Approaching one year after becoming a signatory, we welcome the opportunity to both review the significant progress made on our commitments to the European Commission Code of Practice against Disinformation, and provide updates on our continued efforts following the EU Parliamentary elections.

During the European election period we provided monthly reports, which highlighted updates on our efforts around election integrity, updates to our Ads Transparency Centre and political ads transparency, as well as details on our collaboration with partners, including governments, industry peers, civil society, and research organisations.

This report provides an overview of the implementation measures taken throughout the duration of the code, as well as developments since the last interim monthly report was published. Beyond election periods we continue to update our rules and transparency to better and more strategically fight and enforce against attempted manipulation, spam, disinformation, and abuse.

Previous reports

- Twitter Progress Report
- January 2019 update
- February 2019 update
- March 2019 update
- April 2019 update
- May 2019 update
Scrutiny of ad placements

This section details the efforts made throughout the Code including the implementation of a certification process for political advertisers during the EU elections period, the publication of our interactive Guide to Twitter Advertising, and our updated advertising policy. It also outlines efforts made since the submission of the fifth interim report (May 2019) including updated metrics around enforcement of ads policies including unacceptable business practices, Quality ads policy enforcement, and EU political ads enforcement broken down by Member State. We also provide information on our latest update on advertising policies with respect to state media.

EU Political Advertiser Certification

As mentioned above, as part of Twitter’s Political Content Policy and overall commitment to transparency, advertisers promoting political campaigning content for the European Parliament elections are required to go through a strict certification process.

Different information is required based on the country in which users wish to advertise and on the nature of the advertisers: in the case of organisations or candidates registered with their corresponding national electoral authority, they need to provide registration proof as submitted to their corresponding national electoral authority. For organisations not registered with a national electoral authority, an EU VAT or EU Company identification number is necessary. For individuals, an EU government-issued photo ID is required. Once proof of identity is verified and advertisers meet the eligibility requirements, a letter with an access code is posted to their address to confirm they are located within the EU. This procedure aims to ensure that only EU-based individuals can advertise.
political campaign content, thereby avoiding interference from malicious foreign actors.

**Elections Guide for Political Campaigning Advertisers**

In line with our commitment to assist and/or allow political campaigning advertisers to assess media buying strategies and online reputational risks, we produced a guide for EU political advertisers.

Our interactive [Guide to Twitter Advertising](https://twitter.com) provides the answers to the questions most frequently asked, and helps EU political advertisers create compelling Tweets for their audiences before, during and after the 2019 European Elections. The guide includes details of our new EU Political Campaigning Policy, how to get certified and started with Twitter Ads, plus hints and tips on how to target audiences and measure campaign performance.
Safety in advertising on Twitter

Twitter does not employ strict policies only in relation to political content but around advertising on the whole in order to ensure quality and safety on the platform. Our advertising policy is organised around six key principles: keeping users safe, promoting honest content and targeting it responsibly, prohibiting the distribution of spam, harmful, or other disruptive content, setting high editorial standards for the Twitter Ads content created, and being informed about the Twitter Ads processes that support these policies.

Also in the case of business ads, before any account can advertise on Twitter, it must meet specific criteria to be eligible. For example, advertisements must include a functioning URL in their bio, they should represent the brand and product being promoted and cannot mislead users to open content by including exaggerated or sensational language or misleading calls to action. Moreover, newly created accounts are held in review for a period of time before they can begin advertising with Twitter Ads.

When advertisers on Twitter choose to promote their content with Twitter Ads, their content may become subject to a review process. This is designed to support the quality and safety of the Twitter Ads platform. This process helps Twitter check that advertisers are complying with our advertising policies. All ads policies undergo regular revision and updates in order to be compliant with existing legislation and product developments. We invest heavily in these areas to keep our product and processes updated.

Enforcement of ad policies

The enforcement of our new political ads policy began on 11 March 2019. Twitter gathered details on the enforcement of our ads policies across EU Member States, highlighting our teams’ work to protect our users from misleading and potentially harmful advertisements, and ensuring brand safety for our advertisers, including EU political advertisers. In the previous progress reports we provided detailed enforcement data, broken down by EU Member State in the areas focusing on:

- Unacceptable business practices
- Quality ads policy enforcement
- EU political ads enforcement

Examples of unacceptable business practices include:

- Potentially deceptive, misleading, or harmful business propositions.
● Making misleading, false, or unsubstantiated claims.

● Promoting misleading information or omitting vital information on pricing, payment terms, or expenses the user will incur.

● Promoting offers or deals that are not available or easily located on the landing page.

More information on the policy can be found here.

The table below indicates the number of ads targeting EU Member States¹, rejected per Twitter’s Unacceptable Business Practices Ads Policy in the period 01/01/2019 - 31/08/2019.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted country</th>
<th># Ads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>361</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Note for all tables: if an EU Member State is not listed it means that there were no ads rejected for this policy in that country.
Ireland 350
Italy 788
Latvia 365
Lithuania 221
Luxembourg 131
Malta 145
Netherlands 744
Poland 388
Portugal 326
Romania 204
Slovakia 171
Slovenia 199
Spain 786
Sweden 915
United Kingdom 772

Total 11,307

Quality ads policy enforcement

To ensure that users have a positive experience on Twitter, advertisements must adhere to editorial guidelines for the following categories:

- user bio and destination URL
- content, clarity and accuracy
- text, image and video

More information on the policy can be found here.

