[FR] First opinion of the Council for Journalistic Ethics and Mediation on the use of AI

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The *Conseil de déontologie journalistique et de médiation* (Council for Journalistic Ethics and Mediation - CDJM), a body for self-regulation and mediation between journalists, the media, press agencies and audiences, on all issues relating to journalistic ethics, was contacted by a private individual in March 2025 regarding an article on the Jeuxvidéo.com website, alleging a lack of respect for accuracy and an affront to dignity. The article, referring to a survey, concluded that people from generation Z have a problem with punctuality. The article's author introduced the survey by claiming that it would drive Apple co-founder Steve Jobs mad. The text was illustrated by an AI-generated image of Steve Jobs with his face contorted in anger.

In accordance with its mandate, the CDJM refers to texts specifying professional obligations. In particular, the *Charte d'éthique professionnelle des journalistes français* (1918-1938-2011) (Charter of Professional Ethics of French Journalists), which states that: journalists "consider critical thinking, truthfulness, accuracy, integrity, fairness and impartiality to be the pillars of journalistic activity; they consider accusations without proof, malicious intent, alteration of documents, distortion of facts, misappropriation of images, lies, manipulation, censorship and self-censorship, and failure to verify facts to be the most serious professional abuses".

The Global Charter of Ethics for Journalists states that a journalist "shall report only facts of which he/she knows the origin [...] shall not suppress essential information or falsify document. He/she will be careful to reproduce faithfully statements and other material that non-public persons publish in social media" (IFJ, 2019, Article 3).

Furthermore, under the terms of its recommendation "Journalism and artificial intelligence: best practices" of 3 July 2023, the CDJM reiterates the established principles: "When visuals generated by AI tools (drawings, illustrations, artist's views, reconstructions...) are used, no doubt should be left as to their artificial nature and the audience should be informed". Furthermore, the recommendation states: "Journalists should not use AI tools to generate images, sounds or videos whose realism is likely to mislead the audience or leave it in a state of ambiguity, by presenting it with information that is contrary to the reality of the facts. As an

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exception, such visuals may be used to illustrate subjects relating to the creation and circulation of these false images. In this case, it is best practice to add a visible and explicit reference to the creation, in order to limit the risk of misleading the audience, particularly in the event of re-use".

While the CDJM takes note of the fact that the editorial team at Jeuxvideo.com, alerted by its e-mail of 4 March 2025, added a notice stating "Image generated by AI", it points out that publishing a fake is a major breach of professional ethics. The CDJM points out that, in its opinion, it is not enough to add, in a caption or commentary, that the photo published is an artificially created image or to mention, in the credit, the tool used to produce it as this information may, in reality, escape a large proportion of readers or viewers. In the CDJM's view, respect for accuracy should lead editorial staff to give priority to what is real, in this case the work of photojournalists, and not to use AI tools to generate images, sounds or videos whose realism could mislead the audience or leave it in a state of ambiguity.

In this case, the CDJM considers that the ethical obligation of accuracy and veracity has not been respected by Jeuxvideo.com. *On the other hand,* it considers that showing someone in a state of anger, even after their death, does not *a priori* constitute an affront to dignity.

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