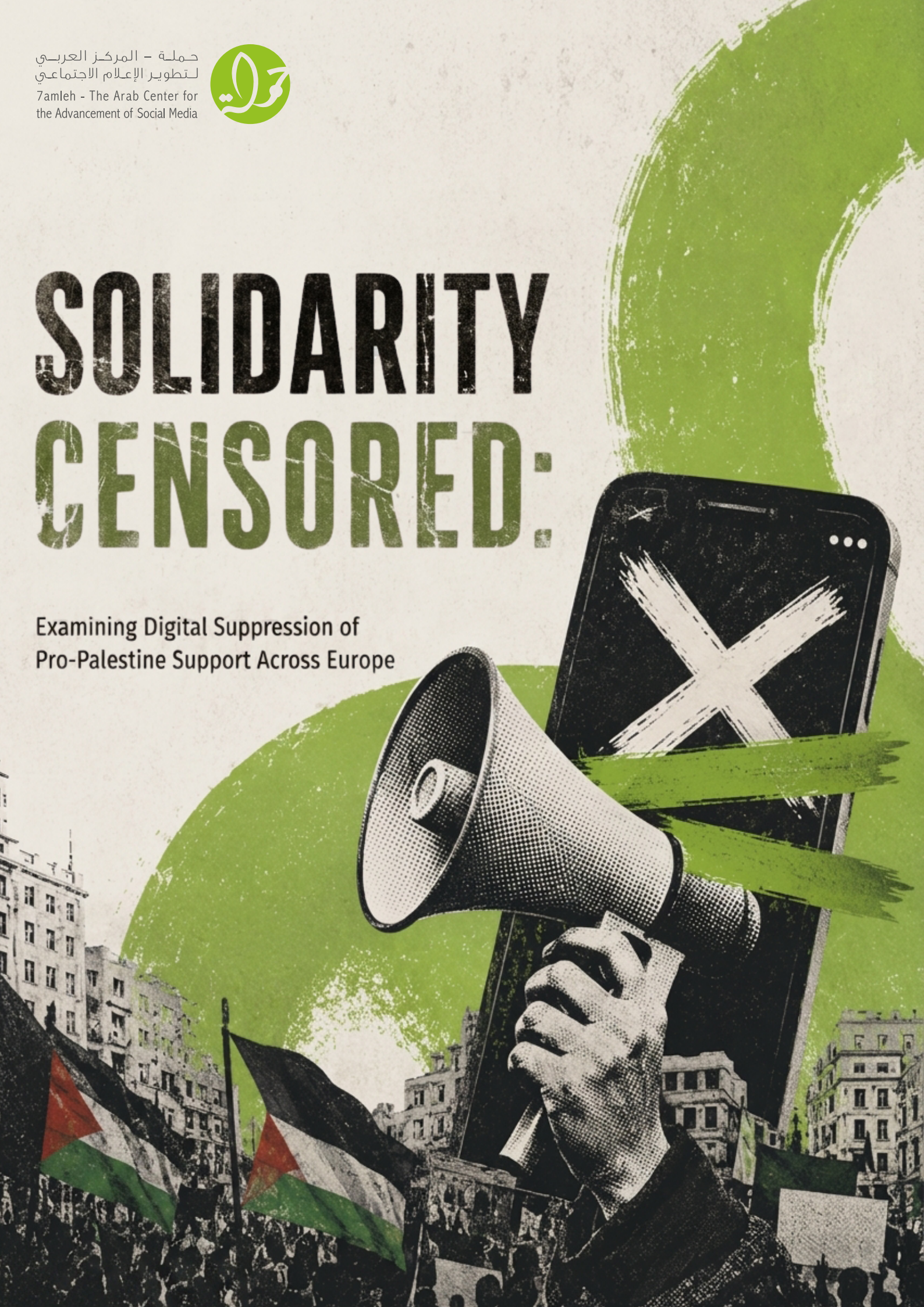




SOLIDARITY CENSORED:

Examining Digital Suppression of
Pro-Palestine Support Across Europe



7amleh - The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media

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Across Europe

September 2026

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AUTHORS

Alexandra Fine
Carolina Xavier
Elodie Vialle

DESIGN

Catherine Raad

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CONTACT US

Email: info@7amleh.org

Website: www.7amleh.org

Find us on social media: 7amleh



“

**We don't live in
a dictatorship.
As a European
citizen, I expect
my free speech
to be honored.”**

A British Instagram user whose account was deactivated after sharing expressions of solidarity towards Palestinians.



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I.

Introduction

Online censorship of Palestinian narratives and expressions of solidarity is not new. For years, activists, researchers, and civil society organizations have documented a persistent pattern in which peaceful political expression, documentation of human rights violations, and critique of Israeli state policies are systematically taken down, restricted, or penalized. *



* Hamdallah, Sura. "Facebook and Palestinians: Biased or Neutral Content Moderation Policies?" 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/booklet-final2-1.pdf>; "Hashtag Palestine: Rise in Violations of Palestinian Digital Rights in 2021." 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/hashtag-palestine-rise-in-violations-of-palestinian-digital-rights-in-2021>

Since the beginning of the Genocide¹ in Gaza, online censorship intensified significantly. A new wave of digital repression has been widely denounced by civil society and affected users around the world. According to 7amleh's ongoing monitoring through the Palestinian Observatory of Digital Rights Violations (7or), more than 1,350 instances of online censorship were recorded between October 7, 2023 and July 1, 2024 across major social media platforms.² Human Rights Watch similarly reported over 1,050 incidents of content takedown or suppression on Meta's platforms alone – within just one month – affecting Palestinians and their supporters in over 60 countries.³ Other reports have identified patterns of censorship that extend beyond Meta, such as on LinkedIn and X.⁴

The collected data shows that this censorship has targeted not only Palestinian voices online, but has also limited access to information for broader audiences who seek to understand or express solidarity with the Palestinian cause. Such censorship undermines democratic discourse and the right of people everywhere to access diverse perspectives on a topic of general interest.⁵ According to Deborah Brown, Deputy Director for Technology, Rights, and Investigations at Human Rights Watch, this is a “freedom of expression issue in Europe, and this is happening as Israel is committing crimes against humanity and acts of genocide while at the same time silencing voices who are speaking out...It's important to document violations of human rights and abuses to keep evidence for future justice.”⁶

While platforms play a central role in moderating and restricting content, they are not acting in isolation. Increasingly, the suppression of Palestine-related content online appears to result from a complex interplay between platform governance, legal frameworks, and state authority. Platform moderation systems are deeply influenced by national legislation, regulatory pressures, political dynamics and local governments' requests. State actions, such as arrests, deportations, and prosecutions based on social media posts have the potential to create a chilling effect, stoking fear amongst users who then are more likely to self-censor or withdraw from public discourse to forestall negative outcomes, wherein they could face increased personal or professional risk.

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- 1 United Nations Human Rights Council, Legal Analysis of the Conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Conference Room Paper of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, UN Doc. A/HRC/60/CRP.3 (September 16, 2025)
 - 2 “Social media's role in censoring supporters of Palestine.” Mizan Online News Agency. Retrieved from: <https://www.mizanonline.ir/en/news/34/social-medias-role-in-censoring-supporters-of-palestine>
 - 3 “Meta's Broken Promises.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metass-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>
 - 4 “New Report by 7amleh Exposes Biased Content Moderation Practices on LinkedIn During the Genocide in Gaza.” 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/digital-rights-under-threat-en>; Abukhater, Jalal. “The Impact of X Platform's Content Moderation Policies on Palestinian Digital Rights.” 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/storage/%D9%88%D8%B1%D9%82%D8%A9%20%D8%A5%D9%83%D8%B3/The%20Impact%20of%20X%20.pdf>
 - 5 “Freedom of expression also under fire in Gaza war, rights expert says.” United Nations: UN News. Retrieved from: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1155881>
 - 6 Interview with Deborah Brown, co-author of the report, “Meta's Broken Promises, Systemic Censorship of Palestine Content on Instagram and Facebook,” released in December 2023 by Human Rights Watch. Conducted on January 30, 2026 “Meta's Broken Promises.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metass-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>

Together, these dynamics can result in the shrinking of spaces where meaningful discussion, dissent, and documentation can take place. This threatens not only freedom of expression, but also restricts the ability to advocate for justice, to preserve collective memory, and to counter dominant narratives. These effects are particularly acute for Palestinian communities, whose voices are already marginalized in mainstream political and media discourse, and who increasingly rely on digital platforms to share lived experiences, challenge power, and mobilize support across borders.