The table below indicates the number of ads targeting EU Member States, rejected per Twitter’s Quality Ads Policy in the period 01/01/2019 - 31/08/2019.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Country</th>
<th># Ads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>641</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>257</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvia</td>
<td>291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuania</td>
<td>231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malta</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>319</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Slovenia 239
Spain 500
Sweden 606
United Kingdom 1,650
**Total** 10,649

**EU Political Campaigning Ads policy**

Political Content includes political campaigning and issue advocacy advertising or EU Parliamentary elections, political campaigning advertisers must complete a certification process. More information on the policy can be found [here](#).

The table below indicates the number of rejected ads targeting EU Member States from non-certified accounts during the policy enforcement from 11/03/2019 to 26/05/2019. This policy was applicable only for the EU Parliamentary elections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targeted Country</th>
<th># Ads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(EU) Political Campaigning  
11/03/2019- 26/05/2019
Twitter’s EU political campaigning ads policy, with its thorough certification process and the strict requirements imposed to advertisers, fulfills the commitment under the Code of Practice against Disinformation to ‘deploy policies and processes to disrupt advertising and monetisation incentives for relevant behaviours, such as misrepresenting material information about oneself for the purpose of one’s properties’. Building on this, we will continue to improve our policies, processes and tools.

**Update of advertising policies in state media**

In August we updated our advertising policies with respect to state media. Going forward, we will not accept advertising from state-controlled news media entities. Any affected accounts will be free to
continue to use Twitter to engage in public conversation, but restricted from using our advertising products.

This policy will apply to news media entities that are either financially or editorially controlled by the state. It has been informed by established academic and civil society leaders in this space. Sources include Reporters Without Borders Press Freedom Index, Freedom House, the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index, the European Journalism Centre’s Media Landscapes Report, the Committee to Protect Journalists, and UNESCO’s framework to assess media development and independence. Policy determinations will be made on the basis of critical issues of media freedom and independence, such as control of editorial content, financial ownership, influence or interference over broadcasters, editors, and journalists, direct and indirect exertion of political pressure, and/or control over the production and distribution process. This policy will not apply to entities that are solely dedicated to entertainment, sports, and travel content. However, if the content is mixed with news, it will be prohibited.

After the affected entities are notified, they will have 30 days to offboard from Twitter advertising products, after which we will stringently enforce these policies. In the meantime, no new campaigns will be allowed and we will enforce our policies rigorously. Affected media entities are free to continue to use their Twitter account(s) to organically participate in public conversation, as long as they are in compliance with the Twitter Rules. We are exploring transparency approaches to keep the public updated on these types of actions going forward.

Transparency of political advertising

This section details our implementation of our ongoing commitment to improving the transparency of political advertising on Twitter. This includes the expansion of the Ads Transparency Center (ATC) and the certified political advertisers and adverts ran on the platform throughout the EU election period, which - in line with our commitment to providing greater transparency - will remain visible in the ATC indefinitely.

EU Political campaigning ads policy

Twitter is committed to ensuring that promoted accounts and paid advertisements are free from malicious and bad faith actors, including foreign state actors seeking to manipulate our service around the EU elections.

In February, Twitter political campaigning ads policy was expanded to cover all EU Member States. This policy provided the general public, whether a Twitter user or not, with an additional layer of
insight into who is running a political campaign ad on Twitter, including details on: 1) ads purchased by a national or European political party, 2) ads purchased by a candidate, and 3) ads that advocate for or against a clearly identified candidate or party, to more stringent rules and eligibility requirements. A thorough certification process was also introduced (as illustrated in the following section).

The requirements that political advertisers had to meet are:

- Profile photo, header photo, and website must be consistent with the handle's online presence.
- Bio must include a website that provides valid contact information. Political parties and European Parliament candidates should indicate their European political party affiliation.
- If handle name is not related to the certified entity, the bio must include the following disclaimer: "Owned by [certified entity name]."

**Expansion of the Ads Transparency Centre and Political Advertisers Certification**

Transparency is a core value of the work we do at Twitter. Our commitment to transparency is embodied in our Ads Transparency Center (ATC), a repository of all ads currently running on Twitter and political campaign ads taken out by certified advertisers during the EU elections. Launched in the summer of 2018 and subsequently expanded to the EU, the ATC increased transparency for political advertising ahead of the European Parliament Elections by enabling anyone - whether they are Twitter users or not - to view promoted Tweets that have been served on the platform, along with online campaign details such as billing information, ad spend, impressions data per Tweet, and demographic targeting data for the ads being served.

In addition to the information shared within the ATC, we made it clearer to recognise who advertises European political campaign content on Twitter by including a visual label and disclaimer information on promoted content from certified accounts. This allowed users to easily identify political campaign ads and to know who paid for them.

New features to the EU political ads on Twitter were subsequently added to make it easier to direct users from the political campaigning ads directly to the EU political Ads Transparency Center. This helps to ensure greater transparency and real-time information around the content and messaging leading up to the EU elections. When a user views an EU political ad, this is already labelled as a promoted post with the additional context of being political. By clicking on the ad, users are able to view further details and are provided with a link which will direct users to the Ads Transparency Center. (Learn more).
As of 11 March 2019, individuals and organisations seeking to advertise political campaigning content were required to undergo a thorough certification process, verifying, among other elements, their identity and that their location was within the EU. The latter element aimed to ensure that only EU-based actors could advertise political campaign content on the service, in response to the concerns over the role of coordinated disinformation campaigns in subverting the democratic process.

