

**What european strategy  
against the pornographic  
industry ?**

**Our recommandations  
for further action**



# **PROTECTING WOMEN FROM CYBER VIOLENCE**

## **PORNOGRAPHY : A CHALLENGE FOR EUROPE**

# 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'Égalité 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 pornografía 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.

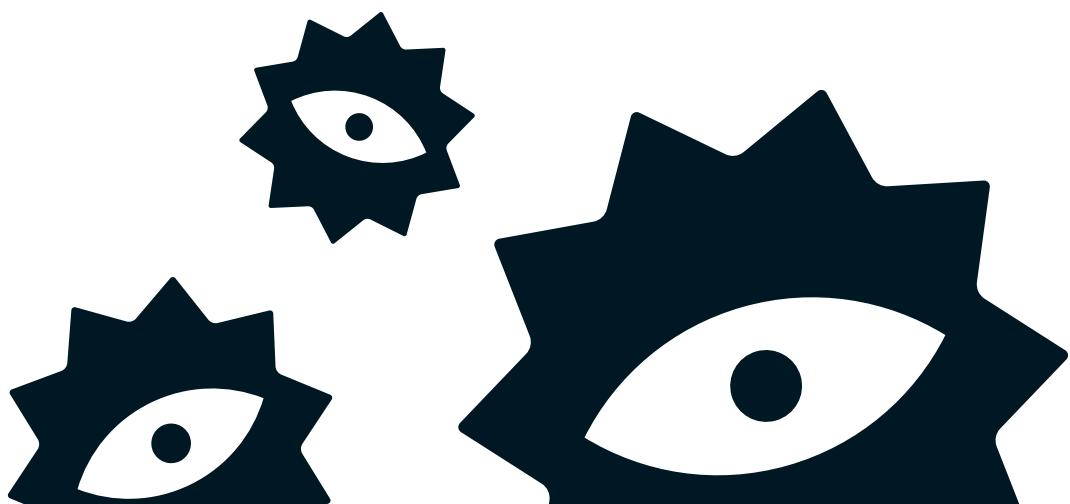
**Dare to Be Feminist is a civil party in the case**, alongside the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme, the Mouvement du Nid, and Les Effronté-es.

**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.

# our recommendations

**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.**





# contacts

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