Given this context, this report explores how this infrastructure of online censorship operates in Europe. While the influence of the United States in shaping online discourse is not understated, the evolving regulatory environment in the EU, with the implementation of the Digital Services Act and growing suppression of the Palestine solidarity movement throughout region, highlight the urgent need to assess how different layers of governance interact and impact freedom of expression for EU-based individuals. By mapping how the EU and its Member States – intertwined within a broader global context – shape, reinforce, or resist this censorship machinery, the report identifies broader patterns, points of divergence, and the cumulative impact on digital rights across the region.

Building on this analysis, the report offers evidence-based recommendations to governments, EU institutions, digital platforms, and civil society actors. These recommendations are grounded in the urgent need to safeguard users' fundamental rights, including freedom of expression and access to information, and to preserve online spaces where meaningful, pluralistic, and rights-based public debate can continue to flourish.



II.

Methodology

This research employs a mixed-methods approach - combining legal analysis, case studies, survey data, and qualitative research - to examine online censorship of Palestine-related content across Europe between October 7, 2023 and December 31, 2025. The study focuses on France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK, selected due to available data from organizations like 7amleh and the European Legal Support Center, and more visible pro-Palestine advocacy in these countries since the start of the genocide in Gaza.

Researchers mapped the landscape across these six countries by reviewing national legislation, recent developments, judicial decisions, as well as platform transparency reports to establish the regulatory context affecting Palestine solidarity expression. They then documented cases using civil society reports, media coverage, and advocacy material ensuring geographic diversity and representation of different types of censorship.

Experiential insights were collected through over 12 semi-structured interviews and 17 messaging exchanges conducted with civil society organizations, legal scholars, tech workers, and affected individuals, complemented by data sourced from two surveys – one stemming from a questionnaire launched by the European Legal Support Center (ELSC), analyzing 62 testimonies from users who reported and documented censorship of pro-Palestine content across France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK, and the other launched by researchers of this report, where 17 responses were collected between October 2025 and December 2025. Researchers also collected feedback after presenting their initial key findings at a gathering with CSO representatives and researchers in Brussels, hosted in early December by 7amleh.⁷

Documentation efforts, however, face significant challenges. Oftentimes, users do not necessarily document censorship, as it presents as a glitch from mistaken enforcement of content moderation rules. The Digital Services Act's transparency requirements have yielded reports with substantial shortcomings, hindering civil society monitoring and accountability.⁸ Opaque practices like shadow

7 "Protect of Perpetuate? The European Union's Choices on Palestinian Digital Freedom," 7amleh's Annual Conference, Brussels, December 2nd, 2025. Authors of this report introduced key findings and gathered insights from CSOs and Palestinian rights activists.

8 "Counting without accountability?..." The Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Internet and Society (HIIG). Retrieved from: <https://www.hiig.de/en/analysis-of-the-dsas-transparency-reports/>

banning occur without user notification, making detection extremely difficult.⁹ Other transparency tools like the DSA Transparency Database remain limited, particularly for analyzing content in solidarity with Palestine due to vague definitions and lack of original content access.

Government takedown transparency is similarly limited: platforms publish rough figures per country omitting specific request details, often citing «violating local laws» without specification and excluding policy-based removals, making the state of state-driven censorship of pro-Palestine content impossible to gauge.

To address these challenges, this research triangulates data from literature reviews, case studies,¹⁰ surveys, and interviews, and convenings¹¹ to identify systemic trends and regional patterns while acknowledging limitations posed by secretive and automated moderation practices.

9 Español, Marc. “Censorship of pro-Palestinian voices on social media soars...” El País. Retrieved from: <https://english.elpais.com/international/2023-12-27/censorship-of-pro-Palestine-voices-on-social-media-soars-amid-war-in-gaza.html>

10 Civil society monitoring has been crucial for this purpose. In addition to 7amleh’s Palestinian Observatory of Digital Rights Violations (7or), we would like to highlight the efforts of organizations such as Human Rights Watch, the European Legal Support Center, Forensic Architecture, and Mnemonic.

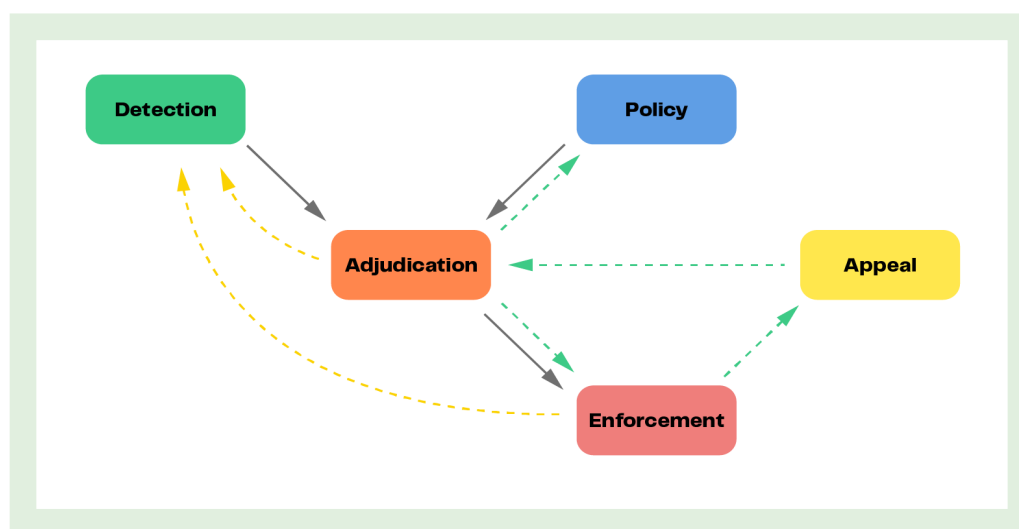
11 “Protect of Perpetuate? The European Union’s Choices on Palestinian Digital Freedom,” 7amleh’s Annual Conference, Brussels, December 2nd, 2025. Authors of this report introduced key findings and gathered insights from CSOs and advocates for Palestinian rights.

III.

Content Moderation, A Multi-Layer Process

To understand how global censorship operates online, it is essential to consider how social media platforms moderate content through community standards, which shape public discourse. These standards claim to promote safe, respectful environments where users can share content and interact without fear of harassment, violence, or discrimination and are regularly updated to the boundaries of acceptable behavior on platforms.

Although there is no authoritative definition of “content moderation,” the term generally refers to the processes of monitoring, judging, and acting on user-generated content to enforce platform policies or community standards.¹² According to Meedan, a nonprofit organization that develops tools to help historically underserved communities access information, content moderation can be understood as a process composed of five key components:



Source: Meedan, *Toolkit for Civil Society and Moderation Inventory*, Kat Lo

¹² “Toolkit for Civil Society and Moderation Inventory.” Meedan. Retrieved from: <https://meedan.org/post/toolkit-for-civil-society-and-moderation-inventory>

Content moderation can be preventive, proactive, or reactive, and may occur even before policy-violating content becomes visible to users. The first phase, Detection, involves identifying potentially problematic content, often through platforms' voluntary monitoring systems, frequently relying on AI technologies. For instance, Meta reports that over 90% of the content it acts upon is detected through automated processes.¹³

Content can also be flagged through user reporting, which allows users to signal potential violations, and through state intervention, when governments request or order content removal. These mechanisms demonstrate that content moderation has become a multi-dimensional process involving both state and non-state actors.¹⁴

The second stage, Adjudication, involves deciding whether the identified content violates any platform policies. While automated systems often make these decisions, human review may be involved in more complex or borderline cases.¹⁵

Finally, enforcement occurs if the content is found to violate a policy. Depending on the severity, sanctions can include hiding or removing posts, temporarily suspending or permanently banning accounts, restricting audiences, or limiting participation in platform features. Other measures might include partially or entirely blocking content (e.g., through screen-blurring), downranking,¹⁶ or shadowbanning.

Content Moderation Processes in Europe: The Digital Services Act

The Digital Services Act (DSA), adopted by the European Union in 2022 and fully applicable since February 2024, marks a pivotal shift in regulating digital platforms across Europe. One of its key concerns is content moderation, and it sets clear rules for platforms on how they must handle harmful or illegal content. In practice, the DSA shapes how platforms identify, act upon, and justify content moderation decisions, which means that in Europe, the process described above must follow specific regulatory rules.