Support and training were provided since March 2019 to the political parties and groups on how to enroll as a certified political advertiser.

Twitter received a total of 70 applications from across the EU to be certified as a political campaign account. As of the end of May, there were 27 EU certified political campaign accounts, 21 of which were running ads for the EU elections (an overview is presented in the image below). The breakdown by country was presented in our May progress report. These accounts contributed to 23,253,153 impressions on Twitter, and the revenue for the European Parliament elections from political ads between 19 February and 27 May was 98,531 euros.

Political ads (that can be viewed here) will remain indefinitely within the Ads Transparency Centre, where they are viewable by anyone in the world, regardless of whether or not they own a Twitter account.
Political campaigning advertisers

As part of our increased transparency efforts, we clearly label and show disclaimer information for Promoted Tweets that fall under our Political campaigning policy.

Political campaigning on Twitter in the US is defined as:
- Ads purchased by a political committee or candidate registered with the FEC;
or
- Ads advocating for or against a clearly identified candidate for federal office.

We require political campaigning advertisers to self identify and created stricter requirements for who can serve these ads.

You can read more about how we define political campaigning in our Political Campaigning Policy.

D66

EPP
The European People’s Party; centre-right, largest political family in EU. Holds Presidency of EU Parliament, EU Commission, EU Council.
#StrongerTogether

European Greens
A Green wave is surging through Europe. It’s coming from the grass roots and in May it’s moving into the European Parliament too.
#LetsActTogether

Fianna Fáil
Fianna Fáil, the Republican Party, led by @MichealMartinTD; Committed to delivering #AnirelandForAll. Member of @ALDEParty in

GroenLinks
Spreek je uit. Stem donderdag 23 mei GroenLinks. beweging.groenlinks.nl/doe-mee @europeangreens

PES
Party of European Socialists. Social democrats. Feminists. Pro European. @TimmermansEU is our common candidate. A kitten dies every time you feed a troll.

S&D Group
The Socialists and Democrats Group in the European Parliament works for social justice & equality for all EU citizens.

VVD
In Nederland staan we niet tegenover elkaar, maar naast elkaar.
#kiesvooroneden
Integrity of Service

This section summarises the key developments in protecting the platform from spam and malicious automation as well as reiterating election specific measures such as the creation of a high-level cross-functional elections team, the implementation of our election integrity policy, the creation of a dedicated reporting feature for misleading voting related content, updates that were made to our reporting features, and details surrounding onboarding of key partners to our Partner Support Portal. We also share the latest numbers around enforcement of proactive Anti spam and fake account challenges and user reports of spam.

Health update

The public conversation occurring on Twitter is never more important than during elections. Our service shows the world what is happening, democratises access to information and — at its best — provides people around the globe with insights into a diversity of perspectives on critical election issues. Progress made over the last year towards a Twitter free of abuse, spam and other behaviours that distract from the public conversation include the following:

- 38% of abusive content that enforcement action is taken against is surfaced proactively to our teams for review instead of relying on reports.
- 16% fewer abuse reports after an interaction from an account the reporter does not follow.
- 100,000 accounts suspended for creating new accounts after a suspension during January — March 2019, a 45% increase from the same time last year.
- 60% faster response to appeals requests with our new in-app appeal process.
- 3 times more abusive accounts suspended within 24 hours after a report compared to the same time last year.
- 2.5 times more private information removed with a new, easier reporting process.

Fighting malicious automation and protecting conversation health

Building on the lessons learnt from the experience of the 2018 US midterm elections, Twitter made further progress in tackling malicious automation, fake accounts and spam, which can provide a vehicle for the spread of disinformation on platforms. In this way, we reinforced our preparedness for the European elections.

Spam or platform manipulation can take many forms and our rules are intended to address a wide range of prohibited behaviour, including:

- commercially-motivated spam, that typically aims to drive traffic or attention from a conversation on Twitter to accounts, websites, products, services, or initiatives; and
coordinated activity, that attempts to artificially influence conversations through the use of multiple accounts, fake accounts, automation, and/or scripting.

Twitter fights spam and malicious automation strategically and at scale. Our focus is increasingly on proactively identifying problematic accounts and behaviour rather than waiting until we receive a report. Our primary goal on this front is to identify and challenge accounts engaging in spammy or manipulative behavior before users are exposed to misleading, inauthentic, or distracting content.

We enforce our policies depending on the severity of the violation as well as any previous history of violations. Our action is also informed by the type of spammy activity identified. The actions we take may include Tweets deletion and temporary account locks, permanent suspension, and anti-spam challenges. We challenge accounts when we detect suspicious levels of activity, leading to accounts being locked and prompted to provide additional information (e.g., a phone number), or to solve a reCAPTCHA.

High-level internal elections group

In February 2019, a high-level internal elections group was formed to lead Twitter’s electoral integrity work in the EU until polling day. Using our proprietary-built internal tools, the team, comprised of engineers, trust and safety and legal experts, data scientists, and policy-analysts, proactively worked to protect the integrity of regional trends, support partner escalations, and identify potential threats from malicious actors.

This cross-functional, international approach was also deployed during other recent EU elections such as Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Estonia, Spain, and Belgium. As we move forward to support the integrity of other elections, we will continue to use this model and leverage the learnings we garner along the way to augment our approach.

