

Appendix 1

Recent Regulatory Measures on the Use of Smartphones and Social Media by Children and Adolescents

Country	Date	Main regulations	Key notes
Australia	2024	On 28 November 2024, Australia became the first country to legislate a ban on access to social media platforms by individuals under 16 years of age, through the <i>Online Safety Amendment (Social Media Minimum Age) Act</i> ¹ .	Responsibility for enforcing compliance lies with digital platforms, which must implement effective measures to prevent account creation by minors under 16. ¹ In cases of systematic non-compliance, companies may face fines of up to 50 million Australian dollars ¹ .
Belgium	2025	The Government of Wallonia decided to prohibit the recreational use of mobile phones and other Internet-connected electronic devices by pre-school, primary, and secondary school students across all educational networks, starting from the 2025–2026 academic year ² .	Schools are responsible for defining how the ban will be implemented—without possibility of derogation—and for determining sanctions for non-compliance ²
Brazil	2025	On 13 January 2025, Federal Law No. 15.100 was approved and entered into force the same month, prohibiting the use of mobile phones in primary schools. ³	Schools must develop and implement internal policies to address non-compliance situations. ³
Spain	2025	The Ministry of Education and the State School Council issued a Recommendation proposing restrictions on mobile phone use in schools, combined with the promotion of digital skills. ⁴	Although there is no single national law, all autonomous communities have followed the national guidance and implemented their own regulations to limit the use of mobile devices in educational settings. ⁴
Finland	2024	The Finnish Government proposed an amendment to the <i>Basic Education Act</i> , scheduled to enter into force in August 2025, aimed at restricting mobile phone use during school hours, allowing it only for educational purposes or medically justified reasons. ⁵	Under the amendment, schools will be required to regulate the use and storage of mobile phones and other devices during the school day, including during breaks and lunchtime. ⁵
France	2018	On 3 August 2018, the French Parliament approved Law No. 2018-698, establishing a ban on the use of mobile phones, tablets, and smartwatches in primary, lower, and middle schools. Secondary schools may choose whether to apply the ban during recess periods. ⁶	Each educational institution is responsible for defining implementation procedures, including storage arrangements during school hours, and for setting internal disciplinary measures in cases of non-compliance. ⁶
The Netherlands	2024	Since 1 January 2024, a national policy has been in force prohibiting the use of mobile phones, tablets, and smartwatches in secondary school classrooms. From the 2024–2025 academic year onwards, this policy was extended to primary and special education. ⁷	Although it is a national policy, schools retain autonomy to define implementation details. Exceptions may be allowed for specific reasons, such as medical needs or approved educational purposes, including digital skills training. ⁷

United Kingdom	2024	The Department for Education in England issued non-binding guidelines recommending that schools develop their own policies to restrict the use of mobile phones and similar technologies during school hours. ⁸	These are advisory guidelines, granting school leaders discretion to adapt rules to their local context. Although there is no national legislation, 97% of schools have already implemented restrictions on mobile phone use. ⁸
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References

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