For example, platforms covered by the DSA are required to provide accessible mechanisms allowing users to report content they believe to be illegal. This includes both individual users and designated

13 "How Technology Detects Violations." Meta. Retrieved from: <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/enforcement/detecting-violations/technology-detects-violations/>

14 Romain Badouard and Anne Bellon. "Introduction to the special issue on content moderation on digital platforms." Internet Policy Review. Retrieved from: <https://policyreview.info/articles/analysis/introduction-content-moderation-digital-platforms>

15 Ferreira, Leonel. "Automated content moderation and the right to a human decision." LexTech Institute. Retrieved from: <https://www.lextechinstitute.ch/la-moderation-de-contenu-automatisee-et-le-droit-a-une-decision-humaine/?lang=en>

16 Leerssen, Paddy. "An end to shadow banning?..." ScienceDirect. Retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0267364923000018#sec0002>

“trusted flaggers” – actors such as civil society groups whose expertise grants their reports priority consideration. Alongside these mechanisms, several Member States have implemented specific channels for users to report illegal content on the Internet. For example, Europol, a reporting platform across borders that directs users to their country-specific reporting websites, or Pharos, which is operated by the Ministry of Interior in France.

With regards to state intervention, under the DSA, national authorities have the power to issue legally binding orders requiring platforms to remove or disable access to content that violates national or EU law. Platforms must comply promptly and inform users when their content is affected. (Often limited) data on these requests are generally available in the transparency reports published by the platforms.¹⁷

Importantly, the DSA requires platforms to address not only content that violates their own terms of service but also content that is considered illegal. While the concept of “illegal content” is not specifically defined, illegal content broadly refers to any information that is considered illegal under EU law or the national laws of Member States.

Because platforms are now legally required to act on content that breaches national and regional laws, their private policies have become closely shaped by these legal frameworks. As a result, the relationship between platforms and state authorities have grown more entangled. Platforms not only enforce their own rules, but also act on public laws, blurring the line between private governance and public regulation.¹⁸

One practical effect of this is that platforms may restrict the visibility of certain content on a country-by-country basis. When content violates local laws, platforms may make it unavailable only in the concerned country.¹⁹ This creates a fragmented digital environment in which different Member States can exert different levels of influence over online discourse, including the treatment of narratives such as pro-Palestine content.

What is Censorship?

Traditionally, censorship has been conceptualized as a state-driven practice through which governments suppress, restrict or condition the circulation of ideas and information, typically through legal or administrative measures. This perspective focuses on state authorities as the primary actors capable enforcing such restrictions, often to suppress dissent and maintain ideological conformity²⁰.

17 “How the Digital Services Act enhances transparency online.” European Commission. Retrieved from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/dsa-brings-transparency>

18 Romain Badouard and Anne Bellon. “Introduction to the special issue on content moderation on digital platforms.” Internet Policy Review. Retrieved from: <https://policyreview.info/articles/analysis/introduction-content-moderation-digital-platforms>

19 “Content Restrictions Based on Local Law.” Meta. Retrieved from: <https://transparency.meta.com/reports/content-restrictions/>

20 This is reflected in legal instruments such as the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR), which, under Article 10, protects freedom of expression as a fundamental right from state interference.

However, the rise of the Internet and social media has profoundly transformed the landscape of public communication. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, and TikTok now function as central infrastructures for public discourse, hosting and curating vast amounts of user-generated content.²¹

Not all speech restrictions, however, constitute censorship. Like other fundamental rights, freedom of expression can be legitimately restricted, as recognized, in Europe, by the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. For example, laws may limit speech involving defamation, incitement to violence, or child abuse material.

In contrast, censorship involves the suppression of lawful expression for the purpose of silencing dissenting voices. In these cases, speech is limited not because it causes harm recognized by law, but because it challenges political power, dominant narratives and corporate interests. This dynamic might emerge when speech is regulated solely by platforms' community guidelines, which are unilaterally defined and often influenced by economic incentives or corporate values, or those they claim.²²

Besides, evidence indicates that social media platforms frequently fail to enforce their own speech rules consistently, exposing significant gaps and practical shortcomings in their moderation practices.²³ Empirical analysis of content moderation using the EU's Digital Services Act Transparency Database also reveals substantial variations in enforcement across platforms, with some moderating far more frequently per user than others.²⁴ The study, based on Statements of Reasons (SoRs) submitted by major platforms during the first two months of the database's operation, also shows a strong reliance on automated decision-making, which accounts for more than 90% of moderation actions and often prioritizes speed over contextual understanding.²⁵

These practices increase the risk of false positives, particularly because platforms frequently rely on severe sanctions such as content removal or account suspension,²⁶ highlighting the high-stakes consequences of these practices over users' speech, and particularly for marginalized groups and individuals.

Research by the Brennan Center for Justice, including the 2021 report *Double Standards in Social Media Content Moderation*, indicates that moderation policies and their enforcement often place these groups at greater risk of account removal, especially when discussing current events or documenting attacks against their communities, thereby limiting their ability to organize and share information.²⁷

21 See Gillespie, Tarleton. "Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions that Shape Social Media." Yale University Press, 2018.

22 Klonick, Kate. "The New Governors," 1625.

23 Daphne Keller and Paddy Leerssen. "Facts and Where to Find Them: Empirical Research on Internet Platforms and Content Moderation." *Social Media and Democracy: The State of the Field and Prospects for Reform*.

24 Chiara Drolsbach and Nicolas Pröllochs. "Content Moderation on Social Media in the EU: Insights from the DSA Transparency Database." arXiv. Retrieved from: <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2312.04431> "It remains speculative whether platforms with higher content moderation volumes tend to encounter rule-breaking content more frequently or if they simply handle such content differently."

25 Gillespie, Tarleton. "Custodians of the Internet: Platforms, Content Moderation, and the Hidden Decisions that Shape Social Media." Yale University Press, 98.

26 See Chiara Drolsbach and Nicolas Pröllochs. "Content Moderation on Social Media in the EU: Insights from the DSA Transparency Database."

27 Ángel Díaz and Laura Hecht-Felella. "Double Standards in Social Media Content Moderation." Brennan Center for Justice.

Self-Censorship and the Fear of Sanctions

These erratic and inconsistent content moderation practices of social media platforms also impact on how users behave online, often leading to self-censorship. Individuals may choose *not* to share or speak freely, knowing that their posts could be flagged or their accounts taken down, which may result in both personal and professional consequences.

As a result, users often avoid specific words or expressions that trigger filters that would remove, demonetize or shadowban their content.²⁸ Professor Kendra Calhoun, in her research on TikTok, discusses how these practices are experienced unevenly, explaining that these avoidance strategies are mostly used by marginalized users and communities, such as LGBTQIA+ users, women, and individuals expressing social and political views that challenge dominant power structures, such as those expressing solidarity with Palestine.²⁹

The fear of repercussions goes beyond the risk of an account being removed. Online threats and potential offline consequences, such as criminal investigations, arrests, and state surveillance, can also discourage individuals from discussing certain topics. Marginalized groups are particularly vulnerable in this regard, as social media platforms have become key sources of data for law enforcement, with police increasingly using them to monitor protests and track activists considered potential “threats”, as demonstrated by the surveillance of social justice movements, such as Black Lives Matter,³⁰ and the Palestine solidarity movement.³¹

Global influences on the Online Censorship of Pro-Palestine Speech

Since the beginning of the genocide in Gaza,³² the growing volume of reports documenting content

28 Kendra Calhoun and Alexia Fawcett. “‘They edited out her nip nops’: Linguistic Innovation as textual censorship avoidance on TikTok.” *Language@Internet*, 2.

29 Yates, Diana. “How do people use self-censorship...” News Bureau – University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Retrieved from: <https://news.illinois.edu/how-do-people-use-self-censorship-to-avoid-having-their-content-suppressed-on-sites-like-tiktok/>

30 Suleiman, Munirat. “Social Media Surveillance of the Black Lives Matter Movement...” *Columbia Undergraduate Law Review*. Retrieved from: <https://www.culawreview.org/journal/social-media-surveillance-of-the-black-lives-matter-movement-and-the-right-to-privacy>

31 “Europe’s Proscription of Palestine Solidarity.” European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Retrieved from: <https://elsc.support/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Europes-Proscription-of-Palestine-Solidarity.pdf>

32 United Nations Human Rights Council, Legal Analysis of the Conduct of Israel in Gaza pursuant to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Conference Room Paper of the Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel, UN Doc. A/HRC/60/CRP.3 (September 16, 2025)

moderation practices disproportionately targeting pro-Palestine voices is alarming, as it highlights a systematic and global pattern of online censorship. While this report examines the dynamics of online censorship within specific countries in the EU and the UK, the phenomenon must be understood within a broader context. As Deborah Brown, Deputy Directory for Technology, Rights, and Investigations at Human Rights Watch, explains, “There is a continuum between people expressing censorship offline and then being censored online...restrictions on protests don’t happen in a vacuum».

