What european strategy against the pornographic industry ?

Our recommandations for further action



PROTECTING WOMEN FROM CYBER VIOLENCE

PORNOGRAPHY : A CHALLENGE FOR EUROPE

OSEZ LE FÉMINISME

La Coordination Française pour le Lobby Européen des Femmes

EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY
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Pornography

A globalized and profitable industry

The reality of pornography changed in the mid-2000s with the emergence of “tube sites” : digital platforms broadcasting thousands of pornographic videos, **often freely accessible and free of charge, with no real prior control.** Often based in tax havens, pornographic platforms generate **$97 billion annually worldwide.***

Normalising Sexual Violence

The porn industry makes **violence commonplace.** It normalizes relationships based on **domination, misogyny, and racism.** Far from being fictional, this content is based on **real violence.**

The High Council for Equality (HCE) conducted an in-depth study in March 2023 on keywords found on the four largest pornographic platforms: Pornhub, Xhamster, Xnxx, and XVideos. This study aims to quantify the prevalence of various categories of violent, degrading, and discriminatory content.**

- **90% of content hosted** on major pornographic platforms contains physical or verbal abuse against women.
- **The results reveal a significant number of videos associated with certain racist keywords** such as “ebony” or “beurette” or child pornography keywords such as ‘schoolgirl’ or “teen.” For this category, there are more than one million occurrences.
- Some categories such as **“choking,”** “gagging,” and **“torture”** appear more than 11,000 times, 300,000 times, and 13,000 times, respectively, on major pornographic platforms, as highlighted by testing conducted by the HCE.

A Reflection of Societal Power Dynamics

Pornographic discourse is based on a sexist view, where women are reduced to objects of pleasure and subject to male desires. Stereotypes of passive women, aroused by violence or humiliated, are found in much of the content, reinforcing myths linked to rape culture. The industry also classifies women according to **racist categories** such as “beurette” or “ebony.” Some content eroticizes colonial violence, with violent scenes (e.g., the rape of black slaves).

*« Porno : l’enfer du décor », rapport du Sénat, 27 septembre 2022.

**PORNOCRIMINALITE : mettons fin à l’impunité de l’industrie pornographique ! », Rapport du Haut Conseil à l’Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes, 27 septembre 2023.

A major risk for young people's health

A growing influence on young people’s representations

Pornography has a growing influence on an increasingly younger audience. The early exposure of minors to pornography is widespread.

- **From the age of 12, more than half of boys visit pornographic websites** on average every month**,** and nearly two-thirds visit them between the ages of 16 and 17.*

Exposure to such content reinforces violent behavior :

- **In the United Kingdom, a study shows that boys exposed to such content** are 3.3 times more likely to engage in violent sexual behavior.**
- **Another survey reveals that 42% of boys believe that** most girls enjoy sexual assault.***
- **A study conducted in Spain indicates that women** who consume pornography are four times more likely to be victims of sexual violence.****

Effects on mental health :

Access to pornography is harmful to children's mental health and psychological integrity. The integration of pornographic messages involves pleasure: the release of dopamine linked to masturbation leads to increasing tolerance, fueling the search for even more extreme images. For researcher Maria Hernandez-Mora, this constitutes a form of “psychological rape” inflicted on children.*****

There is an undeniable risk of addiction. Overconsumption of pornography activates the same reward circuits as drugs. This can lead to addiction and desensitization.****** Facing this public health crisis, more and more countries are taking actions to **restrict minors' access to pornographic websites (the United Kingdom, France, Germany, etc.).**

*Autorité de régulation de la communication audiovisuelle et numérique (Arcom), Fréquentation des sites adultes par les mineurs, mai 2023 (analyse des données 2022 ; publié sur le site de l’Arcom le 2 janvier 2023).
** A lot of it is actually just abuse’- Young people and pornography. Children Commissioner for England, 31 janvier 2023.
***Ibid.
****Nueva pornografia y cambios en las relaciones interpersonales. BALLESTER BRAGE, Lluis, ORTES SOCIAS, Carmen. Octaedro, 2019.
*****Hernandez-Mora, M. (2025). [Audition]. Fédération Française des CRIAVS, Paris, France.
******Brain Structure and Functional Connectivity Associated With Pornography Consumption. KÜHN, Simone, GALLINAT, Jürgen. JAMA Psychiatry, 1er juillet 2014,

The uberization of sexual exploitation

The rise of platforms such as **OnlyFans and Mym** embodies a new form of the Uberization of sexual exploitation. Wrongly presented as spaces for financial independence, they **reproduce the logic of prostitution : exploitation of women's bodies, precariousness, and violence.**

Economic pressure and increased dependence :

Promises of financial independence mask an exploitative economy. Platforms take between 20% and 25% of profits (OnlyFans and Mym).*

Total lack of social and legal protection :

No health insurance, pension, or working hours regulations. In case of image theft, there are no legal remedies. In Europe, 50 to 70% of OnlyFans' paid content is stolen and distributed without consent.**

Commodification of girls and women :

On Telegram groups, men exchange messages such as “sell or buy models,” revealing the reality of a market where women are treated as exchangeable goods.***

Scams and digital procuring :

A true hidden economy has developed around the recruitment of young women in precarious situations, often students. Male “agents” manage their accounts, confiscate their access, and steal their income.****

Non-consensual sharing and sexual harassment:

Stolen content circulates widely on Reddit, Telegram, and Discord, sometimes in groups of several thousand men. Forums such as Celebforum have had 7 million visits in a month and expose women's identities and addresses.*****

Risk of exploitation and harm to minors :

Minors aged 13 to 17 manage to open accounts on OnlyFans using fake IDs.******

*G. Hafner et P. Garonnaire (cofondateurs de MYM) : « MYM vise les 250 millions d’euros de chiffre d’affaires en 2023 et 500 millions en 2024 », Journal du net, 17 novembre 2022.
**RYCHLÍKOVÁ, Mayya Chernobylskaya, Kristina Böhmer, Polina Bachlakova, Apolena, 2025. Consent violated: how creators pay the price for stolen OnlyFans content. Unbias The News.
***LIZÉE, Romane, 2024. Les jeunes femmes arnaquées d’OnlyFans et Mym. StreetPress.
****Ibid.
*****Op.cit.
******BBC. The children selling explicit videos on OnlyFans, 2021.

