The EU is testing a prototype age verification app

“Making sure our children and young people are safe online is of paramount importance to this Commission,” said EU tech policy leader Henna Virkkunen. “The guidelines on the protection of minors for online platforms, combined with the new age verification blueprint, are a huge step forward in this regard. Platforms have no excuse to be continuing practices that put children at risk.”

The age verification app is designed to allow users to prove they are over 18 when accessing restricted adult content online, helping the EU to crack down on platforms that are failing to meet obligations under laws like the DSA, and enabling companies to adopt the bloc’s verification toolbox instead of developing their own. The EU Commission says that app users will retain full control over their personal information, such as their exact age or identity, and that the online content they view will remain private.

The verification app prototype will be “tested and further customized in collaboration with Member States, online platforms and end-users,” according to the EU Commission, with Denmark, Greece, Spain, France, and Italy aiming to launch national age verification apps. It’s positioned as a temporary solution that will be superseded by the EU Digital Identity Wallet that’s expected to launch in 2026, which aims to provide a way for “European citizens, residents and businesses to prove who they are when accessing digital services” and a place to “safely store, share and sign important digital documents.”

While the bloc’s DSA rulebook doesn’t impose specific age

verification requirements, websites and online platforms are obligated to protect the “health, physical, mental, and moral development” of minors who use their services, and provide them with the “highest level of privacy, safety, and security.” The new guidance urges online platforms to address concerns around exposing children to harmful content, cyberbullying, unwanted interactions with strangers, and addictive design features.

In May, the EU launched investigations into four large adult content websites — Pornhub, Stripchat, XNXX, and XVideos — over concerns that they were failing to have appropriate age verification tools in place to prevent children from accessing pornographic content. The Commission said at the time that it was open to accepting commitments that would remedy these concerns, which may include the implementation of the EU age verification app.

https://www.theverge.com/news/699151/eu-age-verification-app-dsa-enforcement