



Public Comment Appendix for

Case 2023-033-FB-UA

Case number

Case description

In July 2023, a user posted a video on Facebook in which French politician Éric Zemmour is interviewed about demographic changes in Europe and Africa. The user who posted the video is an administrator for Zemmour’s official, verified Facebook page, which has about 300,000 followers. A candidate in the 2022 French presidential election, Zemmour won around 7% of the votes in the first round, according to official [results](#), but did not advance any further. He has been found guilty of “[inciting discrimination and religious hatred](#)” in France, a conviction that was [upheld by the European Court of Human Rights](#).

In the video, Zemmour claims the European population has stayed roughly the same since the beginning of the 20th century, while the African population has increased significantly, “so the power balance has shifted.” The caption in French repeats the claims in the video, stating that “when there were four Europeans for one African, [Europe] colonized Africa,” and now “there are four Africans for one European and Africa colonizes Europe.” The content was viewed about 20,000 times and had fewer than 1,000 reactions, the majority of which were “likes,” followed by “love.”

Under its [Hate Speech policy](#), Meta removes direct attacks against people on the basis of protected characteristics, including race, ethnicity, national origin and religious affiliation. Refugees, migrants, immigrants and asylum seekers are protected against “the most severe attacks,” although Meta allows “commentary and criticism of immigration policies.”

The content in this case was reported twice under the Hate Speech policy. Meta’s automated systems closed both reports and the video was left up on Facebook. The first user who reported the content appealed Meta’s decision but following human review on the same day, the company decided it was correct to leave up the video. The same user then appealed Meta’s decision to the Board. In their statement, they described the content as “fake news.” After the Board

selected the case, Meta confirmed that its original decision was correct and explained that, in its view, Zemmour’s claims did not violate the Hate Speech policy because they do not contain an attack on a protected group. The company does not consider the claim that one group is “colonizing” a place to be an attack “so long as it does not amount to a call for exclusion.”

The Board selected this case because of the increasing salience of policies toward immigration and migrants in elections around the world, and the attendant rise of anti-migrant content around election periods, including such claims as the “Great Replacement.” The “Great Replacement” is a claim that white European populations are being demographically replaced by non-white peoples. This case falls within the [Board’s strategic priorities](#) of Hate Speech Against Marginalized Groups and Elections and Civic Space.

The Board would appreciate public comments that address:

- Whether the post should be understood as a direct attack on the basis of protected characteristics, in violation of Meta’s Hate Speech policies, or instead as commentary on immigration policy and related social trends.
- The social and political context of discussions about immigration in France.
- Views on how Meta’s Hate Speech policies comport with its human rights responsibilities, and whether any changes should be considered.
- Whether and how the company’s content moderation around its Hate Speech and other applicable policies should be affected by who posts the content, specifically high-profile users such as politicians.
- Views on how Meta should distinguish “commentary and criticism of immigration policies” from direct attacks on people based on protected characteristics, especially during election periods.

As part of its decisions, the Board can issue policy recommendations to Meta. While recommendations are not binding, Meta must respond to them within 60 days. As such, the Board welcomes public comments proposing recommendations that are relevant to this case.



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The Oversight Board is committed to bringing diverse perspectives from third parties into the case review process. To that end, the Oversight Board has established a public comment process.

Public comments respond to case descriptions based on the information provided to the Board by users and Facebook as part of the appeals process. These case descriptions are posted before panels begin deliberation to provide time for public comment. As such, case descriptions reflect neither the Board's assessment of the case, nor the full array of policy issues that a panel might consider to be implicated by each case.

To protect the privacy and security of commenters, comments are only viewed by the Oversight Board and as detailed in the [Operational Privacy Notice](#). All commenters included in this appendix gave consent to the Oversight Board to publish their comments. For commenters who did not consent to attribute their comments publicly, names have been redacted. To withdraw your comment, please email contact@osbadmin.com.

To reflect the wide range of views on cases, the Oversight Board has included all comments received except those clearly irrelevant, abusive or disrespectful of the human and fundamental rights of any person or group of persons and therefore violating the [Terms for Public Comment](#). Inclusion of a comment in this appendix is not an endorsement by the Oversight Board of the views expressed in the comment. The Oversight Board is committed to transparency and this appendix is meant to accurately reflect the input we received.