Election integrity policy

We believe we have a responsibility to protect the integrity of election conversations from interference and manipulation and we therefore prohibit attempts to use our services to manipulate or disrupt elections. To this regard, in April a new election integrity policy was established with the objective to halt the misuse of Twitter’s services for the purpose of manipulating or interfering in elections. This includes posting or sharing content that may suppress voter turnout or mislead people about when, where, or how to vote.

More specifically, the following three categories of manipulative behaviour and content are prohibited under Twitter’s election integrity policy:
● **Misleading information about how to participate**

Users can’t share false or misleading information about how to participate in an election or other civic event. This includes, but is not limited to: misleading information about how to vote or register to vote (for example, that you can vote by Tweet, text message, email, or phone call); misleading information about requirements for voting, including identification requirements; and misleading statements or information about the official, announced date or time of an election.

● **Voter suppression and intimidation**

Users can’t share false or misleading information intended to intimidate or dissuade voters from participating in an election. This includes but is not limited to: misleading claims that polling places are closed, that polling has ended, or other misleading information relating to votes not being counted; misleading claims about police or law enforcement activity related to polling places or elections; misleading claims about long lines or equipment problems at voting locations; misleading claims about voting procedures or techniques which could dissuade voters from participating in an election; and threats regarding voting locations (note that our [violent threats policy](#) may also be relevant for threats not covered by this policy).

● **False or misleading affiliation**

Users cannot create fake accounts which misrepresent their affiliation or share content that falsely represents their affiliation to a candidate, elected official, political party, electoral authority, or government entity. Content that would not be in violation of this policy include inaccurate statements about an elected official, candidate, or political party; organic content that is polarising, biased, hyperpartisan, or contains controversial viewpoints expressed about elections or politics; discussion of public polling information; and using Twitter pseudonymously or as a [parody, commentary, or fan account](#) to discuss elections or politics.

**Dedicated reporting feature for misleading voting related content**

Further to the development of the election integrity policy, a [dedicated reporting feature](#) was created for content that aims to mislead users about issues pertaining to voting as illustrated in the three categories reported above. This allowed users to more easily report this content.

This feature, introduced in addition to our existing proactive approach to tackling forms of [platform manipulation](#) on the service, was fully operational in the EU as of 29 April.
Details on how to report content that aims to mislead users about issues pertaining to voting can be consulted via the Tweet here.

In the period 01 - 20 May 2019, Twitter received 28,456 reports via the dedicated function.

Example of Tweets violating Twitter’s rules are represented below.

Example 1:

Username @username
Breaking News!
Due to the overcrowding at the polling station and nasty remonaers polling stations are opened tomorrow just for UKIP and BrexitParty voters Stay safe stay home and vote tomorrow for Brexit UKIP and BrexitParty URGENTLY RT FOR EVERYONE

Example 2:

Username @username
Infatti non cascatei amici segnate la scheda della Lega con due cerchi e un ellisse e scrivete Capitano

English translation: “Don’t let them fool you, put two circles and an ellipse on the electoral ballot of Lega and write “Capitano”

Example 3:

Username @Username
Ganz wichtig für alle Sachsen. In Sachsen findet die Europawahl aus organisatorischen Gründen erst am 27.05.19 statt. Anderslautende Daten auf den Wahlbenachrichtigungen können ignoriert werden. Bitte weiter sagen #Europawahl2019

English Translation: “Very important for all Saxons. In Saxony, for organisational reasons the European elections will take place on 27.05.19 only. Other dates on the election notification can be ignored. Please pass on #Europawahl2019”
Updates to Twitter reporting features

In order to provide users more tools when they encounter potentially spammy or inauthentic accounts, we have updated our spam reporting tools so that users can now specify the type of spam they are seeing when they report, including fake accounts.

We significantly improved the way users can report the exposure of personal information on Twitter, to ensure quicker and more accurate actions are taken. This will help strengthen our approach to providing greater support for candidates through their campaigns around the EU elections.

Partner Support Portal (PSP)

In the run up to the EU elections, we updated the Partner Support Portal, a tool for allowing partners to rapidly report suspected violations of the Twitter Rules. This improvement facilitated easier reporting from outside partners and further promoted information sharing by tapping into the experience and expertise of active stakeholders.

Our goal was and still is to expedite our response to reports from people and organisations active in the election arena. Prior to Election Day, we onboarded to the Partner Support Portal more than 80 partners across the EU. This included election support organisations, EU based research organisations, universities and academics who study the spread of misinformation in the media, and key EU and national political parties and institutions. During the election period, we did not receive any reports from our partners across the EU.
Enforcement updates to address spam, malicious automation, and fake accounts

We continued to enforce our policies around impersonation, inactive accounts, automation, and spam to ensure the safety and security of our users and remove malicious actors on Twitter. We challenge millions of potentially spammy accounts every week - approximately 10 accounts per second - requesting additional details, like email addresses and phone numbers to authenticate them, or requiring the account holder to complete a challenge to confirm that a human is in control of the account. In the period 01 January - 31 August 2019, **126,025,294** accounts were pro-actively challenged by Twitter platform-wide. Twitter actions approximately 75% of accounts challenged.²

Proactive Anti spam* and fake account challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of accounts challenged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>19,522,273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2019</td>
<td>17,036,751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>16,552,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>13,787,154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>14,848,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>15,376,611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2019</td>
<td>14,558,671</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2019</td>
<td>14,342,956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>01 January 2019 - 31 August 2019</strong></td>
<td><strong>126,025,294</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Anti spam challenges refer to our internal, proactive detection of suspected spam and fake accounts. If we have reason to suspect an account may be engaging in platform manipulation, we may require the account holder to complete a challenge to confirm that a human is in control of the account. As stated above, this could be confirming a phone number or email address, or completing a reCAPTCHA challenge. It is important to note that this is raw data, these figures will be subject to change as it is reviewed for publication in our Transparency Report.