Increase in legal cases

Numerous legal proceedings show that the pornography industry is based on an illegal business model, founded on **exposing minors to harmful content, sexual exploitation, and human trafficking**.

Delaying tactics against age verification (France)

In France, since 2020, a law has required pornographic platforms to verify the age of users.
The porn industry is stepping up its efforts to prevent the enforcement of this mandatory age verification on its sites: twelve legal proceedings have been initiated. In 2024, the Paris Court of Appeal upheld the blocking of several sites, reiterating **the primacy of the child's best interests**. Despite this, many platforms still do not comply with the law. Some sites, such as Pornhub, have even chosen to suspend their services in France, revealing a business model based on exposing young people to violent content at an early age.

Sex trafficking and sexual violence in pornography: the examples of French Bukkake (France) and Girls Do Porn (USA)

GirlsDoPorn

In the United States, Michael James Pratt, founder of GirlsDoPorn, was convicted of **fraud, coercion, and sexual assault**.

Between 2012 and 2019, his network lured young women—some of whom were minors—with **fake modeling contracts**, then forced them to shoot pornographic videos that were subsequently distributed online, notably on Pornhub.

Nearly **500 women** have been identified as victims, many of whom suffered threats, physical violence, and deep psychological trauma. Some had to **change their identities to escape harassment**, while others died by suicide or overdose.

Despite the conviction of those primarily responsible, **much of this content remains accessible online**, perpetuating harm and illustrating the persistent impunity of the porn industry.

French Bukkake

More than fifty women, often young and vulnerable, were targeted on social media and manipulated through fake profiles into attending pornographic film shoots where they were subjected to extreme violence and filmed.

Seventeen men are being prosecuted in this case, notably for gang rape, organized human trafficking, and aggravated pimping.

Dare to Be Feminist is a civil party in the case, alongside the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, the Mouvement du Nid, and Les Effronté-es.

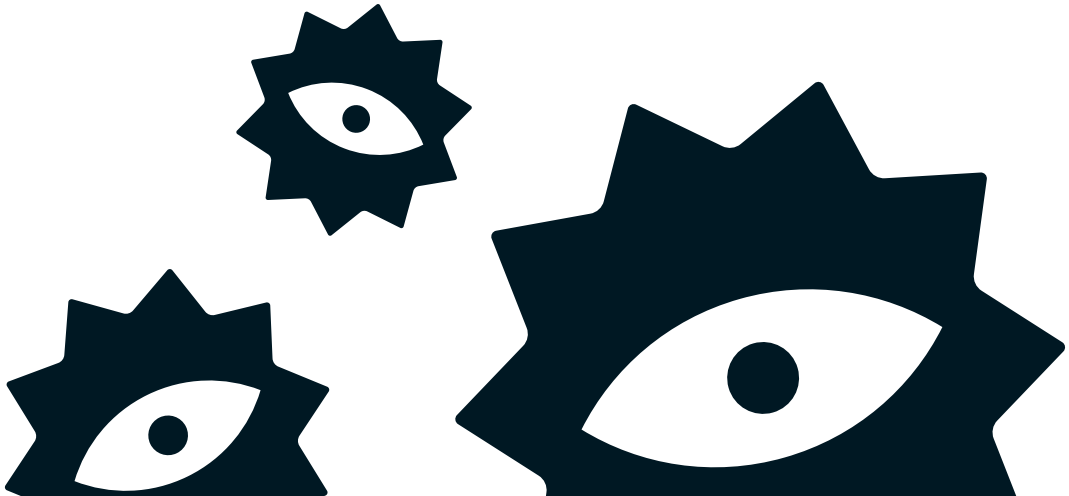
In May 2025, the Court of Cassation upheld the aggravating circumstances of sexism and racism in the case. The trial will take place in 2026.

**Communiqué de presse OLF à ce sujet : https://osezlefeminisme.fr/affaire-french-bukkake-une-decision-historique-de-la-cour-de-cassation/

Our recommandations

The European Union has a responsibility to regulate pornographic platforms, protect minors, and reaffirm its commitments to fundamental rights.

- **Link the regulation of pornography to the fields of public health, the fight against online hate speech, and the fight against gender-based and sexual violence**.
- **Enforce reliable and auditable identity checks on pornographic platforms** to prevent children from accessing harmful content.
- **Promote public prevention policies,** including emotional and sexual education, awareness campaigns, and training for professionals.
- **Hold platforms legally responsible** for violent, pedocriminal, or non-consensual content that they host.
- **Establish a rapid (48-hour), effective, and permanent right** to remove intimate content shared without consent for victims.
- **Introduce a requirement for platforms to proactively detect content and** to ensure, at least, the automatic removal of content that has already been recognized as illegal. A database of illegal content could be set up at the European level.
- Recognize forced **viewing of pornographic content as a form of violence against children.**





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