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Case 2023-033-FB-UA

Case number

15

Number of Comments

Regional Breakdown

1	2	3	1
Asia Pacific & Oceania	Central & South Asia	Europe	Middle East & North Africa
1	7	0	
Sub-Saharan Africa	United States & Canada	Latin America & Caribbean	

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22002

Middle East &
North Africa

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Yoav

Moran

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I would like to comment on the entire question of posting on immigration.

Banning any discussion on immigration is hazardous. There are many aspects to immigration that can harm a country and are unrelated to race. For example - culture.

Let's say a country has large mass of immigrants from another country with a completely different culture. For example - a mostly Christian country having large Muslim immigration. This type of immigration will surely change the face of the host country, affecting its culture deeply. I know that a knee jerk reaction is to be accepting for other cultures in the name of inclusion - but this process can actually destroy one culture, making it a history artifact more than a living one. A discussion on such a problem must be allowed - we do not wish to destroy different cultures, specifically if multi-culturalism is important to us.

So what is the line that differs between "commentary and criticism of immigration policies" and direct attacks on people? I believe as long as these conditions are met, the

discussion should be fine.

- The discussion focuses on culture instead of "racial qualities"

- If a religion is discussed, it can be criticized - but in a respectful manner. Not as an absolute evil or something bad, but as a set of values that doesn't match the values of the hosting country.

- No calls to harm or attack people from these cultures. These are just conversation on immigration issues, no more than that.

Personally, this matter became important to me since 7.10.23, since the Black Saturday in Israel. Europe has become an unsafe place from Jews, and many are expected to flee Europe and immigrate to Israel. There are many discussions about why it is that Europe became so unsafe, and part of this discussions is the question of immigration from countries that have strong antisemitism. I think it's important to talk about this, because some Europeans may feel that what's happening harms their way of life and their peace of mind - which is an understandable feeling. The world is changing in front of our eyes, and not being able to talk about it is a dangerous way of thinking.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22004

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Robert

Rodriguez

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I don't think it Violated any policy

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22007

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

By the suppression of free speech, you inject a simpleton's paradigm into your system that unreasonably renders your platform completely irrelevant. Elimination of conflicting views does not create "the proper view" among educated members of society, not indoctrinated ones. Pol Pot, otherwise born Saloth Sar, is best remembered for pioneering this approach to "social governance" in Cambodia. This is probably why most Asians consider Fakebook or Meta [Fakebook] an abomination for the inculcation of their teenagers to destroy logical reasoning. Pol Pot did not have the tools to isolate or censor the 25% of the older population he exterminated [without the Meta platform]. Yet he certainly did have the drugs and women to lure non-educated teens into an absolute anarchy led by himself.

As a capacitor in a circuit bleeding off heat when overcharged, repressing the communication among the cognitively active members creates backlashes against this communist approach. Pol Pot implemented "critical thinking" in his schools for peasants. In America, we've dumbed the standards down so deep, most PHD graduates cannot pass a 1952 8th grade exam. Instead of Physics, Chemistry, Science, Math, Articulate English, or a raft of basic skills.....they're fed a diatribe of Political Science

and the latest Social Studies that demolished the Roman Empire. Kudos to Meta for using the Pol Pot platform. Unfortunately, whether Asian, American, or just plain sentient homo sapiens; A = A. Anything more or less is A' prime. A communist is a communist is a communist. Change the name to Social Democrat....you're still a communist.

Designating the rhetoric as Factually Non-Supported In Any Form versus wasting a committee and time to limit the drug-infested ramblings of lunatics is more productive and logical. Pursuing Pol Pot's method is the same communist methodology.

[Link to Attachment](#)

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22008

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

Suppressing speech? Are you a bunch of CCP commies? Hitler wannabes? Disgusting. ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION IS ILLEGAL. The mere thought of suppressing speech alone should have you deported to some island in the middle of nowhere. Gross.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22009

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Amanda

Ros

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

DID NOT
PROVIDE

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

The commentary and discussion do not offend or incite and should be allowed as commentary on immigration policy and related social trends.

The policy must not be unilaterally biased against politicians' speech. In fact, I would argue that politicians have a responsibility to report back to and inform the citizens. Politicians must not be censored.

Censoring discussions around the effects of immigration will only serve to compound the anger of the citizens who feel their voices are not being heard. The French people can see for themselves and should be able to speak their truth through their representatives.

