



**An Bille um Sheirbhísí Comrádaíochta Intleachta Saorga (Cosaint Leanaí),
2026**

Artificial Intelligence Companion Services (Protection of Children) Bill 2026

Mar a tionscnaíodh

As initiated



**AN BILLE UM SHEIRBHÍSÍ COMRÁDAÍOCHTA INTLEACHTA SAORGA
(COSAINTE LEANAÍ), 2026
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANION SERVICES (PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN) BILL 2026**

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AN BILLE UM SHEIRBHÍSÍ COMRÁDAÍOCHTA INTLEACHTA SAORGA
(COSAINTE LEANAÍ), 2026
ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANION SERVICES (PROTECTION OF
CHILDREN) BILL 2026

Bill

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entitled

An Act to prohibit the making available of certain artificial intelligence companion services to children, to provide for age-assurance measures and to confer functions on Coimisiún na Meán; to amend the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022; and to provide for related matters.

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Be it enacted by the Oireachtas as follows:

PART 1

PRELIMINARY AND GENERAL

Short title, citation and commencement

1. (1) This Act may be cited as the Artificial Intelligence Companion Services (Protection of Children) Act 2026. 15
- (2) This Act shall come into operation on such day or days as the Minister may appoint by order or orders either generally or with reference to any particular purpose or provision, and different days may be so appointed for different purposes or different provisions. 20

Interpretation

2. In this Act—
 - “AI chatbot” means a software system which generates conversational outputs using artificial intelligence techniques in response to inputs from a user;
 - “AI companion service” means an AI chatbot service which is designed, developed or marketed primarily for the purpose of simulating companionship, friendship, emotional support, interpersonal relationships or ongoing social engagement with a user; 25
 - “child” means a person under the age of 16 years;
 - “Coimisiún na Meán” means the Commission established under section 6 of the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022; 30

“intimate AI service” means an AI chatbot service which is designed, developed or marketed to simulate—

- (a) a romantic relationship,
- (b) a spouse, partner or equivalent relationship, or
- (c) a family relationship;

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“Minister” means the Minister for Culture, Communications and Sport;

“provider” means a person who makes an AI chatbot available within the State.

Designation of prescribed services

3. (1) The Minister may, following consultation with Coimisiún na Meán, by regulations designate a category of AI chatbot service as an AI companion service for the purposes of this Act. 10
- (2) The Minister shall not make regulations under *subsection (1)* unless satisfied that the service concerned is designed, developed, marketed or operated in a manner that creates a substantial risk of emotional manipulation or inappropriate social dependency in children. 15

PART 2

PROHIBITIONS RELATING TO CHILDREN

Prohibition on making AI companion services available to children

4. A provider shall not make available an AI companion service to a child.

Prohibition on making intimate AI services available to children

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5. A provider shall not make available an intimate AI service to a child.

Prohibition on targeted promotion

6. (1) A provider shall not advertise, promote, recommend or otherwise direct an AI companion service or an intimate AI service towards a child.
- (2) A provider shall not use profiling, recommender systems or behavioural advertising techniques for the purpose of promoting a service prohibited under this Act to a child. 25

Requirement to operate age-assurance measures

7. (1) A provider shall take appropriate and proportionate measures to determine whether a user is a child.
- (2) A provider shall ensure that a child is prevented from accessing a service prohibited under this Act. 30
- (3) Compliance with *subsection (1)* shall not be satisfied solely by requiring a user to self-declare his or her age.

- (4) Any age-assurance measures implemented under this section shall be carried out in a manner consistent with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016¹.

Duty of transparency

8. (1) A provider shall ensure that an AI chatbot clearly identifies itself as an artificial intelligence system. 5
- (2) The identification referred to in *subsection (1)* shall be displayed in a manner that is clear, prominent and comprehensible to users.

Prohibition on anthropomorphic representation

9. A provider shall not design, develop or operate an AI companion service in a manner that falsely represents that the system— 10
- (a) is a natural person,
 - (b) possesses consciousness,
 - (c) possesses legal personality, or
 - (d) experiences human emotions. 15

PART 3

ENFORCEMENT

Functions of Coimisiún na Meán

10. Coimisiún na Meán shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcing compliance with this Act and may exercise any power conferred on it by this Act or by the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022 for that purpose. 20

Information notices

11. (1) Coimisiún na Meán may, by notice in writing, require a provider to furnish such information as the Commission reasonably requires for the performance of its functions under this Act. 25
- (2) A provider shall comply with a notice under this section within the period specified in the notice.