In the same timeframe, **4,544,096** user reports of spam were submitted after after people who use Twitter received interaction from a suspected spam account.

² The term ‘action’ refers to our range of enforcement options, including possible account suspension. The list of enforcement actions is available here.
User reports of spam*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Number of reports submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 2019</td>
<td>489,148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 2019</td>
<td>406,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2019</td>
<td>504,729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2019</td>
<td>597,295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 2019</td>
<td>537,784</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2019</td>
<td>547,545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 2019</td>
<td>688,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2019</td>
<td>783,047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>01 January 2019 - 31 August 2019</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,554,096</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*User reports of spam reflects reports submitted by people who use Twitter after receiving interaction from a suspected spam account. The lower numbers reflect our ongoing motivation to reduce the burden on users of Twitter to report spam and malicious automation. It is important to note that this is raw data, these figures will be subject to change as it is reviewed for publication in our Transparency Report.

The new policies and functions detailed in this section, together with the results achieved, show Twitter’s tireless work towards the commitments on the integrity of services stipulated under the code of practice on disinformation. Of course, this is an ongoing task. We remain committed to understanding how bad-faith actors use our services. We will continue to proactively combat nefarious attempts to undermine the integrity of Twitter, while partnering with civil society, government, our industry peers, and researchers to improve our collective understanding of coordinated attempts to interfere in the public conversation. Our dedicated site integrity team, in partnership with a diverse range of committed organisations and personnel across the company, continue to invest heavily in this area. We are constantly seeking to improve our ability to detect, understand, and neutralise these campaigns as quickly and robustly as technically possible.
Expanding digital literacy and empowering consumers

Below we reiterate measures taken to expand digital literacy and empowering consumers, including our efforts in keeping users informed on ads and privacy options on the platform, ensuring users find accurate information on issues such as vaccines through #GetInformed, working with partners to provide support to those at risk through #ThereisHelp, media literacy initiatives including our partnership with UNESCO and #EUMediaLiteracyWeek, and our work around #SaferInternetDay2019, #WorldPressFreedomDay, as well as voter engagement efforts, training with government partners, and civil society. We will continue to engage with key stakeholders in these important areas.

Informing users on ads and privacy options

In line with Commitment 9 of the Code of Practice on Disinformation, we provided detailed insights in order to help users understand why they see certain advertisements on our platform, for example, when a user follows, tweets, searches, views, or interact with tweets or Twitter accounts, we may use these actions to customise Twitter Ads. Furthermore we provided tools to enable users to make meaningful privacy choices as regard ad personalisation and internet-based ads.

Furthermore, last year Twitter made it easier for users to switch their timeline from seeing the latest, chronologically posted tweets, and top tweets from their network with a simple click.

Building media literacy skills

We believe citizens should be empowered to develop the skills that help them critically analyse material for credibility and to ask the right questions of the information they are engaging with and sharing online.

Several steps were taken to empower citizens and enable them to become more media literate throughout the year. These include (but are not limited to) the production of the Educator’s Guide to Twitter, which raises awareness of media and information literacy among parents, educators, and academics and the distribution of Ads for Good grants to 10 separate NGOs in UNESCO’s media and literacy network, to help raise awareness of their work. We also supported the efforts of many non-profits across the world who work to promote media and information literacy.
Working together for a safer Internet in the EU

The safety of Twitter is a top priority for us. But making Twitter safer is a job that’s never complete. Nor is it a job we can do alone. As part of our ongoing commitment, on Safer Internet Day 2019 we supported our global network of safety partners by amplifying their campaigns, awarding Ads for Good grants, and hosting them in our offices for frank and robust conversations. To serve that conversation on the platform, we launched a special emoji for the hashtags #SaferInternetDay and #SID2019, available in twelve languages to encourage conversations around a safer internet.

We remain committed to improving the quality of information you see on Twitter, and ensuring that content does not lead to offline harm. We will continue to make it more difficult for bad actors to create spammy or fake accounts that manipulate our platform. And we want to do all of this as transparently as possible. We won’t stop working to build a healthier Twitter, so people feel safe and are able to find high-quality information on our service.

Fighting disinformation on vaccines #GetInformed

Ensuring that individuals can find information from authoritative sources is a key component of our commitment to protecting the health of the public conversation on Twitter. We understand the importance of vaccines in preventing illness and disease and to help people find reliable information on this subject, in May we launched a tool so when users search for keywords associated with vaccines, a prompt directs them to a credible public health resource.
This initiative, which is being progressively rolled out in new markets across the world, builds on our work to guard against the artificial amplification of non-credible content about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. We already ensure that advertising content does not contain misleading claims about the cure, treatment, diagnosis or prevention of certain diseases and conditions, including vaccines. In addition, we do not auto-suggest queries that are likely to direct individuals to non-credible commentary and information about vaccines.

