

BUSINESS

European Union opens investigation into Musk's AI chatbot Grok over sexual deepfakes





1 of 2 | Elon Musk attends a memorial for conservative activist Charlie Kirk, Sunday, Sept. 21, 2025, at State Farm Stadium in Glendale, Ariz. (AP Photo/Julia Demaree Nihkinson, File)

BY **KELVIN CHAN**

Updated 9:22 PM UTC,
January 26, 2026
[Leer en español](#)

Add AP News on Google

Share

14

LONDON (AP) — The European Union opened a formal investigation into Elon Musk's social media platform X on Monday after his artificial intelligence chatbot Grok spewed nonconsensual sexualized deepfake images on the platform.

European regulators also widened a separate, ongoing investigation into X's recommendation systems after the platform said it would switch to Grok's AI system to choose which posts users see.

The scrutiny from Brussels comes after Grok sparked a [global backlash](#) by allowing users through its AI image generation and editing capabilities to undress people, putting females in transparent bikinis or revealing clothing. Researchers said some images appeared to include children. Some governments banned the service or issued warnings.

The 27-nation EU's executive said it was looking into whether X has done enough as required by the bloc's digital regulations to contain the risks of spreading illegal content such as "manipulated sexually explicit images."



undefined

AP AUDIO: European Union opens investigation into Musk's AI chatbot Grok over sexual deepfakes

AP correspondent Laurence Brooks reports on the EU investigating Elon Musk's X over deepfake images.

That includes content that "may amount to child sexual abuse material," the European Commission said. These risks

MOST READ



- 1 **Carney says Canada has no plans to pursue free trade agreement with China as Trump threatens tariffs**
- 2 **Live updates: Border Patrol commander Greg Bovino and some agents expected to leave Minneapolis, AP source says**
- 3 **He left the US for an internship. Trump's travel ban made it impossible to return**
- 4 **Six people died when a business jet trying to take off in Maine crashed in a snowstorm**
- 5 **The man killed by a US Border Patrol officer in Minneapolis was an ICU nurse, family says**

nave now “materialized,” the commission said, exposing the bloc’s citizens to “serious harm.”

RELATED STORIES



Musk's Grok chatbot restricts image generation after global backlash to sexualized deepfakes



Musk's AI chatbot faces global backlash over sexualized images of women and children



Malaysia and Indonesia become the first countries to block Musk's Grok over sexualized AI images

Regulators will examine whether Grok is living up to its obligations under the Digital Services Act, the bloc’s wide-ranging rule book for keeping internet users safe from harmful content and products.

In response to a request for comment, an X spokeswoman directed The Associated Press to an earlier statement that the company remains “committed to making X a safe platform for everyone” and that it has “zero tolerance” for child sexual exploitation, nonconsensual nudity, and unwanted sexual content.

The X statement from Jan. 14 also said it would [stop allowing](#) users to depict people in “bikinis, underwear or other revealing attire,” but only in places where it has been deemed illegal.

“Non-consensual sexual deepfakes of women and children are a violent, unacceptable form of degradation,” Henna Virkkunen, an executive vice president at the commission, said in a statement.

“With this investigation, we will determine whether X has met its legal obligations under the DSA, or whether it treated rights of European citizens — including those of women and children - as collateral damage of its service,” said Virkkunen, who oversees tech sovereignty, security and democracy.

Musk’s artificial intelligence company xAI launched Grok’s image tool last summer. But the problem began snowballing only late last month when Grok seemingly granted a large

number of user requests to modify images posted by others. The problem was amplified both because Musk pitches his chatbot as an edgier alternative with fewer safeguards than rivals, and because Grok's responses on X are publicly visible, and can therefore be easily spread.

The EU investigation covers only Grok's service on X, and not Grok's website and standalone app. That's because the DSA applies only to the biggest online platforms.

There's no deadline for the bloc to resolve the case, which could end in either X pledging to change its behavior or a hefty fine.

