

Public perceptions of age verification for limiting access to pornography



Awareness of age verification technology

- **Unprompted awareness** of age verification methods varied significantly:
 - **70%** aware of ‘identity verification’
 - **51%** aware of ‘age verification’
 - **18%** aware of ‘age estimation’
 - **5%** aware of ‘age gating’
- **Prompted awareness** continued to demonstrate varying awareness levels:
 - **76%** aware of ‘identity verification’
 - **50%** aware of ‘age verification’
 - **26%** aware of ‘age assurance’

Perceptions of and experiences with age verification

- Only 16% of respondents indicated that they had used an AV system in the last 12 months.
- 78% of respondents supported the implementation of age verification technology by the Australian Government to verify a minimum age to access online pornography. However, some were neutral in their response (21%), and 16% disagreed with the idea to some extent.
- 24% of respondents lacked confidence in the effectiveness of its design, implementation and operationalisation. Specific issues included lying or bypassing the system (28%), data security/identity theft (17%) and the privacy of personal information (6%).
- Despite these issues, 34% ‘supported’ and 44% ‘strongly supported’ the concept of the Australian government implementing an age verification initiative.
 - **62%** saw the primary benefit of these technologies as the provision of safeguards and assurances for children by only permitting adults to access online pornography.

Quotes from survey respondents

“It makes sense. I do agree that whether the pornography is offline or online it should have the same aged-based restriction.”

“I think it is necessary, but I would worry who would be asking for verification and if they would exploit it.”

“The idea behind it is good as the aim is to stop under 18s from accessing pornography. However, if you really want to restrict under 18s from seeing porn you will need to do way more than age verification.”



82% of respondents reported using the internet for non-work-related purposes in the three months prior to the survey - 34% 'almost constantly', and 47% 'several times a day'.

Implementing age verification in practice

- Respondents believed adults, parents and the pornography industry were most responsible for ensuring access to online pornography was legal.
- Date of birth, driver's licences and photo ID scans were seen as most useful in supporting an age verification system.
- The 'security of a system' and 'evidence that it worked' were the most highly ranked features for government to consider when implementing any age verification system.

People's preferred identity verification documents/methods



(subject to rigorous system testing and assurances of appropriate privacy and data security safeguards)

Date of birth



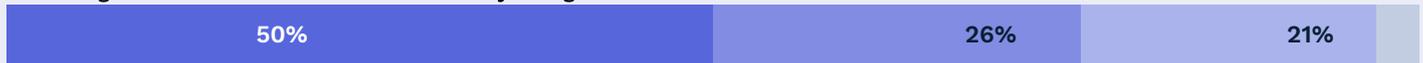
Driving licence



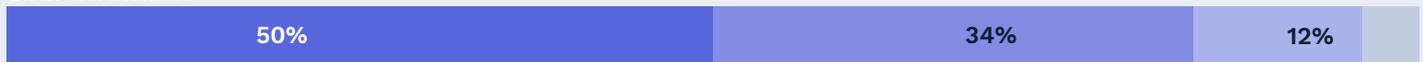
Scanning a photo ID to enable age check



Obtaining a voucher code or card that verifies your age



Birth certificates



Passport



Face, fingerprints or voice (known as biometrics)



Mobile phone number



Credit card



● Yes
 ● No
 ● Don't know
 ● Refused