enforcement agencies, judicial authorities, the ICT industry, internet service providers (ISPs), internet host providers (IHPs), social media companies, the banking sector and NGOs, with a view to ensuring that any illicit content was promptly removed and reported to law enforcement authorities;

- strengthening the resources dedicated to victim identification and victim-centred services, and the setting-up of related platforms and the strengthening of existing platforms within Europol;

- the setting up systematic direct reporting mechanisms and the development of hotlines for children where they could denounce abuse anonymously;

- further engagement with representatives of **alternative payment sy**stems in order to identify opportunities for better cooperation with law enforcement authorities, including common training on better identification of payment processes linked to the commercial distribution of child abuse material;

- **improvement in international cooperation** and transnational investigations in this area through cooperation agreements, and strengthening cooperation through Europol and the European Cybercrime Centre (EC3), with a view to investigating, dismantling and prosecuting child sex offender networks more effectively;

Lastly, Parliament called on those Member States that had not yet done so to **transpose Directive 2011/93 /EU** on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography. The Commission was required to see to its implementation and to report back to Parliament, and its committee responsible, on its findings in a timely manner.