The United States, an unconditional supporter of Israel, plays a significant role in defining global online narratives, given its dominance as the home of major technology companies. These companies control the majority of online communication globally, their policies shaping the digital landscape far beyond U.S. borders.³³ The presence of many U.S.-based tech companies in the EU is significant as they bring with them their own company-specific policies, which are heavily influenced by U.S. politics and economic investments.³⁴ As an example, Meta’s Dangerous Organizations and Individuals (DOI) policy, which is globally enforced, uses the U.S. government’s list of designated terrorist organizations.

In addition to the U.S. influence, the state of Israel has emerged as another significant force in shaping global content moderation practices. Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu has described social media as an important weapon for shaping global opinion,³⁵ and Israel has invested substantial resources to influence public perception regarding the ongoing genocide in Gaza.³⁶ At the same time, Israeli authorities have leveraged social media to monitor, suppress, and persecute those perceived to be in dissent.³⁷

Besides the already uncovered connections between Meta and Israeli authorities,³⁸ Israel, through its Cyber Unit, works directly with social media platforms to request the takedown or suppression of

33 Klonick, Kate. “The New Governors.” Retrieved from: https://harvardlawreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/1598-1670_Online.pdf

34 For example, 9 out of the top 10 global software companies, 9 of the top 10 U.S. technology companies, the top 3 enterprise software companies, and 4 of the top 5 IT service companies are all based in Ireland. Notably, Adobe, alphabet the parent company of Google), Amazon, Apple, HP Inc, IBM, Intel, Meta, Microsoft, Oracle, Salesforce, and others are based in Ireland. The Big Five tech companies – Meta, Google (Alphabet), Microsoft, Apple, and Amazon all have their EMEA and/or European headquarters in Ireland, with all of those company headquarters located in Dublin with the exception of Apple, which is headquartered in Cork, Ireland. Additionally, LinkedIn, PayPal, Airbnb, Adobe, IBM, and Intel are also headquartered in Dublin. “The Top USA Tech Companies Based in Ireland.” SEO Solutions. Retrieved from: <https://www.seosolutions.ie/top-usa-tech-companies-based-ireland.html>; Bruton, David. “Ireland is the number 1 destination for US Tech Firms.” Nathan Trust. Retrieved from: <https://www.nathantrust.com/insights/ireland-is-the-number-1-destination-for-us-tech-firms>

35 Abu Shamala, Rania. “Netanyahu admits using social media as a weapon...” Anadolu Ajansı. Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/netanyahu-admits-using-social-media-as-weapon-to-influence-us-opinion-amid-gaza-genocide/3700646>

36 Osman, Nadda. “Narrative Warfare...” The New Arab. Retrieved from: <https://www.newarab.com/analysis/how-social-media-became-new-frontline-israels-digital-war>

37 Monetta, Sara. “Israeli Arabs arrested...” BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-67181582>

38 Waqas Ahmed et al. “Leaded Data Reveals...” Drop Site News. Retrieved from: <https://theintercept.com/2024/10/21/instagram-israel-palestine-censorship-sjp/>; Magee, Caolán. “Meta profits as ads promote illegal Israeli settlements in West Bank. Al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/3/31/meta-profits-as-ads-promote-illegal-israeli-settlements-in-west-bank>; Biddle, Sam. “Meta’s Israel Policy Chief Tried to Suppress Pro-Palestinian Instagram Posts.” The Intercept. Retrieved from: <https://theintercept.com/2024/10/21/instagram-israel-palestine-censorship-sjp/>; “Meta Israel policy chief Jordana Cutler allegedly ‘censoring’ pro-Palestine Instagram posts.” The New Arab. Retrieved from: <https://www.newarab.com/news/meta-policy-chief-israel-censoring-pro-palestine-posts>

content that it deems objectionable. In practice, this often means targeting posts or accounts discussing Palestinian human rights or criticizing Israeli policies, frequently under allegations of incitement or misinformation.³⁹ Between October and November, 2023, the Unit sent almost 10,000 requests to platforms, which responded with a 94% compliance rate.⁴⁰

This global context of censorship against Palestine solidarity movements, online and offline,⁴¹ directly intersects and influences the dynamics observed in Europe at large, and specifically in this study focusing on France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK, attesting that concerns with freedom of expression spread far beyond any national jurisdiction.

39 Thomas Brewster, "Israel Has Asked Meta And TikTok To Remove 8,000 Posts Related To Hamas War." Forbes. Retrieved from: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/thomasbrewster/2023/11/13/meta-and-tiktok-told-to-remove-8000-pro-hamas-posts-by-israel/?sh=16af3f16f6ce>

40 "Meta's Broken Promises." Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metas-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>

41 <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/report-special-rapporteur-23aug24/>

IV.

The Role of Social Media Platforms in Censoring the Palestine Solidarity Movement

Several individuals or organizations who advocate for Palestinian human rights and who were interviewed for this research reported an inability to engage with some pages, to like posts, or even to use the “go Live” feature.⁴² Most of the time, they do not receive a notification, and if they do receive one, the notification is disconnected from what they saw. A European-based Pro-Palestine organization stated, “We are currently banned from going Live on our Instagram account. Posts from our local branches and our own publications can randomly be deleted without any clear reason.”

Two other users interviewed for this research who often share pro-Palestine content online similarly reported on their inability to “like” comments or share posts, and the absence of any notification from the platform. «When an account is shut down, the user doesn’t seem to receive a detailed rationale from the platform, much less an accurate or credible rationale, so they remain in the dark about the processes around this form of censorship,” said Brian Ó Éigeartaigh, Media Officer at the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign.⁴³

Users globally have been censored online in several ways, and increasingly so since October 2023, as it has been reported on extensively by organizations like 7amleh, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, Access Now, various news sources, and others.⁴⁴ It is important to note that this digital

42 Fatafta, Marwa. “It’s Not a Glitch: How Meta Systematically Censors...” Access Now. Retrieved from: <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/how-meta-censors-palestinian-voices/>. Also reported in other reports: “Meta blocked Palestinian content creator Adnan Barq, an activist from Jerusalem, from live-streaming on Instagram, and restricted his account, including hiding it from non-followers and excluding it from Explore, Search, Suggested Users, Reels, and Feed Recommendations.”

43 Email exchange with 7amleh, Oct 7th, 2025.

44 “Meta’s Broken Promises.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metas-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>; Priyanka Shankar et al. “Are Social Media Giants Censoring...” al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2023/10/24/shadowbanning-are-social-media-giants-censoring-pro-palestine-voices>; Nashif, Nadim. “Digital Warfare: Israeli Censorship of Palestinian Content. Institute for Palestine Studies. Retrieved from: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1653973>

ensorship did not begin after October 7, 2023, but has been ongoing.⁴⁵ Data reveals significant censorship on Instagram, with 80% of respondents from the European Legal Support (ELSC)-7amleh questionnaire reporting being censored, and our own October 2025 survey showed a slightly lower, yet still substantial, rate of 56% of respondents identifying censorship.