Suicide prevention #ThereIsHelp

At Twitter we recognise that we have a responsibility to help encourage users who may be struggling not to self-harm to reach out for professional help. On the occasion of the World Suicide Prevention Day, celebrated on the 10th of September, Twitter, continuing the partnership with the International Association for Suicide Prevention (IASP), launched a special emoji in the shape of an orange ribbon, the international symbol for World Suicide Prevention Day. The emoji appears when people use the hashtags #WorldSuicidePreventionDay, #SuicidePrevention, #WSPD2018, and #WSPD in different languages.
Most importantly, thanks to partnerships with suicide prevention organisations around the world, Twitter offers a prompt which links the user directly to valuable mental health resources: when someone searches for terms associated with suicide, depression or self-harm, the top search result is a message encouraging them to reach out for help. This valuable notification also provides the contact details of the partner organisation in the country where the search is carried out.

**De l’aide est disponible**

Si vous ou une personne que vous connaissez traverse une période difficile, sachez que vous n’êtes pas seul(e). Notre partenaire belge le Centre de Prévention du Suicide peut vous aider. Appelez la ligne d’écoute 0800 32 123.

Ne restez pas seul(e)!

Centre de Prévention du Suicide @suicidebelgique

In addition, Twitter has a dedicated reporting form for people threatening suicide or self-harm. A specialised team reviews these reports and upon receiving them, they get in direct contact to let the individuals know that someone who cares about them identified they might be at risk. Twitter provides online and hotline resources and encourage them to seek help.

Twitter also shares information on their Help Centre both for people who may be experiencing thoughts of suicide and self harm, and for people who are concerned about others on Twitter.

#WorldPressFreedomDay

As part of our ongoing commitment to promote healthy and inclusive discourse on our platform, to celebrate #WorldPressFreedomDay 2019, we launched #HerStory, a monthly video series seeking to elevate female voices in journalism. #HerStory featured women journalists with diverse backgrounds and focus areas, who discussed about their lives, how they use Twitter to report the news, and other women journalists who inspire them.

Promoting media literacy and healthy campaigning on Twitter
In March we contributed to the inaugural #EUMediaLiteracyWeek by hosting a number of events across Europe.

In Ireland we supported the #BeMediaSmart campaign from @MediaLitIreland, an initiative of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. We amplified the reach of this campaign by supporting nonprofit partners with Ads for Good grants. We also hosted secondary school students from across Dublin who participated in the School Digital Champions programme, an initiative of the Department of Communications, Climate Action, and Environment. We talked to them about digital citizenship and the increasing importance of media literacy skills.

In France we partnered with the Liaison Center for News Media and Education and hosted 60 students in the Paris office of @TwitterFrance to discuss the representation of women in sport by analysing Tweets from various sources. At the event, we were joined by a sports journalist, a teacher, and an Olympic basketball player.

**Voter engagement**

To augment the conversation on Twitter, we collaborated with the European Parliament and a number of non-governmental organisations to promote voter engagement, registration, civic engagement, and media literacy.

In coordination with the European Parliament, we developed an emoji to capture and encourage the #ThisTimeImVoting campaign. The emoji and other resources developed around it, such as the conversation card pictured here, were intended to get voters talking about how they planned to vote and why voting in these elections was important to them. We also directed users to the official #ThisTimeImVoting website where they could find information about the voting process in their Member State.

**Government engagement across the EU**

In the months preceding the EU elections, we engaged with government and EU institutional bodies to highlight our ongoing efforts, gather feedback, and discuss challenges. This included meetings with the EU Commissioners leading on election integrity efforts ahead of the EU elections.
We worked closely with the European External Action Service (EEAS), following the creation of the EU Rapid Alert System (RAS) to improve coordination on external threats with member states around elections. We engaged at national level with a number of government agencies and ministries on security and election integrity efforts, including working closely with EU Computer Emergency Response Teams across the EU.

We provided training to the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA), the body tasked with monitoring the implementation of the Code of Practice on Disinformation, on the Twitter ads transparency center, ads policy, and the certification process for political advertisers.

We offered and provided trainings across the EU on safety, security, campaigning, and best practises for candidates and local and pan-European political parties and groups. Some examples below:

In Sweden, we held a training for Swedish government agencies facilitated by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, highlighting Twitter’s work to protect the integrity of the EU elections and sharing safety best practices for government communicators.

In Ireland, we hosted and livestreamed an event at our headquarters in Dublin where we gave a training on campaigning best practices for political parties and candidates. This training also included safety and account security information, along with an update on our proactive efforts around platform health and election integrity.
In Germany, we joined the "integrity and security initiative" hosted by the national cyber security authority, the Federal Office for Information Security (Bundesamt für Informationssicherheit). This initiative aims to protect the integrity of elections and to tackle information operations by creating a better and more comprehensive understanding of interference into elections through knowledge sharing between participating stakeholders.

Civil society

Throughout the months leading up to the EU elections, our teams were engaged in real-time discussions with civil society organisations working on issues specific to building constructive and healthy conversations on Twitter around elections, election integrity, digital literacy, and voter engagement across the EU. Partnerships with civil society organisations are invaluable in developing our understanding of shared societal challenges and opportunities, enabling us to quickly respond to any activity requiring action. Some examples below:

On Twitter, we supported a number of organisations across the EU through the #WeDeserveBetter campaign, and facilitated a workshop at our headquarters in Dublin which brought together civil society organisations, government, and industry partners from across the EU to coordinate on efforts to tackle hateful conduct online and promote more constructive public debate around elections.

In the UK, we have awarded Ads for Good grants to some of our closest nonprofit partners. Shout Out UK runs political and media literacy programmes in schools and colleges and amplified their Media Minded content with this Twitter campaign. Bite The Ballot reached out to young people on the service and surveyed them on their civic literacy. We also ran a Tea, Toast, and Tweeting session on digital literacy to support users over the age of 50 in their use of Twitter.

