



# Twitter Report: Staying safe and informed on Twitter during COVID-19

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## Executive Summary

Twitter remains committed to helping people to:

- find reliable information and evaluate credible sources regarding the COVID-19 pandemic,
- connect with others,
- follow what's happening in real time, and
- commit to safe behaviours, from washing hands to wearing a mask.

Twitter has an important role to play as a place for good faith public debate and discussion around critical public health matters. Throughout these unprecedented times, Twitter has continued to adapt and update our policies and enforcement, as well as increase transparency and share more data to ensure experts and the public can better analyse how discussion around COVID-19 continues to evolve. We have kept an updated blog with all relevant information on Twitter's efforts [covid19.twitter.com](https://twitter.com/covid19), and to date, **over 160 million people have visited the COVID-19 curated page, over two billion times.**

Below is an overview of the measures we have taken to protect the health of the public conversation while ensuring we are a collaborative and open partner in endeavours to address the challenging and changing online and offline issues society is facing.



## March and April data and updates

- Data on global violations of Twitter's [COVID-19 misleading information policy](#):
  - In March, we **suspended 198 accounts, and removed 1,392 pieces of content**
  - In April, we **suspended 1,329 accounts, and removed 5,320 pieces of content**
- Data on violations of Twitter's [COVID-19 advertising policy](#):

From 1 to 31 March 2022, **40 Promoted Tweets violated** our COVID-19 advertising policy. They were halted and removed from promotion according to our policy.

- We reviewed all 40 ads and did not find any which contained misinformation.
- We estimate that about **85% of the violating content during that time was detected by our automated systems**, and approximately 15% was brought into human review and rejected for policy violations.

From 1 to 30 April 2022, **21 Promoted Tweets violated** our COVID-19 advertising policy. They were halted and removed from promotion according to our policy.

- We reviewed all 18 ads and did not find any which contained misinformation.
- We estimate that about **90% of the violating content during that time was detected by our automated systems**, and approximately 10% was brought into human review and rejected for policy violations.

Out of altogether 61 promoted Tweets that were halted in March and April, the vast majority targeted several EU countries among other countries - or targeted globally. None of them targeted EU countries exclusively.

## March and April updates

- On March 24th, we published an article in our Help Center on our [Misleading and Deceptive Identities Policy](#). The update aims at clarifying that we prohibit
  - 1) the impersonation of an existing group, person, or organization used in a way which may mislead others, and
  - 2) the use of a deceptive/fake identity used in a deceitful manner.
- On the occasion of World Immunization Week, from April 24 to April 30 under the slogan [#LongLifeForAll](#), we supported campaigns raising awareness of the importance of vaccines. As an example, [here](#) is the Twitter Spaces session by the WHO.
- During the [European Mental Health Week](#) in May, we hosted a Twitter conversation with Mental Health Europe, that allowed highlighting resources that, among others, support young people struggling with mental health issues due to the pandemic.
- On May 11, we updated our Privacy Policy, focusing on using clear language and moved away from legal jargon to make it easier for everyone to understand the policy. Additionally, from now on, users will be able to see the updates to our privacy policy and terms of service in the app via settings and on our [redesigned privacy policy site](#). To make the content more engaging, we also created an [online game on Privacy](#).

This report contains information on policies, products, philanthropic activities and actions undertaken from 1 March to 30 April 2022, and complements previous reports submitted in [July](#), [August](#), [September](#), [October](#), [November](#) and [December](#) 2020 as well as in [January](#), [February](#), [March](#), [April](#), [May](#), [June](#), [July](#) and [August](#), [September](#) and [October](#), [November](#) and [December](#) 2021, and in [January](#) and [February](#) 2022.



## Helping people find reliable information

We are committed to making sure that when people come to Twitter to see what's happening, they are able to easily find reliable information on both Covid-19 and vaccines.

- As mentioned above, our new [Help Center page](#) was launched in February consolidating Twitter's efforts on misleading information.
- In the EU, COVID-19 search prompts are active in: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.
- Vaccine-related prompts have been implemented in Denmark, Spain, Ireland, Italy and Belgium.
- In over 30 countries, we launched '[Twitter Events Pages](#)' that bring together **the latest Tweets from a number of authoritative and trustworthy government, media and civil society sources in local languages**. We regularly update these pages to ensure that people are met with credible information on Twitter.
- We are regularly updating [Twitter topics](#) related to COVID-19 including COVID-19 news, COVID-19 government and public officials, COVID-19 experts.
- **Every week, we serve around 300 million impressions** of content in the [COVID-19 explore tab](#) to over 14 million customers. It now includes three features to further help people find accurate and reliable information around COVID-19: PSA Carousel, Topics and Lists.
- Twitter Lists are being used by the [World Health Organization](#) and the [European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control](#) to organise and prioritise Tweets.