Meta should not change us policy to appease people who cannot handle mere conversations about the impact of immigration on a nation. Speech should not be censored unless it incites illegal action against a group based on their race or religion alone.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22010

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Withheld

Withheld

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Withheld

No

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

I believe people should have a right to voice their opinion. People's opinions should be considered as commentary, on immigration policy and related social trends. Not sure what all is considered in Meta's Hate Speech policies, but just because someone disagrees with another, shouldn't be considered hate. Notice you don't mention politics "hate" or disagreement speech. Meta should be about free speech. Not censored speech. You should have a link for people to mute or block people (or comments) they don't like. Let each individual do their own censoring.

Link to Attachment

No Attachment

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22013

Central & South
Asia

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Abdullah

Tariq

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Digital Rights
Foundation

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

DIGITAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION PUBLIC COMMENT ON OVERSIGHT BOARD CASE:
POLITICIAN'S COMMENTS ON DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Submission: Research Department, Digital Rights Foundation

Submission Date(s): 12 December 2023

The case is about a French politician, Zemmour, providing a commentary on French demographic changes. The post was shared on Eric Zemmour’s Facebook page by his administrator, in which during an interview Zemmour passed remarks on demographic changes and shift in power balance in Europe, further going on to say that this change in demography has led to Africa colonizing Europe. Zemmour in the past has crossed paths with the European justice system, where he was criticized for “inciting discrimination and religious hatred” in France. On a careful analysis of the current political discourse in Europe and the case's contents, we conclude that the case violates Meta’s hate speech policy under the TIER 3 categorization. The comment not only talks

about the immigration policies but also about a broader generalization of Africans in Europe. The post echoes “The Great Replacement”(Le Grand Remplacement) theory. The idea propagated by French author Renaud Camus, promotes violence and hatred by framing the presence of non-white populations, particularly from Muslim-majority countries, as a threat to the ethnic French and white European populations. While Camus publicly condemns white nationalist violence, scholars argue that “implicit calls to violence” are present in his depiction of non-white migrants “as an existential threat”. The theory has been linked to several far-right terrorist acts, including the Christchurch mosque shootings and the El Paso shooting. The theory found support in Europe and has grown popular among anti-migrant and white nationalist movements, with its broader appeal attributed to simple catch-all slogans. More so than a commentary on immigration policies, the post furthers an existing civil division. Thus, it would be fair to categorize the post's contents in TIER 3 of hate speech. Moreover, the post also includes traces of misinformation and misleading content, which also falls under Meta’s content moderation policy on misinformation.

When provided with contextual information, the statement in question befits the broader conspiracy dialogue in France regarding the Great Replacement. Zemmour has vigorously defended “The Great Replacement”(Le Grand Remplacement) conspiracy. The concept, echoed by the far-right groups in Europe, elucidates that the white population of Europe is being demographically replaced. The sentence “...there are four Africans for one European and Africa colonizes Europe...” tries to induce the elements of segregation and dissent against the wider African diaspora within Europe. Moreover, this ideology has previously been used as the justification by white supremacists to carry out mass shootings in the US and New Zealand – bringing attention to the global relevance and repercussions of such a narrative. Not to mention, that the argument used to infer this claim is equally misleading. Using the correlation of demographics to infer the causation of colonization is a misleading argument and fuels conspiracy amongst the general populace. Additionally, using the term colonization induces a power hierarchy among the demographic segments, which does not exist in the context the Politician is framing it.

Zemmour’s comment, although generally highlighting the demographic analysis of two separate periods of two separate continents, the addition of “...Africa colonizes Europe...” creates a false correlation between demography and colonization. In that context, Zemmour is using false information to target a race and nationality – which goes directly against Meta’s policy against misinformation and hate speech on its

platform. Such misinformation poses a danger to European democracies, as intimidation and manipulative narratives further jeopardize the broader political discourse on immigration policies and democratic elections in Europe.

Such conspiracies not only otherize a whole population segment but also induce hate and fear among the white European population. The statement “...Africa colonizes Europe...” serves as an identifier where Zemmour insinuates that African immigrants living in Europe are the colonizers. Creating a distinction of European citizens from European Citizens of African descent is highly exclusionary and discriminatory based on race and nationality. Moreover, such extreme claims about reverse colonization because of demographic changes take attention away from arguments that are of legitimate concern for most of Europe in current times. Commentary and criticism of immigration policies are healthy discussion topics that should not be restricted in our digital spaces. However, developing well-informed policies becomes a target of manipulated truth when this discourse enters the realm of conspiracies and misinformation. In that instance, it is equally essential to ensure that the wider population, especially protected groups, is kept safe in offline and online spaces. Meta needs to ensure, especially through election periods, that the bogus and conspiratorial claims are identified and marked on their platforms. Until the platform figures out a way to efficiently and effectively include detailed contextual embeddings within their algorithms, there needs to be increased human review of such reports. There are limited laws against the involvement of AI in online political discourses; therefore, as a multi-billion-user company, the responsibility falls on Meta to do its part in ensuring the minimal impact of such automated models on human discourse development.