Compliance notices

12. (1) Where Coimisiún na Meán is satisfied that a provider has failed, is failing, or is likely to fail to comply with this Act, it may issue a compliance notice. 30
- (2) A compliance notice may require a provider to take specified measures within a specified period.

¹ OJ No. L 119, 4.5.2016, p. 1

Administrative financial sanctions

13. Part 8B of the Broadcasting Act 2009 (inserted by the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022) shall apply to a contravention of this Act as if such contravention were a contravention of that Act.

Offences

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14. A provider commits an offence where the provider—
- (a) knowingly makes available a service prohibited under this Act to a child,
 - (b) knowingly provides false or misleading information to Coimisiún na Meán, or
 - (c) fails, without reasonable excuse, to comply with a compliance notice issued under *section 12*.

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Penalties

15. A person guilty of an offence under *section 14* shall be liable—
- (a) on summary conviction, to a class A fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 12 months or both, or
 - (b) on conviction on indictment, to a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding 5 years or both.

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PART 4

AMENDMENT OF ONLINE SAFETY AND MEDIA REGULATION ACT 2022

Amendment of Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022

16. The Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022 is amended in accordance with this Part. 20

Online safety risk to children

17. The Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022 is amended in section 2 by the insertion of the following definition:

“ ‘AI companion service’ has the meaning assigned to it by the *Artificial Intelligence Companion Services (Protection of Children) Act 2026*;”.

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Harmful online content

18. The Online Safety and Media Regulation Act 2022 is amended by providing that, for the purposes of Online Safety Codes and online safety measures relating to children, the making available to a child of a service prohibited under the *Artificial Intelligence Companion Services (Protection of Children) Act 2026* shall constitute an online safety risk to children. 30

Online Safety Codes

19. (1) Coimisiún na Meán may prepare and adopt Online Safety Codes relating to AI chatbot services.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (1)*, an Online Safety Code may provide for— 5
- (a) age-assurance measures,
 - (b) parental controls,
 - (c) risk-management systems,
 - (d) reporting and complaint mechanisms,
 - (e) auditing and transparency requirements, 10
 - (f) content moderation requirements, and
 - (g) service design measures intended to reduce risks to children.

Directions

20. (1) Where Coimisiún na Meán is satisfied that a provider is contravening this Act, it may direct the provider to— 15
- (a) cease making a service available to children,
 - (b) implement specified age-assurance measures,
 - (c) remove or disable a specified chatbot persona, or
 - (d) take such other measures as are reasonably necessary to secure compliance with this Act. 20
- (2) A provider shall comply with a direction issued under this section.

PART 5

MISCELLAENEOUS

Regulations

21. (1) The Minister may make regulations for the purpose of giving full effect to this Act. 25
- (2) Every regulation made under this Act shall be laid before each House of the Oireachtas as soon as may be after it is made.
- (3) Either House of the Oireachtas may annul a regulation within 21 sitting days after the regulation has been laid before it.

Review

22. (1) The Minister shall, not later than three years after the commencement of this Act, carry out a review of its operation. 30
- (2) A report of the review shall be prepared and laid before each House of the Oireachtas.

- (3) The report shall include an assessment of—
- (a) the effectiveness of the Act in protecting children,
 - (b) developments in artificial intelligence technologies relevant to the Act, and
 - (c) whether further legislative measures are required.

BILLE

(mar a tionscnaíodh)

dá ngairtear

Acht do thoirmeasc seirbhísí comrádaíochta intleachta saorga áirithe a chur ar fáil do leanaí, do dhéanamh socrú maidir le bearta i leith dearbhú aoise agus do thabhairt feidhmeanna do Choimisiún na Meán; do leasú an Achta um Rialáil Sábháilteachta ar Líne agus na Meán, 2022; agus do dhéanamh socrú i dtaobh nithe gaolmhara.

*An Teachta Maolcholm Ó Broin a thug isteach,
29 Meán Fómhair, 2026*

BILL

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*Introduced by Deputy Malcolm Byrne,
29th September, 2026*

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ARNA FHOILSIÚ AG OIFIG AN tSOLÁTHAIR
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BAILE ÁTHA CLIATH 8, D08 XAO6.
Teil: 046 942 3100
r-phost: publications@opw.ie
nó trí aon díoltóir leabhar.

DUBLIN
PUBLISHED BY THE STATIONERY OFFICE
To be purchased from
GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS,
MOUNTSHANNON ROAD, KILMAINHAM,
DUBLIN, D08 XAO6.
Tel: 046 942 3100
Email: publications@opw.ie
or through any bookseller.

€2.54