On Twitter, we supported Alliance of Democracies (@AoDemocracies) to promote their “Pledge for Election Integrity” (https://electionpledge.org/). The pledge states that “Political parties and their candidates are on the front lines of democracy and election integrity” and the pledge called on “all democratic parties as well as candidates themselves, to commit to take no action to aid and abet those who seek to undermine our democracies.”
In Ireland, we supported the #BeMediaSmart campaign from @MediaLitIreland, an initiative of the Broadcasting Authority of Ireland. We amplified the reach of this campaign by supporting nonprofit partners with Ads for Good grants. Partners included the National Youth Council of Ireland, the National Adult Literacy Agency, and Webwise. We also hosted secondary school students from across Dublin who participated in the School Digital Champions programme, an initiative of the Department of Communications, Climate Action, and Environment. We talked to them about digital citizenship and the increasing importance of media literacy skills.
We also engaged in a number of events and debates and supported initiatives focusing on promoting the positive engagement around voting and the EU. One such event was the Democracy Alive festival, the first EU festival dedicated to bringing citizens together to discuss the future of Europe and the importance of having all voices heard through voting.

News Partnerships

We worked closely with news partners to broadcast key EU candidate debates live on Twitter. This included leveraging the #ThisTimeImVoting emoji design for the EBU (@EUDebate) #TellEurope debate, and setting up a Twitter event page to collate news and commentary. The live stream of the debate was viewed over 2.5 million times from the Parliament’s @Europarl_EN account.
Election conversation

To encourage conversation across the EU, we launched a special emoji for the occasion — activated by the hashtags #EP2019 and #EUElections2019. These hashtags were translated into the 24 official languages of the EU to ensure that citizens could add their voice to the discussion.

From Thursday 23 to Sunday 26 May — when voters from 28 Member States went to the polls — EU election-related conversations generated 2.1 million Tweets collectively, including those using #EP2019, #EUElections2019. The large volume of discussion on Twitter around the elections reflects the offline reality, with the highest voter turnout in 25 years!

Since the campaign officially began in February, there have been 6.2 million election-related Tweets, marking a 273% increase in volume on the previous EU elections.

From Portugal to Cyprus, and from Finland to Greece, #EUElections2019 sparked a regional Twitter conversation on the future of the European Union!
Twitter was where citizens went to express themselves in their own languages on the issues that matter most to them. Based on our view of the election conversation, voters recognised that certain issues, such as climate change and the future of Europe, will likely require a regional, as much as national discussion. For example, the rise in Twitter conversation involving the @europeangreens is reflective of the #GreenWave across Europe in terms of voting patterns.

Unsurprisingly, Brexit-related issues also attracted a huge volume of conversation and debate, with over 1.5 million Tweets on the topic over the election weekend. The most mentioned candidates during the election weekend were Ska Keller, Frans Timmermans and Manfred Weber, with the most frequently mentioned political parties being; European Green Party; European People’s Party and the Party of European Socialists.

**Empowering the research community**

This section details our efforts to support and bolster the vital work undertaken by the research community including on access to Twitter data, our public API, as well as our research partnerships and the important research, ranging from machine learning to disinformation, that has stemmed from them.

**Access to Twitter Data**

We are constantly seeking to improve our understanding of how bad-faith actors use our services and to enhance our ability to detect and neutralise their activities as quickly and robustly as technically possible. Independent analysis of malicious activities happening on Twitter is crucial to promote a shared understanding of these threats and to strengthen the health of the public conversation.
In line with our commitments to transparency, enhancing the integrity of our service and improving public understanding of foreign influence campaigns, throughout 2019 we have built on the achievements of the previous year, when in October 2018, we disclosed the first comprehensive archive of state-backed information operations on Twitter.

Nearly one year on, the archive is now the largest of its kind in the industry. Thousands of researchers have made use of these datasets and have conducted their own investigations and shared their insights and independent analyses with the world. In 2019, new account sets were added to the archive, thereby further enabling members of the public, governments, academics and researchers to investigate these behaviours, learn, and build media literacy capacities for the future to fight against manipulation and disinformation.

The data include more than 30 million Tweets and more than a terabyte of media. This enables researchers to better discern the origin and intent of various types of content, and is crucial to our work and the work of researchers.

As our investigations of platform manipulation around the world have continued, we subsequently added new datasets in 2019 including January, June, August, and September, while also sharing insights on Twitter’s internal investigative approach and how these complex, sometimes cross-jurisdictional operations are identified. Some examples of what was covered in the data sets below:

- **June**: covered Russia, Venezuela, Spain and Iran. This was the first set to include a European country, where we suspended 130 fake accounts originating in Spain. These accounts were directly associated with the Catalan independence movement, specifically Esquerra Republicana de Catalunya. They were primarily engaged in spreading content about the Catalan Referendum. The network includes fake accounts which appear to have been created in an attempt to inorganically influence the conversation. Setting up fake accounts is a violation of the Twitter Rules.

- **August**: we disclosed 936 accounts originating from within the People’s Republic of China (PRC) consisting in state-backed information operation focused on the situation in Hong Kong, and specifically attempting to sow political discord in Hong Kong, including undermining the legitimacy and political positions of the protest movement on the ground. In addition to the disclosed accounts, a larger, spammy network of approximately 200,000 accounts — many created following our initial suspensions — were proactively suspended before they were substantially active on the service.
• September: six additional datasets to Twitter’s archive of state-backed information operations covering five separate jurisdictions (United Arab Emirates & Egypt, Saudi Arabia, China, Ecuador, and Spain). We launched this initiative to empower academic and public understanding of these coordinated campaigns around the world, and to empower independent, third-party scrutiny of these tactics on our platform.