In December Brussels issued X with a [120-million euro](#) (then-\$140 million) fine as part of the earlier ongoing DSA investigation, for shortcomings including blue checkmarks that [broke the rules](#) on "deceptive design practices" that risked exposing users to scams and manipulation.

The bloc has also been scrutinizing X over allegations that Grok generated antisemitic material and has asked the site for more information.

Malaysia and Indonesia [blocked access](#) to Grok earlier this month in response to the controversy, becoming the first countries to do so.

On Friday, Malaysian authorities said they lifted the temporary restriction after the company implemented additional security and preventive measures, without giving further details. Malaysian regulators said they met last week with X's representatives and would continue to monitor the situation.

X is facing similar pressure in the United States

Last week, attorneys general in 35 states wrote a [letter](#) to the company calling for it disclose its plans to prevent Grok from creating nonconsensual sexualized deepfake images, and explain how it will eliminate such existing content from the platform.

"We strongly urge you to be a leader in this space by further addressing the harms resulting from this technology," the attorneys general wrote.

—

AP writer Eileen Ng in Kuala Lumpur contributed to this report

KELVIN CHAN

Chan covers technology and innovation in Europe and beyond for The Associated Press.

Conversation

Join the conversation

ALL COMMENTS 14

NEWEST ▾

MR

MrsMason 6 HRS AGO

You mean Musk, The "breeder"? EDITED

REPLY 0 0

MS

MsKobold 10 HRS AGO

Meanwhile, Grok is being integrated into the Pentagon's .mil system.

REPLY 1 0

UN

undefinedusername 10 HRS AGO

Disbar from ever conducting business in the EU again.

REPLY 2 0

TH

TheRedMare 11 HRS AGO

We all know that GROK was trained on curated datasets that push conservative values. It just so happens that lies and deep fakes are part of the conservative rehetorical arsenal. My question is who does GROK appeal to, especially now that the Pentagon, err, sorry, I mean, The Department of WAR, is integrating GROK into the military's internal networks?

REPLY 5 REPLIES 4 0

3

SHOW OLDER REPLIES

TH

TheRedMare 5 HRS AGO

Reply to **MsKobold**

MsKoblod, I believe in the worker bee too. But trickle up efforts never seem to get beyond the front door, at least not since America's youth helped end our involvement in Vietnam. Not many of the amateur analysts in these pages might know about that, too young. But today the government is now hardened. It...

[Read more](#)

REPLY 1 REPLY 0 0

MS

MsKobold 4 HRS AGO

Reply to **TheRedMare**

I know. I vacillate between optimism and extreme cynicism.

REPLY 1 0

LOAD MORE COMMENTS

Powered by

ACTIVE CONVERSATIONS



Trump's about-face in Minnesota after Pretti...



The shootings in Minneapolis are...



5



15



The Associated Press

Advancing the Power of Facts

The Associated Press is an independent global news organization dedicated to factual reporting. Founded in 1846, AP today remains the most trusted source of fast, accurate, unbiased news in all formats and the essential provider of the technology and services vital to the news business. More than half the world's population sees AP journalism every day.



FROM AP NEWS

[ABOUT](#)

[CONTACT US](#)

[ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT](#)

[TERMS OF USE](#)

[PRIVACY POLICY](#)

[YOUR PRIVACY CHOICES](#)

[DO NOT SELL OR SHARE MY PERSONAL INFORMATION](#)

[LIMIT USE AND DISCLOSURE OF SENSITIVE PERSONAL INFORMATION](#)

[CA NOTICE OF COLLECTION](#)

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

[AP.ORG](#)

[CAREERS](#)

[ADVERTISE WITH US](#)

[AP NEWS VALUES AND PRINCIPLES](#)

[AP'S ROLE IN ELECTIONS](#)

[AP LEADS](#)

[AP DEFINITIVE SOURCE BLOG](#)

[AP IMAGES SPOTLIGHT BLOG](#)

[AP STYLEBOOK](#)

[AP NEWS CODE OF CONDUCT](#)

Copyright 2026 The Associated Press. All Rights Reserved.