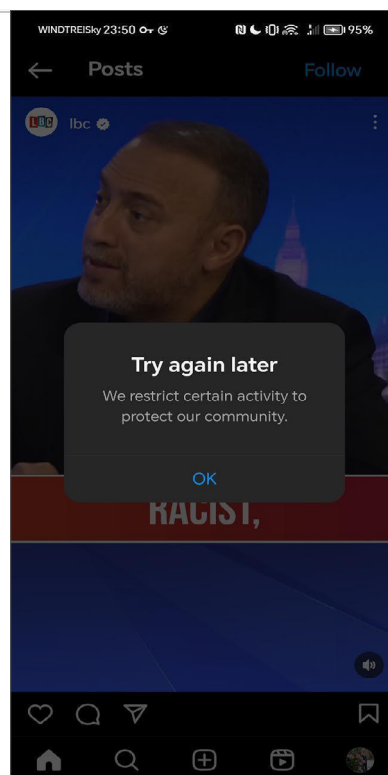
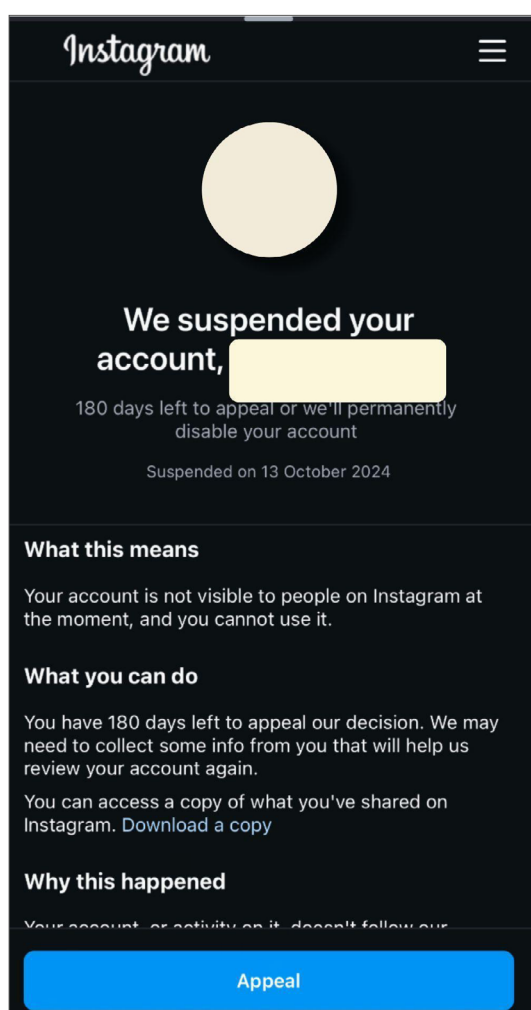


The lack of consistency in community standards between platforms complicates monitoring processes. “Different social media platforms use different terms to describe similar or identical moderation features, and conversely, use the same terms to describe moderation features that are implemented differently across platforms,” says Kat Lo, User Experience Designer. Platforms continue to release new features to address ever-emerging challenges in content moderation.

Users and organizations external to social media companies thus have limited, confusing, and inconsistent insight into how content moderation features operate within the systems’ underlying platform governance, from both technical and platform policy perspectives.

⁴⁵ Nashif, Nadim. “Digital Warfare: Israeli Censorship of Palestinian Content. Institute for Palestine Studies. Retrieved from: <https://www.palestine-studies.org/en/node/1653973>

A user based in the UK unable to share a pro-Palestine comment.



A UK-based user whose account was suspended shared: "I'm tired of Instagram constantly censoring my account for speaking up about Gaza. I've been shadowbanned, flagged, and even suspended twice—for simply posting real-time footage of Israel bombing civilians. I can't even like posts sometimes without getting blocked or flagged again. Being outspoken about genocide shouldn't be punished. This is what digital silencing looks like, and it's happening to thousands of us. Censorship won't stop the truth from spreading."

According to WITNESS, an international nonprofit organization that helps people use video and technology to protect and defend human rights, content moderation is now facing a dilemma. Digital tools have the potential to increase civic engagement – particularly for marginalized and vulnerable groups – enabling civic witnesses to document abuse, and defend their rights. But, bad actors are utilizing these same tools to spread misinformation, identify and silence dissenting voices, perpetuate hate speech, and put individual rights defenders and journalists at risk. AI-generated media in particular has the potential to amplify, expand, and alter existing problems around trust in information, verification of media, and

weaponization of online spaces.⁴⁶

To address these challenges after numerous accusations of human rights violations –including Meta, being accused of complicity of genocide in 2017⁴⁷–social media platforms have engaged with civil society organizations to gain further insights into community standards. Meta has a Trusted Partners Program,⁴⁸ which gathers over 400 non-governmental organizations, humanitarian agencies, human rights defenders and researchers from 113 countries around the globe.

Meta’s Oversight Board is another avenue for civil society organizations to report on cases and to inform Meta’s Policy, even though the Oversight Board’s decisions are not binding.⁴⁹ TikTok Safety Partners Programs⁵⁰ involve initiatives related to fact-checking, media literacy, body inclusivity, digital well-being, family education, and countering violent extremism. Their Community Partner Channel is “a direct avenue for trusted flaggers around the world, including in the conflict region, to report content to (TikTok) for review, which sits alongside TikTok in-app reporting function.”⁵¹ The YouTube Priority Flagger program⁵² includes a web form that NGOs can use to contact YouTube directly, to acquire visibility into decisions on reported content, prioritize flag reviews for increased actionability, continue ongoing discussion and feedback about YouTube content areas, and to occasionally receive online training.

Meta’s Policies after October 7, 2023

Since October 7, 2023, Meta has intensified the enforcement of its content moderation policies.⁵³ While the company publicly reaffirmed enforcing longstanding policies such as those against “Dangerous Organizations and Individuals, Violent and Graphic Content, Hate Speech, Violence and Incitement,

46 “Ticks or it Didn’t Happen*.” Witness. Retrieved from: <https://lab.witness.org/ticks-or-it-didnt-happen/>

47 “The Social Atrocity: Meta and the Right to Remedy in Rohingya.” Amnesty International. Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/ASA16/5933/2022/en/>

48 <https://transparency.meta.com/en-gb/policies/improving/bringing-local-context/>

49 However, The Oversight Board’s decisions, alongside civil society pressure and advocacy, might have an impact on Meta’s policies. For example, the impacts from the updated “shaheed” policy after a decision from the Board. “Oversight Board Publishes Policy Advisory Opinion...” The Oversight Board. Retrieved from: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/oversight-board-publishes-policy-advisory-opinion-on-referring-to-designated-dangerous-individuals-as-shaheed/>; “Expanding Free Expression Across Cultural and Civic Discourse.” The Oversight Board: Retrieved from: <https://transparency.meta.com/governance/tracking-impact/expanding-free-expression>

50 “Our continued actions to protect the TikTok Community...” TikTok. Retrieved from: <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/our-continued-actions-to-protect-the-tiktok-community-during-the-israel-hamas-war-ca?lang=en-CA>

51 “Our continued actions to protect the TikTok Community...” TikTok. Retrieved from: <https://newsroom.tiktok.com/our-continued-actions-to-protect-the-tiktok-community-during-the-israel-hamas-war-ca?lang=en-CA>

52 “About the YouTube Priority Flagger program.” YouTube Help. Retrieved from: <https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/7554338?hl=en#:~:text=The%20YouTube%20Priority%20Flagger%20program%20helps%20provide%20robust%20tools%20to,that%20violates%20our%20Community%20Guidelines.>

53 “Meta’s Ongoing Efforts Regarding the Israel-Hamas War.” Meta. Retrieved from: <https://about.fb.com/news/2023/10/metass-efforts-regarding-israel-hamas-war/>

Bullying and Harassment, and Coordinating Harm”, the real-world application of these policies reveals a troubling pattern of systemic censorship disproportionately impacting pro-Palestine voices and content.

Shadow-banning has been widely reported among Palestinian activists, journalists, and content creators.⁵⁴ Palestinian media pages and activists’ posts have suffered disproportionate declines in reach, engagement, and interaction compared to Israeli or other Arab media,⁵⁵ reinforcing narratives favorable to the Israeli government perspective and marginalizing dissenting voices. Documented cases include the outright suspension of prominent Palestinian news pages—such as Quds News Network, which was permanently banned in October 2023. Meta also suspended the Instagram account of Gaza journalist and photographer Motaz Azaiza,⁵⁶ who gained more than 18.5 million followers for reporting on the current war in Gaza.⁵⁷

Why this happened

The post may contain video that shows graphic violence.



2 Apr 2025

How many more children will the monster Israhell slaughter? 🤔
It will keep massacring until it is fo...



You shared this on your profile

This looks like other content that goes against our Community Standards on graphic violence.

 See rule >

What you need to know

 How to prevent further restrictions

[Request review](#)

An Irish-based user who shared this screenshot with 7amleh relayed:
“All my content is removed, shadow banned or flagged in some way for mentioning Palestine”.