Zemmour’s comment on demographic changes can not be viewed in isolation, considering his influence on the political discourse in France. The claim of a shift in power and explicit mention of the word “Africans” targets and alienates the non-white population of Europe. The contextual underpinnings of general anti-migrant discourse in Europe and a lack of non-white voices hint towards the more significant issue of discrimination against groups falling within the protected characteristics. In such an environment, Meta must ensure their platform does not feed into discriminatory practices. Politicians worldwide have massive followings in online spaces and utilize these platforms to address a more comprehensive voting class. However, their followers are primarily the members of society who are already in alignment with the politicians’ political ideologies – as made evident through the response to Eric Zemmour’s post. This creates an echo chamber within the platform where the

ideologies propagate and expand without much resistance. A lack of accountability in such situations could birth hostile and harmful narratives. Therefore, it is paramount that Meta ensures much more careful monitoring of what is being propagated in these echo chambers. Although identifying and removing hateful content online is essential, it is equally, if not more important, to evaluate the impact of such content. There should be higher sensitivity in the content moderation policies when evaluating content with a higher influence on the general public.

The case's contextual review shows how the post discriminates against a protected group through misleading, fear-mongering narratives and exclusion. The alienation of a non-white demographic segment through Zemmour's comments exacerbates the ongoing discourse around migration laws. In such situations, Meta needs to ensure that it can identify and differentiate between political commentary and targeting of specific segments of the society ("Africans") through misinformation and hate speech. Meta in its hate speech policy allows for "commentary and criticism of immigration policies"; however, this exception does not apply to this case. Conspiracy theories and discriminatory speech falls under the the categorization of hate speech; thus a spade should be called a spade and dealt as such. Providing safe spaces for conspiracies and hateful narratives to grow under the guise of political commentary could have a detrimental impact on the democratic values of European people, as well as discriminate and further create a divide among the civilian population. Thus, a more rigorous understanding of the context within different echo chambers and political spheres should be developed by the reviewers of such claims. On such a basis, TIER 3 of Meta's hate speech policy should take into account the repercussions of specific comments on immigration policies and how they promote segregation and exclusion of protected groups.

Link to Attachment

[PC-22013](#)

2023-033-FB-UA

PC-22014

United States &
Canada

Case number

Public comment number

Region

Wendy

Via

English

Commenter's first name

Commenter's last name

Commenter's preferred language

Global Project
Against Hate and
Extremism

Yes

Organization

Response on behalf of
organization

Full Comment

To: Facebook Oversight Board

From: Wendy Via and Heidi Beirich, Cofounders

Re: Politician's comments on demographic changes

Date: December 12, 2023

We are writing from the Global Project Against Hate and Extremism (GPAHE), a nonprofit, civil society organization based in the US, to request that the Facebook Oversight Board recommend that Meta take additional and meaningful action to stop the dissemination of the dangerous, racist “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory on all Meta platforms. We are requesting a recommendation from the Board similar to that taken in the wake of the rise of the QAnon conspiracy theory and that Facebook recognize references, even oblique ones, to replacement as the hate speech and

disinformation it is. We are also requesting that immediate action be taken to stop the proliferation of this conspiracy theory by political and public figures, who by Meta's own admission, "often have broader influence" and "therefore, they may pose a greater risk of harm when they violate our policies." GPAHE has documented many elements of the spread of the "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory and the political and public figures who spread it. Given the volatile and polarized global narrative around migration and its place in political discourse, it is especially imperative that this Board also recommend to Meta that it enforce its public figures and civil unrest policy.

Background

The racist "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory inspires hate, violence, and mass murders. And nowhere does it thrive and spread more than in online spaces like Facebook and Instagram.

As a technology company that impacts every corner of the globe, it is incumbent upon Meta to accept the responsibility that comes with great power and protect its users and our communities from blatantly false conspiracy theories, hate speech, and violence-inspiring disinformation before more damage is done.

