[ES] Catalan Audiovisual Council analysis of online content that promotes betting and gambling

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Mònica Duran Ruiz
Catalan Audiovisual Council

Current epidemiological data demonstrate that in Spain, up to 4.6% of teenagers show risk behaviour in relation to betting and gambling, and that the average age at which addicts start to gamble is 19 years old. In addition, 37% of adult addicts started gambling before they had reached the minimum legal age to do so.

Bearing in mind this data, the Catalan Audiovisual Council (Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya, CAC) report examines audiovisual content that promotes betting and gambling in various ways, with a view to informing the debate on the rise in betting and gambling addictions. To do so, linear audiovisual communication services (nine television and five radio channels), websites with on-demand television services (CCMA, RTVE, Mediaset, Atresmedia and EDC) and content from video-sharing platforms (Vimeo, Dailymotion and YouTube) were analysed in the CAC report.

According to the analysis carried out by the CAC, the report concludes that on both linear and online media, minors have free, unlimited access to content that promotes gambling and betting and presents them as an attractive activity that generates profit without effort or risk, be it advertising or not.

In this area, advertising on the linear media of television and radio does not, in practice, adhere to the watershed. In the period analysed, 45.3% of television adverts for betting and gambling were broadcast before the watershed; on the radio, this figure was 84.5%. Many of these adverts are shown during broadcasts of sports events, which draw in large youth audiences. The television warnings on responsible gambling and adult age restrictions, in the form of both written messages and overlaid images, are not always clearly visible or obvious to the viewer.

Betting and gambling advertising (on linear and online media) systematically and prominently uses the offer of bonus games to capture and retain new users. They were found in 77.6% of television and 79.8% of radio adverts.

With regard to the Internet, and in particular video-sharing platforms, where children and teenagers comprise a significant share of users, the CAC's analysis also detected that minors can access content freely and without age restriction filters. Tutorials on how to use the betting and gambling sites of various operators

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abound in these videos. On YouTube, 38 of the first 50 videos (76%) in a search for "bet" contain risk factors.

The CAC report warns of the danger of using popular youth celebrities to prescribe gambling and betting; these celebrities are a particular draw for this age group and, therefore, counter to the aim of protecting minors.

Finally, the report outlines that targeted content using algorithms is an intrinsic feature on the Internet, in both advertising and elsewhere. When it comes to betting and gambling, this mechanism means that people who have shown a previous interest in gambling are constantly reminded of it when browsing, either from banners on websites or similar video suggestions on video-sharing platforms, resulting in overexposure to this type of content.

Anàlisi de la presencia de continguts del joc i les apostes en línea, Consell de l'Audiovisual de Catalunya

https://www.cac.cat/sites/default/files/2019-01/Acord%20115_2018%20Joc%20i%20apostes%20CA.pdf

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