

The Online Safety Act

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As many readers will know, the Online Safety Act is now in operation in the UK. I have checked with Ofcom to see if this site is impacted and based on the answers that I provided, this is their response:



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Does the Online Safety Act apply to your service?

Based on the answers you have provided...

No

... the Online Safety Act is not likely to apply to your online service.

That makes life easier for me.

However, the Act has serious consequences for others. Hardly noticed in the news media (which is exempt from the Act, and so very biased) has been the result of Wikipedia's legal action to ask that it be exempted from the requirements of the Act. It has lost its appeal on this, [as the Brighton Argus](#) (making its first appearance in these pages) reported:

Wikipedia has lost a High Court challenge against the UK Government over verification requirements in the Online Safety Act.

The non-profit Wikimedia Foundation (WMF), along with an anonymous editor known as BLN, wanted the website to be exempt from certain regulations that came into force earlier this year.

They argued that compliance with the new law would mean Wikipedia would have to impose verification on people who did not want it or limit the amount of monthly UK users.

But in a judgment on Monday, Mr Justice Johnson rejected those claims, saying there may be ways to work within the law “without causing undue damage to Wikipedia’s operations”.

This is very obviously absurd. As a consequence of this ruling, those under 18 (as well as everyone else) will now have to prove their age on Wikipedia to gain access. Additionally, Wikipedia will need to rank all its pages to block those that should not be accessible, which will be nearly impossible. It's as if our government and those right-wing think tanks behind this legislation (most especially Carnegie UK) wanted to deny access to non-mainstream media sources of information in this country.