The "Great Replacement" conspiracy theory is a global white supremacist concept that falsely claims white people are being replaced in their "home" countries by immigrants, Muslims, Black people, and other people of color. The conspiracy theory often blames the "elite," "globalists," and Jews for orchestrating these changing demographics, which are perceived to be the cause of the disintegration of "traditional" and "national values." The conspiracy theory is most often

associated with the idea that immigration is meant to overwhelm the vote of those of European descent (white vote), thereby destroying their political power, erasing "traditional" and cultural "values," which ultimately will "destroy" the country, in this case France. Those spreading the conspiracy theory often use demonizing language such as "ethnic substitution," "invasion," "overrun," "colonize," "remigration," and "plague," language that has been widely adopted by far-right media and political figures. Remigration refers to the voluntary or involuntary return of the majority of immigrants of non-European (white) descent, in effect an ethnic cleansing.

A May 2022 AP poll in the US found that one-third of those polled believed "an effort is

afoot to replace native-born Americans with new immigrants for electoral purposes,” a 2023 UK poll found that one-third of Brits also believe in the conspiracy theory, and a 2021 poll found that 67 percent of the French believed the great replacement would happen. This is a dangerous global phenomenon. Dozens have been murdered by killers who believed the conspiracy theory, most of whom had a significant connection to online spheres, with at least one using Meta platforms to livestream the horrors.

Mass attacks related to the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory

- 2023 Jacksonville, Florida - three Black people murdered.
- 2023 Allen, Texas – eight people murdered.
- 2022 Buffalo, New York - ten Black people murdered.
- 2021 Toronto, Canada - four members of a Muslim family were run down and killed.
- 2019 El Paso, Texas - gunman hoped to kill Latinos, killing 23 people.
- 2019 Poway, California - a synagogue was targeted because Jews were “planning a genocide” of Europeans. One person murdered. Killer had earlier set a mosque on fire.
- 2019 Christchurch, New Zealand - 51 people were murdered at mosques. Livestreamed on Facebook.
- 2019 Halle, Germany - gunman targeted a synagogue but was unable to enter. One passerby was murdered.
- 2018 Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania attack - targeted a synagogue, murdering 11 people.
- 2011 Oslo, Norway–77 killed, many of them teenagers. Gunman targeted individuals he thought would bring mass Muslim immigration into the country.

“Great Replacement” clearly meets Facebook’s community standard of being “tied to

different forms of real world harm” and should be incorporated into its Dangerous Individuals and Organizations policy against militarized social movements and violence-inducing conspiracy networks like QAnon was, and the purveyors deplatformed, regardless of who they are. Facebook broadly banned QAnon in 2020, although they still have enforcement problems.

Public and political figures’ content moderation

There is no question but that Facebook community standards should be applied to political speech and rigorously enforced. All Meta platforms state that politicians and public figures are subject to the policies, but they also have “public interest” or “newsworthiness” exemptions, effectively rendering the rules, including those on hate speech and misinformation, useless, if indeed political speech is adequately reviewed for violations.

Hate speech has a measurable impact on people’s willingness and ability to participate in the democratic process. It can exert psychological constraints on members of a targeted group causing them to withdraw from public discourse, the so-called “silencing effect.” Moreover, hate speech causes desensitization, a loss of the ability to understand others’ pain, destroying a common basis for political communication. As history continues to show, hate speech coupled with disinformation can lead to stigmatization, discrimination and large-scale violence. Hate speech has been identified as a precursor to atrocity crimes, including genocide, such as the Rohingya genocide of 2017. And violence against LGBTQ+ people reached its highest point in the past decade in Europe and Central Asia in 2022 and the US against the backdrop of “rising and widespread hate speech from politicians, religious leaders, right-wing organizations and media pundits.” Hate speech from politicians and state officials was reported in 23 countries across Europe, as well as Azerbaijan.

As UN Secretary-General António Guterres has said, “Addressing hate speech does not mean limiting or prohibiting freedom of speech. It means keeping hate speech from escalating into something more dangerous, particularly incitement to discrimination, hostility, and violence.”

More than 70 countries comprising more than one billion people are expected to hold elections in 2024, an unprecedented number that includes some of the world’s biggest

democracies, more fragile democracies, and some nations where there is a continued weakening of civil and human rights. More countries have moved away from democracy rather than toward it, a trend developed over the last several years, including in countries where democracy was thought to be firmly established. And since 2017, the number of countries moving toward authoritarianism are more than double those that are moving toward democracy.