### Useful links

- [Our approach around the conversation surrounding COVID-19 on Twitter](#)
- [Our approach to misleading information on Covid-19](#)
- [Updates to our work on COVID-19 vaccine misinformation](#)
- [COVID-19 Misinformation in our Transparency Center](#)
- [Twitter Transparency Report](#)

## COVID-19 Guidance Enforcement

Since introducing our [COVID-19 guidance](#) in 2020, we have challenged 11.72 million accounts, suspended 8,126 accounts and removed 83,999 pieces of content worldwide.



### Overview in numbers: Violations of our Covid-19 misleading information policy

2021	January	February	March	April	May	June
Unique accounts suspended (globally)		48	149	260	185	156
Pieces of content removed (globally)		6822	5371	5091	5147	5117
2021	July	August	September	October	November	December
Unique accounts suspended (globally)	215	229	254	819	431	666
Pieces of content removed (globally)	6602	5579	4544	3574	4129	4559

2022	January	February	March	April
Unique accounts suspended (globally)	2153	336	198	1329
Pieces of content removed (globally)	3397	1828	1392	5320

In the month of March, **we suspended 198 accounts and removed 1,392 pieces of content globally**, whereas in the month of April, **we suspended 1,329 accounts, and removed 5,320 pieces of content globally** for violation of our [COVID-19 misleading information policy](#). As the conflict in Ukraine has escalated, it has become a key priority for our internal teams, shifting attention away from COVID-19 to current events in Ukraine, as reflected in the numbers above.



## Advertising on COVID-19

Twitter has a strict advertising policy on COVID-19, the details of which can be found [here](#).

### Overview in numbers: Violations of our Covid-19 advertising policy

2021	January	February	March	April	May	June
Number of promoted Tweets that violated Twitter's COVID-19 policy	864	977	945	869	745	729
2021	July	August	September	October	November	December
Number of promoted Tweets that violated Twitter's COVID-19 policy	338		84		64	

2022	January	February	March	April
Number of promoted tweets that violated Twitter's COVID-19 policy	34	37	40	21

From 1 March to 30 April 2022, **altogether 61 Promoted Tweets violated our COVID-19 advertising policy**. They were halted and removed from promotion according to [our policy](#).

## Political content advertising on Twitter

In addition to the above highlighted restrictions, consistent with our belief that political reach should be earned and not bought, [Twitter prohibits the promotion of political content](#).

### Useful links

- [Advertising during Covid-19](#)
- [Twitter Ads Policies](#)
- [Twitter Ads Policy update log](#)
- [Political content FAQs](#)
- [Brand communication in times of crisis](#)

## Research and data access

Twitter 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. You can [find out more here](#).



To further support our ongoing efforts to protect the public conversation, and help people find authoritative health information around COVID-19, Twitter released a [specific COVID-19 API endpoint](#) into Twitter Developer Labs to enable approved developers and researchers to study the public conversation about COVID-19 in real-time.

### March and April data and updates

- With the **Academic Research product track**, **qualified researchers have access to all v2 endpoints released to date**, as well as new features and [guides](#). The release of the Academic Research product track is just a starting point. Further information in this [blogpost](#) and in this [thread](#).
- **Recent examples** of using Twitter's APIs or Tweets directly from the platforms include:
  - Hamed Seddighi (University of Groningen), Ibrahim Salmani (Shahid Sadoughi University of Medical Sciences and Health Services) and Saeideh Seddighi published an article entitled "[Saving Lives and Changing Minds with Twitter in Disasters and Pandemics: A Literature Review](#)", aimed at investigating the use of Twitter during natural hazards and pandemics.
  - The Australian Strategic Policy Institute has created an [interactive dashboard](#) that showcases their work and research on disinformation based on publicly accessible data from Twitter's Information Operations Archive.
- Over 100 researchers and developer teams, representing 92 different academic institutions and universities around the world were granted access to the COVID-19 stream.
- More than half of those approved for this stream are **focused on studying disinformation and misinformation around the facts of coronavirus**, see examples in [previous reports](#) under "How researchers studied COVID-19 on Twitter".
- Since the Twitter API was introduced, academic researchers have used data from the public conversation to study topics as diverse as the conversation on Twitter itself, including [attitudes and perceptions about COVID-19](#) and [efforts to promote healthy conversation online](#).
- We've been working closely with developers to ensure their services are able to have the widest impact, and reach the most people while operating in compliance with Twitter's developer policies - see COVID-19 related examples in [previous reports](#).

### Useful links

- [Academic Research Access](#)
- [Updated our Twitter Developer Policy](#)
- [COVID-19 stream endpoint](#)
- [Apply for access to the Twitter API](#)