

## **Meeting of the Joint Committee on Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on the Protection of Children in the use of Artificial Intelligence**

### **Opening statement - 16 April 2024**

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the invitation to attend today's Committee meeting on the topic of the protection of children in the use of AI.

I am Claire Dilé, Director for Government Affairs for Europe at X and I am joined today by my colleague Niamh McDade, our Head of Government Affairs for Ireland and the UK.

As we aim to build a global town square and provide everyone with the ability to connect, debate and share information, we are committed to ensuring a safe environment for all our users. X's purpose is to serve the public conversation, and we believe that freedom of expression and platform safety can and must coexist.

We welcome the opportunity today to discuss X's work to keep users - especially young people - safe on the platform.

### **Protecting younger audiences on X**

**X is not the platform of choice for children and teens, nor do we have a line of business dedicated to children.**

**Users on X must be aged 13** and if a person tells us they are under 13, they will not be able to sign up for an account.

According to our data, in the first 3 months of 2024, **13-17 year old's accounted for less than 1% of X's active account holders in Ireland.**

Although minors represent a small fraction of X's user base, we are **fully committed to the protection of this group**, which is a more vulnerable audience online, and have a number of tools and policies to protect them on our service.

X's **age assurance process** combines self-declaration of age with additional technical measures to ensure that the account holder's age is genuine and that appropriate controls are in place to protect children.

13-17 year old's, by default, have **high privacy, safety and security settings in place on their accounts**. For example, they will not see [sensitive media](#), including graphic and adult content, their direct messages are closed and location is turned off. Additionally, advertisers cannot choose to target this age group.

We believe **verifying users' ages and soliciting parental consent for app downloads could play a pivotal role in addressing age verification**. This approach could leverage existing processes filtering all inappropriate apps for minors. It would also act as a privacy enhancer across the ecosystem by avoiding the need for personal information sharing at the individual app level.

X is a proud member of several child protection initiatives, such as the Tech Coalition, We Protect, the Internet Watch Foundation, the Child Protection Lab, and we continue to welcome opportunities for collaboration with child protection NGOs.

### **The X Rules**

We remain steadfast in our commitment to keeping everyone on X safe and the X Rules require users to ensure that the content they upload, and their behaviour, **complies with the X Rules and with all applicable laws and regulations**.

We can also confirm that **AI generated content is subject to X Rules**, and we enforce our policies irrespective of the source of creation or generation of such content.

We take this opportunity to confirm to the Committee that X remains committed to the fulfilment of its DSA compliance obligations and intends to fully comply with relevant legislation in relation to AI.

A number of our policies are particularly relevant to the protection of children and our supporting statement provides further details on our Rules.

In particular, we confirm that **X has a zero tolerance toward any material that features or promotes child sexual exploitation (CSE)**. If **CSE content is posted on X, we remove it**. Fighting this kind of content on our service is the number one priority of our company - our policy covers media, text, illustrated, or computer/AI generated images.

We've **strengthened our enforcement with more tools, and technology** to prevent bad actors from distributing, searching for, or engaging with CSE content across all forms of media.

We also **remove any account that engages with CSE content – whether it's real or computer generated**.

**Our priority is that we are able to catch it and take action regardless of whether or not it has been generated using AI.**

We continue to invest in human and automated protections and content moderation.

### **X's approach to AI generated content**

Turning to AI generated content, at the outset we want to clarify that **X does not have a generative AI product live in the EU or Ireland at this time.**

With respect to misleading media, we have developed and continue to expand important resources. For example, our **Synthetic And Manipulated Media policy** prohibits users from sharing synthetic, manipulated, or out-of-context media that may deceive or confuse people and lead to harm.

Furthermore, our **Community Notes** product addresses a wide range of sophisticated media types, including AI Generated content, by allowing contributors from a diverse group of people on X to write "notes on media" wherein they can write a note on a specific image or video, and the note will be shown automatically on other posts with matching media.

This community-led approach has significantly increased the scale and speed by which potentially misleading media is detected and labelled on the platform. There are currently over **100,800 active contributors to Community Notes in EU countries**, which accounts for 35% of the global contributor base and to demonstrate their impact, in the last month, there have been over **130.9 million note impressions across the EU.**

### **Recommending responsibly on X**

Finally, we will come to our recommendation algorithm.

Firstly, it is important to note that, **on X, we give users a clear choice over their use of recommendations.** People have two options to view posts in their timeline : "For You" and "Following".

**Under the "Following" tab, they will only see posts from accounts they follow.** Under the "For You" tab, they will see recommended posts for them from both their networks.

Every day, people come to X to keep up with what's happening and **the "For You" tab aims to deliver them the best of what's happening in the world right now.**

This **requires a recommendation algorithm to distil the millions of daily posts on X down to a handful of top posts that ultimately show up in the "For You" timeline,** to make it easier and faster for users to find content and accounts that are relevant to their interests.

**Recommendations may amplify content, so it's important they're surfaced responsibly.**

Our recommender systems are **designed to exclude harmful and violating content by integrating with Visibility Filtering systems** and we have **several ways of preventing potentially harmful or offensive content and accounts from being amplified,** including

using machine learning technology, reviewing user reports.

To increase transparency and accountability, **X opened sourced its algorithm on GitHub** in March 2023, and **X's engineering team published a Blogpost to explain to the public how X's algorithm works.**

**We welcome feedback on recommendations people using X receive.** For the 'For You' timeline recommendations, feedback can be provided by **selecting "Not interested in this post/topic"**. We use this as a signal to recommend less of that type of content to the user.

Additionally, **controls are important in both helping people on X curate their own experience and provide critical feedback for our recommendation systems.** A variety of options are available for people using X to control what they do and don't see on our service. Features include but are not limited to, "mute" and "block" functions; the option to filter notifications; extensive privacy and safety settings; and the ability to turn off autoplay for videos.

Our longer supporting statement provides further details but in the interests of time, we will close here.

Thank you again for the opportunity to attend this session and we look forward to today's discussion.