Social media can be a positive and a negative for democracy. It can have a weakening effect on strong democracies and an intensifying effect on strong authoritarian regimes. Overall though, there is no doubt that the abuse of social media has had a negative impact on democracies worldwide. It is specifically important that politicians not use social media to spread hate speech. A body of research suggests the incendiary rhetoric of political leaders can make political violence more likely, gives violence direction, complicates the law enforcement response, and increases fear in vulnerable communities. Political leaders' remarks do not disappear on social media, especially as the social media platforms' algorithms tend to amplify more incendiary remarks, quickly magnifying rhetoric against their political opponents, minority groups, and other targets. Leaders with large social media followings will see their remarks shared with millions of followers. This then drives coverage in more traditional news outlets and serves as a cue to local politicians whose similar content is in turn amplified by their communities and the company algorithms. Politicians use social media in all the usual marketing ways for a campaign, but they are also able to bypass rules and norms of traditional media. And for those who wish to engage in hate and demonizing speech, the results can be damaging.

Given the equally unprecedented potential influence of social media platforms and those adept at manipulating the platforms, and the introduction of AI and its unknown effects, it is vital that the platforms prepare now to do all they can to protect democracies and elections around the world, especially moderating political figures' speech the same as any other user and doing it in all languages.

Zemmour and demographic changes

The post in question for this appeal should have been taken down under the existing hate speech and misinformation policies. On its face, the post about the numbers of European and African people was clearly false and designed to instill fear about Africans in its readers. The post could have been removed under Facebook's

misinformation policy which states “misinformation will be removed where it is likely to directly contribute to the risk of imminent physical harm,” as has too many times been the case where the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory is concerned.

Deciding the case on the word “colonization” was the wrong element to review. This post was not simply a “comment on or criticism of immigration policy.” The post clearly should have been reviewed based on Facebook protections of “race, ethnicity, national origin and religious affiliation” and the fact that “refugees, migrants, immigrants, and asylum seekers are protected against “the most severe attacks.” Zemmour’s post was obviously directed at his disdain for immigrants from Africa, a non-European continent, and one largely populated by Black and brown people, some of whom are Muslim. And if colonization was to be considered, it should have been understood to be a negative connotation about one population taking over or dominating another.

Facebook policies state that online and offline behavior is considered when reviewing a users’ posts and that is most critical when reviewing political speech which should be viewed with an even more discerning eye. Zemmour believes that non-white immigration is causing the native French population to be replaced by a Muslim majority. In other words, he explicitly endorses the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory. He is openly anti-Muslim and is on record advocating that Ukrainian refugees should be allowed to obtain French visas, but those fleeing wars in Muslim-majority countries (specifically Arab states) should not. Zemmour has long held anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim views and has twice been convicted of incitement of religious hatred for statements he made in broadcasts during his time as a TV commentator. Some members of Zemmour’s Reconquête! party were also members of Génération Identitaire (Generation Identity), a hugely influential white nationalist and anti-Muslim movement founded in 2012, which has been banned by the French government. Additionally, Facebook banned the entire global Generation Identity network in 2019, an Identitarian network that almost exclusively pushes the “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory and has connections to violence. About the July 2023 riots in France after a young Arab boy was killed by police, Zemmour said, “with the arrival of massive numbers of migrants from the global South who are “so far removed from our cultural and civilizing canons,” the level of violence seen during the rioting was inevitable” and likened the riots to an “ethnic war.” Throughout his Facebook page, Zemmour references the great replacement, the term invasion, refers to Muslims and immigrants as violent and criminals, and other dehumanizing language. There are also links to other social media sites and to his official website which refers to the French Identity

and the “evils of immigration and Islamization.”

Recommendations

- “Great Replacement” clearly meets Facebook’s community standard of being “tied to different forms of real world harm” and should be incorporated into its Dangerous Individuals and Organizations policy against militarized social movements and violence-inducing conspiracy networks like QAnon was, and the purveyors deplatformed, regardless of who they are.
- Remove “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory posts and accounts. In addition to the specific words “great replacement,” machine learning, algorithms, natural language processing, and other AI tools must also incorporate variations on the term, key words, hashtags, key phrases, patterns, and connected accounts. For example, Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni uses the phrase “ethnic substitution.”
- Invest in non-English language resources to fully address the conspiracy theory content regardless of language.
- Redirect users to authoritative information when searching for replacement content.
- Limit the reach of content while under review for “Great Replacement” by downgrading in the promotion and search algorithm results, restricting the views, and flagging with disclaimers the posts and accounts.

Link to Attachment

[PC-22014](#)