Independent analysis of this activity by researchers is a key step toward promoting shared understanding of the threats related to foreign information operations. The datasets have proved significant to researchers within the EU and were accessed over 20 thousand times by independent as well as institution-affiliated researchers across the EU. Valuable reporting and research was produced on the basis of these datasets (two examples are presented in the following paragraph).

To learn more about what is included and how researchers can download the datasets, visit our dedicated Elections Integrity Hub.

Data sets accessed by Member State

Going forward, we will continue to enhance and refine our approach to disclosing state-affiliated information operations on our service. For example, we intend to more routinely disclose data relating to state-backed information operations on the service using our @TwitterSafety handle and in future iterations of the Twitter Transparency Report. We will share more on these plans soon.

We see this as a necessary and vital step to regularize our transparency work in this area, and to encourage more third-party investigation of these behaviors online.
Twice a year, we share information about our actions to detect and prevent platform manipulation and spam in the Twitter Transparency Report.

Research results on disinformation

In May, The Computational Propaganda Project of the Oxford Internet Institute released the report “Junk News During the EU Parliamentary Elections: Lessons from a Seven-Language Study of Twitter and Facebook”.

The study conducted a thematic analysis of the top 20 junk news stories on Twitter and Facebook and found that:

- Fewer than 4% of news sources shared on Twitter ahead of the 2019 EU elections was ‘junk news’
- Twitter users shared far more links to mainstream ‘professional’ news outlets than junk news (34%) - this was especially true in Swedish and French language spheres (>50%).
- The exception was in the Polish language sphere, where ‘junk news’ made up 21% of traffic on Twitter - this was however consistent with an overall trend in Poland.

Also in May, the Demos Institute UK released its report “Warring Songs: Information Operations in the Digital Age”, for which they conducted analysis of three case studies of Russian information operations in Germany, France and Italy to examine the patterns in data released by Twitter as definitively attributed to Russian state information operations (through the use of Twitter’s public data sets). The study found that:

- The widely-held focus on ‘fake news’ is myopic: much of the information shared during information operations is not ‘fake’ - but the selective amplification of reputable, mainstream media stories to fit an agenda.

- IRA-run accounts targeting the three countries examined overwhelmingly shared content from reputable media sources in every case study.

- Of 39 cases reviewed, 19 did not contain any factual statements - this challenges the narrative that the only way to tackle inaccurate news is by fact-checking. The risk of focusing only on truth or falsity is that emotional manipulation tactics may be missed, thereby ignoring inflammatory content can incite anger, hatred and physical violence.

- Strategies employed by hostile groups included everything from fabrication of news to false amplification of unwitting journalists; from harassment and abuse of politicians to gaming recommendation algorithms. It underlines the importance of looking broadly at the information
ecosystem and the actors that make it up, rather than focusing on one single piece of the puzzle.

- Fake news is only one cog in a much larger machine. Focusing on the distinction between true and false content misses that true facts can be presented in ways which are misleading, or in a context where they will be misinterpreted in a particular way that serves the aim of the information operative.

Supporting research into disinformation

As part of our efforts to support research into disinformation and engagement with the research community, in April we hosted an event in the framework of our #PositionOfStrength / #ElPoderMiVoz initiative for women’s empowerment, in participation with the fact checking organisation Maldita (members of the International Fact Checking Network and High-Level Expert Group on Fake News and online disinformation). We also provided support for their project Maldito Feminismo, which focuses on debunking misinformation regarding women.

Public Application Programming Interface (API)

Since 2006, Twitter’s APIs have given researchers and developers the opportunity to tap into what’s happening in the world. Twitter firmly believes in open data access to study, analyse, and contribute to the public conversation; which is why we continue to maintain a broad public API. Researchers use Twitter data to provide valuable feedback on how the online conversations and interactions evolve on
and off Twitter, which is essential around elections. We continue to provide more accessible ways to make data and information publicly available to researchers.

Twitter’s API’s are a unique data source for academics. It is used around the world in a wide range of fields, from disaster management to political science, every day. Every major social science conference likely features multiple papers based wholly or largely on Twitter data. Our service is the largest source of real-time social media data, and we make this data available to the public for free through our public API. No other major service does this.

All of our API data is public - no private user data is included. So it’s Tweets, bios, who you follow, Tweets you’ve liked etc. No email addresses, IP data etc.

We make all public Twitter content available via our APIs. You can learn more about them [here](#).

**New research partners to improve Machine Learning**

Machine Learning (ML) plays a key role in powering Twitter. From onboarding users on the platform to preparing their timeline and everything in between, a multitude of ML models help power the experience. Thus, making Twitter more healthy requires making the way we practice ML more fair, accountable and transparent. Studying the societal impact of machine learning is a growing area of research in which Twitter has been participating. In this framework, in January we [partnered with researchers](#) at UC Berkeley to establish a new research initiative focused on studying and improving the performance of Machine Learning in social systems (such as Twitter).

The fight against disinformation is an ongoing work and one that is never over. While remaining committed to transparency and to empower the research community, we believe it is important to share and acknowledge the meaningful progress that has been made by Twitter in this regard.