

# Myths about the CSAM proposal

- **MYTH:** *“The proposal is technologically neutral: end-to-end encrypted chat apps don’t have to implement client-side scanning, they can use other methods to scan messages.”*

**REALITY:** Client-side scanning is the only way to scan end-to-end encrypted messages.

- **MYTH:** *“A police dog can sniff physical mails to see if they contain drugs, and if they contain drugs the police can intervene. It’s an invasion of privacy that we think is reasonable. Scanning is like using a sniffer-dog”*

**REALITY:** It is actually like having the post office come to your house and watch you write a letter: scanning for unknown CSAM and grooming involves checking the content of messages.

- **MYTH:** *“This scanning has been going on for around ten years”*

**REALITY:** Scanning for unknown content and grooming are both new and relatively untested, AI-powered technologies. This legislation would make them mandatory in some cases.

- **MYTH:** *“We need to remember, it’s not nude pictures we’re talking about – we’re talking about sexual abuse of children”*

**REALITY:** Detection of Unknown CSAM cannot tell the difference between consensual intimate pictures and abuse material.

- **MYTH:** *“We already allow for scanning for viruses, and many chat apps scan for viruses”*

**REALITY:** The ePrivacy Directive’s derogation was written so that email providers could check emails for viruses. End-to-end encrypted chat apps do not scan files for viruses, however some scan for suspicious links: the scanning is only done on the phone, and does not send reports back to the service operator.

- **MYTH:** *“There will be no slippery-slope: this tool will only be used to combat child abuse”*

**REALITY:** Commissioner Johansson has [already discussed using chat control to detect drug dealers on snapchat.](#)

- **MYTH:** *“Next summer, all the scanning taking place right now of child sex will be banned within the EU. That is, if we don’t have special legislation that allows it.”*

**REALITY:** We could extend the temporary derogation if needed.