

Geeky News Reports on the Signing of the UK Online Safety Bill



Surrey, United Kingdom Oct 24, 2023 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Geeky News, a leading technology and lifestyle journal, is pleased to report a significant step towards creating a safer online environment for all. The United Kingdom's House of Parliament has officially signed off on the much-anticipated Online Safety Bill. This landmark legislation, introduced in March, is designed to safeguard the digital experiences of UK citizens and will soon come into effect.

The bill has been hailed as a "game-changer" by Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology, Michelle Donelan. It's a pivotal move towards making the UK the safest place in the world to be online. The bill's primary aim is to protect users, particularly children, from harmful content and illicit online activities.

Under the Online Safety Bill, regulatory agency Ofcom will play a pivotal role in enforcing laws that require companies to assess the likelihood of users encountering illegal content. It will protect children from harmful online material. Notably, the bill holds social media platforms accountable for the content they host. It makes them legally obligated to promptly remove illegal content, including hate speech, terrorist propaganda, and child sexual abuse material. Furthermore, these platforms must take proactive measures to prevent such content from being displayed in the first place.

This legislation introduces a rigorous regulatory framework with a zero-tolerance approach to safeguarding children online. Online platforms are mandated to enforce strict age limits and age verification methods to prevent minors from accessing age-inappropriate content. Additionally, major social media platforms must improve transparency by issuing risk assessments. They must also provide avenues for users, particularly children and parents, to report online issues.

The Right Honourable Michelle Donelan MP emphasised, "Our common-sense approach will deliver a better future for British people, by making sure that what is illegal offline is illegal online. It puts protecting children first, enabling us to catch keyboard criminals and crack down on the heinous crimes they seek to commit."

Companies failing to comply with the regulations outlined in the bill may face hefty fines. They can expect penalties of up to 18 million pounds (\$22.3 million) or 10% of their annual global turnover. In extreme cases, company leaders who violate the law could potentially face imprisonment.

Messaging platforms, such as Meta's WhatsApp, expressed concerns about a provision in the legislation that could compromise their end-to-end encryption. Policymakers clarified that the bill does not ban end-to-end encryption. It's primarily aimed at protecting children from harm, especially from sexual predators. As a last resort, it may require implementing a system to scan encrypted messages.

Tech companies have raised concerns about the apparent conflict between end-to-end encryption and message scanning. Nevertheless, the Online Safety Bill remains committed to fostering stringent age verification on digital platforms. It requires companies to balance age checks with user privacy. Online platforms, irrespective of their size, are encouraged to use digital identity services like [Yoti](#) to ensure compliance with regulations. These services provide various options for age verification, prioritising data security while ensuring inclusivity and accessibility for all users.

In summary, the passing of the Online Safety Bill underscores the United Kingdom's commitment to creating a safer digital landscape, especially for children and vulnerable adults. This groundbreaking legislation represents a crucial step towards ensuring a secure and responsible online environment for all its citizens.

To read the full article, please visit: <https://www.geekynews.co.uk/uk-passed-online-safety-bill/>

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