54 Fatafta, Marwa. “It’s not a glitch...” Access Now. Retrieved from: <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/how-meta-censors-palestinian-voices/>

55 “Global: Social media companies must step up crisis response...” Amnesty International. Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/global-social-media-companies-must-step-up-crisis-response-on-israel-palestine-as-online-hate-and-censorship-proliferate/>

56 See Instagram, @motaz_azaiza. Instagram. Retrieved from: https://www.instagram.com/motaz_azaiza/

57 Fatafta, Marwa. “It’s not a glitch...” Access Now. Retrieved from: <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/how-meta-censors-palestinian-voices/>

Several users shared in our survey that they observed that their posts related to Palestine had very low reach, one person stating, “when I post on a new bombing or donation efforts for Palestine, the content reaches a lot less people than my usual posts do, close to 10% of my usual audience.” And a user from France shared that they noticed that “news related to Palestine was more likely to be blurred on my feed as ‘sensitive content.’” Several respondents noticed a decrease in views on their posts related to Palestine, compared to other topics. A user from Switzerland noted this, stating, “I am regularly posting on social media, especially on LinkedIn, on Palestine, and my post reach keeps being lower than on other topics, even though I know there is audience interest, especially amongst my pro-human rights followers.” A survey respondent from Belgium also noticed the lower reach social media posts related to Palestine would have, explaining that “any story I used to post I would have around 70+ people seeing it...anything on Palestine is not reaching more than 10-15 people.”

Changes in the scope of policies related to hate speech were also alarming. For instance, in February 2024, Meta proposed revising its hate speech policy to equate the political ideology of “Zionism” with Jewish and/or Israeli identities,⁵⁸ risking further censorship of political content, particularly relevant in the context of the ongoing genocide in Gaza, as reaffirmed by several organizations.⁵⁹

Central to Meta’s intensified censorship since October 2023 has been the application and expansion of its DOI policy. Originally designed to prevent *glorification, support, or representation* of designated groups deemed dangerous, including Hamas, the policy was updated to include broader references to violent non-state actors and entities preparing or advocating for future violence.⁶⁰ This expansion has affected a wide range of speech, including factual reporting and political discussion related to these groups.

The DOI policy’s vagueness—particularly terms such as «praise» and «substantive support»—allows for broad interpretation, heavily influenced by Meta’s automated moderation systems and a small degree of human oversight.⁶¹ This lack of transparency is compounded by Meta’s failure to publicly disclose the full list of designated organizations and individuals, citing security and legal concerns. However, leaked internal documents and whistleblower reports confirm that the majority of designations disproportionately affect groups from the Arab and Muslim world, including Palestinian political factions.⁶²

58 Johana Bhuiyan and Kari Paul. “Meta’s review of hate speech policy...” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/feb/09/meta-hate-speech-policy-zionist-censorship-pro-palestine-content>

59 “A Coalition of International Organizations Demands that Meta Refrain...” 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/a-coalition-of-international-organizations-demands-that-meta-refrain-from-censoring-criticism-of-zionism-on-its-platforms>

60 “Meta’s Broken Promises.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metass-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>

61 “How Automated Content Moderation Works (Even When It Doesn’t).” The Markup. Retrieved from: <https://themarkup.org/automated-censorship/2024/03/01/how-automated-content-moderation-works-even-when-it-doesnt-work>; “Content Moderation in a New Era for AI and Moderation.” Oversight Board. Retrieved from: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/content-moderation-in-a-new-era-for-ai-and-automation/>

62 Fatafta, Marwa. “It’s not a glitch...” Access Now. Retrieved from: <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/how-meta-censors-palestinian-voices/>; Biddle, Sam. “Revealed: Facebook’s Secret Blacklist...” The Intercept. Retrieved from: <https://theintercept.com/2023/03/01/facebook-blacklist-palestine/>

Human Rights Watch found that between October and November 2023, there were over 1,050 cases of takedowns and other suppression of content on Instagram and Facebook posted by Palestinians and their supporters, with 1,049 cases involving “peaceful content in support of Palestine that was censored or otherwise unduly suppressed.” Many of this content involved mere neutral mention of Hamas, but was still censored, even though the policy should permit “reporting on, neutrally discussing, or condemning” such organizations.⁶³ A BSR report also made note that Palestinians are more likely to violate the DOI policy due to this designation and political affiliations, resulting in more account penalties and content removals.⁶⁴

Moreover, internal Meta leaks underscore that requests for content removal from Israeli authorities—frequently targeting Palestinian voices—are accepted and actioned with minimal human review,⁶⁵ often delegated to AI moderation systems that apply removal across the platform en masse. This creates a feedback loop where algorithmic systems propagate and amplify censorship with little recourse for affected users,⁶⁶ escalating the impact beyond what human moderators would likely institute.

The Oversight Board, created to provide checks on Meta’s content decisions, announced in December 2023 two cases about the war on Gaza following a series of measures to address the spike in harmful and potentially harmful content spreading on the platforms.⁶⁷ After October 7th, Meta admitted having to “fix errors” that led to significantly reduced reach. This “bug” affected accounts equally around the globe – not only people trying to post about what’s happening in Israel and Gaza, but those who had nothing to do with this content.⁶⁸ And significantly, in September 2024, Meta’s Oversight Board ruled that the phrase “From the River to the Sea” does not constitute hate speech.⁶⁹

The changes in content moderation policies after October 7, 2023, occurred in a context of increased political pressures, but also alongside notable shifts in platform leadership that influenced policy

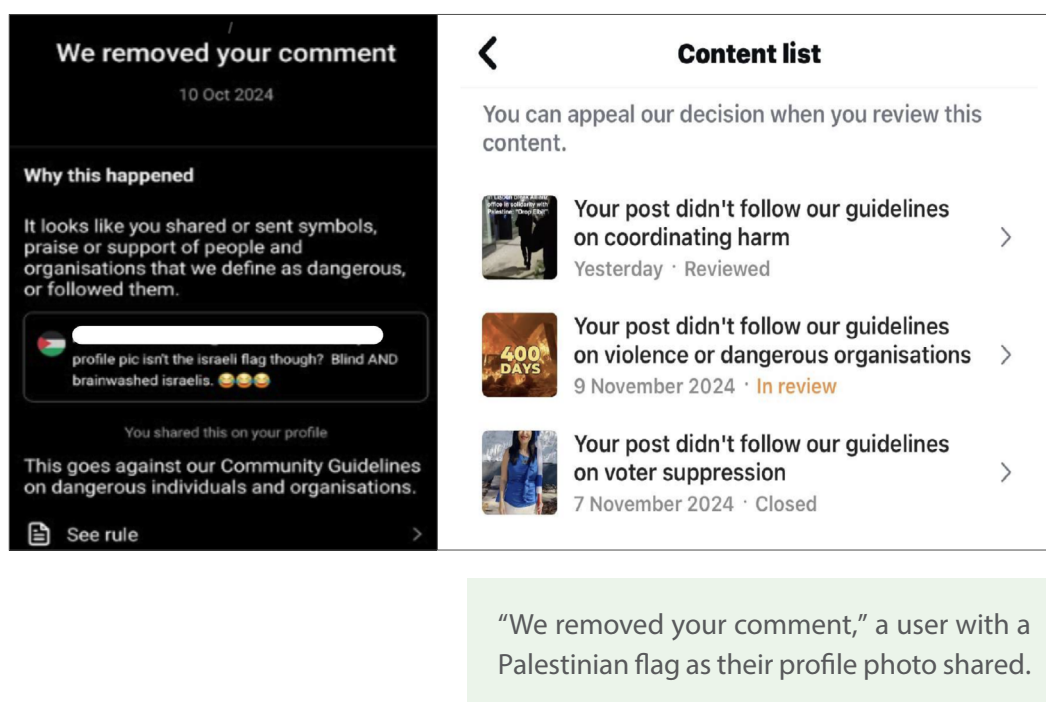
[tercept.com/2021/10/12/facebook-secret-blacklist-dangerous/](https://www.tercept.com/2021/10/12/facebook-secret-blacklist-dangerous/)

