



NAALAKKERSUISUT
GOVERNMENT OF GREENLAND



GOVERNMENT
OF NORWAY



Government Offices of Sweden



Government of Iceland



FINNISH
GOVERNMENT



Marienburg Manifest

We, the Nordic leaders, agree: Smartphones, social media, and artificial intelligence have transformed the world in which our children and young people are growing up.

We know that the consequences for their well-being, mental health, cognitive learning and development are already severely at risk, and we do yet not know the full extent of them.

We are in the midst of a massive social experiment - driven by rapid technological development - where there is a real danger of permanently harming what is most valuable in our society: our children and young people.

We want a fundamental shift in the way digital platforms are designed. Access is often too early, too extensive, and insufficiently aligned with children's healthy growth and learning. Profits cannot be prioritized over our children's well-being and welfare.

We risk for the first time in history raising a generation less able to concentrate, learn and thrive. Too many children are growing up with physical inactivity. Constant distractions. We cannot accept that.

We want to challenge the power of the tech giants. So that democratic values and not commercial interests drive our society forward.

We are shouldering the responsibility. For our children and our social model. We do not have all the answers yet, but we are setting out to find them. Better today than tomorrow.

A changed world for children and young people

In the Nordic region, we share a long tradition of a strong and healthy common view on childhood. One where children become independent, empowered individuals in robust

democracies. Shaped by communities based on mutual commitment, activity, pure imagination, shared stories, and healthy human relationships.

It is a worldview and a set of fundamental values that we wish to safeguard.

Tech giants challenge the values and childhood experiences we want to protect. They steal our children's time and attention. Many children now spend several hours each day in digital environments with limited guidance and oversight.

Digital technologies expose children to commercial exploitation, addictive designs, misinformation, manipulation, rabbit holes and, in the worst cases, cyberbullying, violence, self-harm and extremism. Content, that no children should be exposed to.

With the accelerating technological development, artificial intelligence has now also become part of children's lives far too early. Friends are being replaced by chatbots. This raises important questions about children's social development, critical thinking, and ability to form independent judgements.

Empathy, courage and the ability to concentrate. These are skills we develop during childhood. Through play and friendships formed by physical interactions with others. Not through screens and social media.

The serious consequences speak for themselves: decreasing ability to concentrate, declining well-being, and most recently, PISA-results show that our children and young people are performing significantly worse in reading, mathematics and science than in the past.

We should not halt technological development. But for too long, we have focused naively on the positive effects. Especially when it comes to our children. And it ends now.

We must ensure that the digital world serves the interests of our children, not the other way around.

We commit ourselves

As Nordic heads of government, we define this challenge as a crucial shared priority. We will act both nationally and jointly. We want to use our shared impact to turn the tide both in Europe and internationally.

We must effectively regulate social media and screen use for children and young users. We have upcoming legislation or recommendations on age limits. We are moving towards a school free of private smart devices. We have also taken steps in the EU to create a safer online space. At the same time, we are strengthening digital literacy among children, parents, caregivers, and professionals to help children thrive in a digital world.

This is just the beginning. We will explore possibilities for regulating the tech giants even more strictly. We will continue work on national and European age limits for social media. Get private smart devices out of schools. Counter addictive algorithms and design features on social media.

We are committed to continuously developing and implementing new and innovative solutions. What is at stake is our children's learning, mental health, educability and development - and ultimately our democracy and high-trust society.

Childhood belongs to our children. Not the tech giants.



Mette Frederiksen



Beinir Johannesen



Jens-Frederik Nielsen



Jonas Gahr Støre



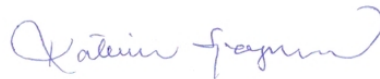
Ulf Kristersson



Kristrún Frostadóttir



Petteri Orpo



Katrin Sjögren