

KJM approves new Internet age verification method

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The *Kommission für Jugendmedienschutz* (Committee for the protection of minors in the media – KJM) has adopted a revised version of its criteria for evaluating age verification systems. The KJM is an organ of the German regional media authorities and comprises experts from national government and the Länder. It is Germany’s central supervisory body for the protection of minors in private broadcasting and on the Internet. According to Article 4(2) of the *Jugendmedienschutzstaatsvertrag* (Inter-State Agreement on the protection of minors in the media – JMStV), content that is pornographic, listed or clearly harmful to minors can only be transmitted if the provider ensures that only adults can access it by creating closed user groups. So-called age verification systems are used to control such closed user groups. The JMStV does not lay down a procedure for the approval of age verification systems. The KJM has therefore devised an evaluation procedure and, at the request of companies or providers, assesses relevant concepts for whole or partial solutions. This helps to improve youth protection on the Internet and, at the same time, gives the providers greater legal and planning certainty. According to the key points adopted by the KJM, age verification for closed user groups must involve two inter-related steps, that is, identification and authentication. Identification (proof of age) must take place at least once through face-to-face contact, while authentication is required each time access is requested. Authentication ensures that only the person who has been identified and whose age has been verified can access closed user groups, and is designed to make it more difficult to transfer access rights to unauthorised third parties. Following the KJM’s adoption of the revised evaluation criteria, providers of age verification systems can now incorporate automatic identification technology into their systems. Under this method, users can be identified thanks to an automatic comparison of a photograph with biometric and other data contained in an identity document. Such machine learning technology can be used instead of the face-to-face checks that were previously necessary for age verification. The KJM believes that this method is as secure as video identification, for example. In the context of the amended Audiovisual Media Services Directive and the implementation of the recently adopted inter-state agreement modernising media regulation in Germany, which amends the JMStV, age verification systems are becoming increasingly important for the protection of minors in the media. The KJM believes that automatic identity technology has the potential to reduce users’ misgivings about the identification procedure and therefore increase public acceptance of age verification systems.

Pressemitteilung der KJM

<https://www.die-medienanstalten.de/service/pressemitteilungen/meldung/news/jugendmedienschutz-neue-methode-fuer-altersverifikation-im-internet/>

KJM press release

AVS-Raster der KJM

<https://www.kjm-online.de/aufsicht/technischer-jugendmedienschutz/anzulaessige-angebote/altersverifikationssysteme/>

Criteria for evaluating age verification systems