- 63 “Meta’s Broken Promises.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2023/12/21/metass-broken-promises/systemic-censorship-palestine-content-instagram-and>
- 64 BSR Staff. “Human Rights Due Diligence of Meta’s Impacts in Israel and Palestine.” BSR. Retrieved from: <https://www.bsr.org/en/reports/meta-human-rights-israel-palestine>
- 65 Magee, Caolán. “Meta profits as ads promote illegal Israeli settlements in West Bank. Al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/3/31/meta-profits-as-ads-promote-illegal-israeli-settlements-in-west-bank>
- 66 Ahmed Nour, Joe Tidy and Yara Farag. “How Facebook restricted news in Palestinian territories.” BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c786w1xz4jgo>
- 67 “Oversight Board Issues First Expedited Decisions About Israel-Hamas Conflict.” The Oversight Board. Retrieved from: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/1109713833718200-oversight-board-issues-first-expedited-decisions-about-israel-hamas-conflict/>; “Meta’s initial decisions to remove 2 videos...” CBS News. Retrieved from: <https://www.cbsnews.com/sanfrancisco/news/israel-hamas-war-meta-oversight-board-reverses-decisions-to-remove-2-videos-fb-ig/>
- 68 “Meta’s Ongoing Efforts Regarding the Israel-Hamas War.” Meta. Retrieved from: <https://about.fb.com/news/2023/10/metass-efforts-regarding-israel-hamas-war/>
- 69 “New Decision Highlights Why Standalone Use of ‘From the River to the Sea’ Should Not Lead to Content Removal.” Oversight Board. Retrieved from: <https://www.oversightboard.com/news/new-decision-highlights-why-standalone-use-of-from-the-river-to-the-sea-should-not-lead-to-content-removal/>; Brown, Deborah. “Meta’s Oversight Board Rules ‘From the River to the Sea’ Isn’t Hate Speech.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/09/18/metass-oversight-board-rules-river-sea-isnt-hate-speech>

directions. Meta, for instance, undertook significant organizational changes at the top management level, including restructuring efforts aimed at accelerating decision-making processes under Mark Zuckerberg and his core executive team.⁷⁰

These leadership changes coincided with a «year of intensity» where Meta overhauled its content moderation systems, increased automation, and rolled out more restrictive measures targeting politically sensitive content, including pro-Palestine speech, as denounced by Meta's employees themselves⁷¹ and documented extensively by 7amleh in prior research.⁷² According to whistleblower disclosures and investigative reports, Meta aligned some of its enforcement mechanisms more closely with Israeli governmental interests, effectively sanctioning a collaborative censorship regime that targets Palestinian narratives⁷³.

This organizational pivot, combined with intensified government requests, resulted in platform policies that became stricter and less transparent, undermining protections for legitimate political discourse and human rights advocacy.



70 Ian. "Mark Zuckerberg's Change Management Strategies at Meta." Pressfarm. Retrieved from: <https://press.farm/mark-zuckerbergs-change-management-at-meta/>

71 "Meta Stop Censoring Palestine." Retrieved from: <https://metastopcensoringpalestine.com/>; Hays, Kali. "Meta employees say internal posts..." Business Insider. Retrieved from: <https://www.businessinsider.com/meta-workers-write-letter-mark-zuckerberg-palestine-2024-5>

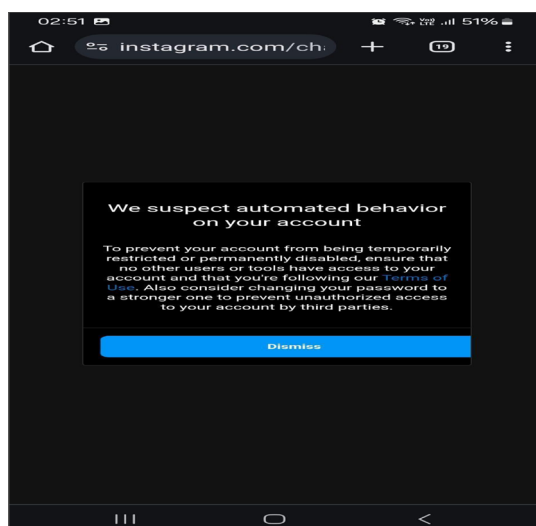
72 Fine, Alexandra. "Delete the Issue: Tech Worker Testimonies on Palestinian Advocacy and Workplace Suppression." 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/tech-workers-testimonies-stories-of-suppression-of-palestinian-advocacy-in-the-workplace-en>

73 Fatafta, Marwa. "It's not a glitch..." Access Now. Retrieved from: <https://www.accessnow.org/publication/how-meta-censors-palestinian-voices/>; Biddle, Sam. "Revealed: Facebook's Secret Blacklist..." The Intercept. Retrieved from: <https://theintercept.com/2021/10/12/facebook-secret-blacklist-dangerous/>

A European Pro-Palestinian organization documented their systematic censorship from Meta, “we couldn’t go live, use private messages, people could not find us in the research bar. On our account, we share videos of activists denouncing the genocide, compile the most significant moments of the genocide without too graphic of content or images of blood of people, but showing the suffering of Palestinians. We share videos exposing Zionist behaviour towards pro-Palestinian protestors. This caused systematic censorship from Meta.”

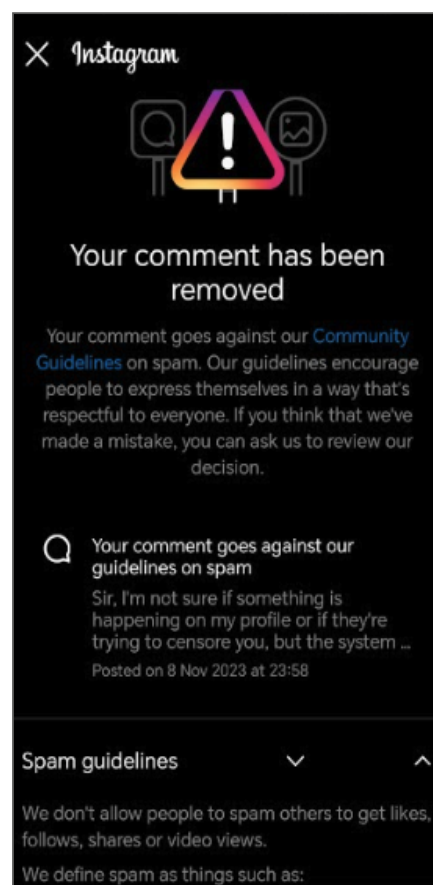
“Soft Censorship:” Pro-Palestine Activism Considered Spam?

Online “soft censorship” practices are more difficult to monitor, which makes it more difficult for organizations advocating for Palestinian rights to build accountability. According to a tech worker based in the Netherlands, it involves more subtle censorship, such as users seeing an event post after the event has happened, even if the user has followed the account and/or turned on notifications, the disabling of a user’s account without warning, the removal of users’ likes on posts, being unable to find posts previously liked, or being flooded with ads that are assumed to be “distracting” to that users’ specific demographic. This tech worker explains that through «soft censorship» tracking they have been conducting since 2021, they have been able to identify patterns by running their own tests to determine whether these forms of censorship appear intentional or to be bugs in the system.



This message appeared for a user, after they “just tried to comment on a picture.” This user reported the problem to Meta, and nothing happened

A user’s comment was banned on Instagram, and their removal message read, “Your comment goes against our Community Guidelines on spam.”



Since October 2023, the Amsterdam-based tech worker we spoke to has noticed a clear increase in online censorship related to Palestinian content. Based on their tracking and observations of “soft censorship,” they explain, “What you notice on social media is that there are many events happening, and it’s difficult to get to know about events in time, because even if you follow the accounts and have notifications turned on, you will see the post after the event has happened... Someone wrote a code for this to happen.”

A UK-based interviewee shared that they could not comment on a pro-Palestine statement, due to what seemed to be a glitch, stating: “My comments would be duplicated, it would pop up as two comments immediately and then after Instagram sent a message: it is spam. I tried to fix it by clicking on it and then I deleted it, but two were deleted.” They go on to explain, “I’ve noticed, when watching the story of public profiles, that there was a period where some stories from some accounts would go very fast, lasting 2 seconds each instead of let’s say 15 to 30 seconds. I saw this on specific profiles speaking on Palestine.”

Deborah Brown from Human Rights Watch corroborated what these pro-Palestine users shared, especially with regards to being notified that their posts in support of Palestinian rights were “spam.” She says, “We observed that if a user posts the same message several times, which is often the case for people denouncing human rights violations, this can be considered as spamming behavior under Meta’s rules... As a consequence, Meta considers activism to be spam.”

Many users we spoke with noticed their content being blocked or shadowbanned, and an inability to like pages if the page shared pro-Palestine content, followed by a general notification – often with no reference to which policy or law was allegedly being violated. One user shared, “I noticed that before October 7th, I could talk freely about the history of Palestine, sharing my personal opinion... After October 2023, I noticed that my comments would be removed. Is it a technical error or a genuine censorship? I’ve never shared problematic comments. I am just a normal human being, not an activist. I don’t even have a huge presence online. I just wanted to express support to the Palestinian people, that’s it.”

