

**EU Internet Forum technical meeting on the online recruitment of youngsters by criminal groups**

**Online - 5.3.2025**

**Participants:** AT, BE, BG, DE, DK, EE, EL, ES, FI, FR, HR, HU, IE, LT, ME, MT, NL, NO, PT, RO, SI, SE, SK, EC (CNECT, HOME), EUDA, Europol, Roblox, Snap Inc., Telegram, TikTok, X

**Summary:** this was the first meeting to discuss with the Forum Member States, European Commission services, EU agencies, and private companies about the increasing concern for criminals recruiting youngsters online to commit illicit activities, including violent crimes. The meeting served to raise awareness about this phenomenon, especially among Member States that have not yet detected it, and put on the table possible actions to be taken. These include contributing to the upcoming guidelines on the protection of minors under the Digital Services Act; developing a list of terms and emojis used by recruiters, with a view to helping companies identify and respond to such content; online prevention actions where police engages with youngsters via e.g. online games; and promoting alternative narratives to the glorification of the criminal lifestyle on the internet. The Organised Crime and Drugs Unit at DG HOME of the European Commission will engage with other units in DG HOME, Directorate F in DG CNECT and relevant Member States to define how to bring forward some of these actions at EU level.