This observation is not isolated – several individuals and organizations advocating for Palestinian rights we interviewed mentioned content being removed, sometimes temporarily, and with no further explanation – an experience shared by many other users worldwide, and documented throughout several reports.⁷⁴ Another user stated, “Despite reporting I never received any notification or message from Instagram about fixing this seemingly deliberate error that left me unable to comment. I would just have to wait it out until I was eventually able to comment again.” Deborah Brown from Human Rights Watch states, “There is a breakdown of trust with these platforms, as people think their report to the platforms go nowhere.”

74 Fine, Alexandra. “Delete the Issue: Tech Worker Testimonies on Palestinian Advocacy and Workplace Suppression.” 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/tech-workers-testimonies-stories-of-suppression-of-palestinian-advocacy-in-the-workplace-en>

In regard to content being removed, several respondents from our survey also mentioned a direct impact on their effort to fund solidarity movement towards Palestinians. “I share stories and almost daily videos with direct links to donate directly to families in Gaza. Most of the time those stories are not visible to followers for about 10-12 hours since posting. Then, I get a maximum of 8 views,” says a user from France. “There is also an option to tag other accounts on those stories, so it is automatically shared on other account stories, but I have received messages from people that they can’t upload those stories on their profiles...they don’t have an option to share at all.”

Attacks on Pro-Palestine Content Across Platforms

While Meta is a major actor in the context of content moderation, other platforms, such as TikTok and X, also play a significant role in digital repression. A recent 7amleh report, for example, reveals serious gaps in LinkedIn’s moderation policies⁷⁵ and an internal work environment marked by institutional bias in favor of Israel and anti-Palestinian racism.⁷⁶ With regard to X, 7amleh reports that while overmoderation of pro-Palestine content has not been heavily identified, the platform undermoderates hate speech used against Palestinians, undermining their ability to express their voices.⁷⁷

TikTok has intensified its content moderation efforts in the EU, employing advanced AI tools and automated systems to remove millions of violations related to Palestine content with “high accuracy” during what they referred to as periods of heightened conflict, while cooperating closely with government authorities and Zionist organizations.^{78,79} In a recently surfaced video, newly appointed CEO Adam Presser⁸⁰ discussed a policy designating the term «Zionist» as a proxy for a protected attribute as hate speech. While “positive uses” like «proud Zionist» remain permitted, calling someone a «Zionist as

75 Wood, Oliver. “Digital Rights Under Threat: The Impact of LinkedIn’s Biased Moderation Amid Genocide.” 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/digital-rights-under-threat-en>

76 Interviews reveal that LinkedIn employees filed formal complaints to senior management about these “double standards” as early as October 2023, after initiatives related to Palestinian culture and human rights were canceled and internally described as “revolting.”

77 In 2023, out of 1606 censorship-related digital rights violations, only 2% of those violations occurred on X. Meanwhile, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok dominated the violations chart, respectively, boasting 93% of the total censorship-related violations recorded through 7or during the same period.

78 “TikTok response on heightened human rights due diligence in OPT/Israel.” Center for Business and Human Rights. Retrieved from: <https://www.business-humanrights.org/pt/%C3%BAltimas-not%C3%ADcias/tiktok-response-on-heightened-human-rights-due-diligence-in-optisrael/>. However, the platform has been preliminarily found by the European Commission to breach the Digital Services Act (DSA) transparency rules, particularly for not providing adequate data access to researchers and for insufficient user-friendly mechanisms to report illegal content or challenge moderation decisions.

79 Lorenz, Taylor. “The Disastrous Rollout of the Trump-Approved TikTok Serves as a Stark Warning for Us All.” Zeteo. Retrieved from: <https://zeteo.com/p/trump-tiktok-disastrous-rollout-warning-social-media>

80 This is not the first time that nomination at TikTok sparks debate about bias and free speech. Back to summer 2025, TikTok had hired a new Public Policy ManagerManger for hate speech who was a former Israeli military instructor; “TikTok hires former Israeli instructor Erica Mindel...” The Economic Times. Retrieved from: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/us/tiktok-hires-former-israeli-instructor-erica-mindel-as-hate-speech-policy-chief-amid-rising-anti-semitism-scrutiny/articleshow/123059341.cms?from=mdr>

a dirty name» gets moderated as hate speech⁸¹—clearly limiting speech critical of Israeli government policies and Zionist ideology under the guise of combating antisemitism.

After intense pressure from civil society, TikTok restored several prominent pro-Palestine accounts, displaying a seemingly more effective response compared to other platforms.⁸² Hebrew content, however, still remained disproportionately undermoderated.⁸³

The evolution of moderation policies coincides with an increasing political alignment of key tech leaders with pro-Israel narratives, exemplified by Spotify's CEO Daniel Ek, whose controversial investments in military AI technology sparked calls for boycotts due to perceived complicity in repression.⁸⁴ These content moderation policies are not only influenced by political and economic interests, but also shaped by the evolving legal environment, which imposes new rules, responsibilities, and constraints on how platforms manage and control online content. Exploring this legal context will shed further light on the forces driving or resisting censorship practices, including those that disproportionately affect pro-Palestine voices.

81 Lorenz, Taylor. "The Disastrous Rollout of the Trump-Approved TikTok Serves as a Stark Warning for Us All." Zeteo. Retrieved from: <https://zeteo.com/p/trump-tiktok-disastrous-rollout-warning-social-media>

82 "Briefing on The Palestinian Digital Rights Situation Since October 7th, 2023." 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/briefing-on-the-palestinian-digital-rights-situation-since-october-7th-2023>

83 See for example, 7amleh's report on Israeli hate speech and incitement to violence in Hebrew against the village of "Huwara" on Twitter, and their subsequent undermoderation; "7amleh issues An Analysis of the Israeli Inciteful speech against the Village of «Huwara» on Twitter." 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7amleh.org/post/7amleh-issues-an-analysis-of-the-israeli-inciteful-speech-against-the-village-of-huwara-on-twitter>. And 7amleh's Violence Indicator, which has "detected over 493,000 cases (and increasing) of advocacy of hatred against Palestinians and advocates of Palestinian rights in Hebrew language content on social media platforms, since 7 October 2023."; "Global: Social media companies must step up crisis response on Israel-Palestine as online hate and censorship proliferate." Amnesty International Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2023/10/global-social-media-companies-must-step-up-crisis-response-on-israel-palestine-as-online-hate-and-censorship-proliferate/> "7or Violence Indicator." 7amleh. Retrieved from: <https://7or.7amleh.org/violence-indicator>

84 "Spotify faces boycott over..." Business and Human Rights Centre. Retrieved from: <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/latest-news/spotify-faces-boycott-over-ceos-700m-investment-in-ai-military-defence-startup/>

V.

Country-Specific Snapshots of Online Censorship

A. FRANCE



In recent years, France has witnessed a marked escalation in its repression of Palestine solidarity movements. Demonstrations have been banned under the pretext of “public order,” activists have been criminally charged, and organisations such as Urgence Palestine face dissolution procedures under counter-extremism laws – moves that indicate how political expression has been framed as a security threat.⁸⁵ Against this backdrop, online expression has become a new frontier of repression in France. What is framed as countering extremism is, in practice, serving to criminalize dissent and curtail the digital spaces where anti-colonial and pro-Palestine voices can be heard.⁸⁶

At the core of this repression is Article 421-2-5 of the Penal Code (*apologie du terrorisme*), a law introduced in 2014 to criminalise the “glorification” of terrorism in vague and sweeping language, resulting in the silencing of controversial, yet legitimate, political speech.⁸⁷ The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Counter-Terrorism highlighted that 85% of terrorism-related prosecutions in France invoke this provision, warning that it disproportionately impacts vulnerable populations and opens the door to abuses of power.⁸⁸ Yet, these warnings have not curbed its application.⁸⁹

The “loi Yadan” bill, currently being debated in France’s National Assembly, aims to combat «renewed

85 “Europe’s Proscription of Palestine Solidarity.” European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Retrieved from: <https://elsc.support/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Europes-Proscription-of-Palestine-Solidarity.pdf>

86 Hamouri, Salah. “France Can’t Ban Solidarity With Palestine.” Jacobin. Retrieved from: <https://jacobin.com/2025/06/france-solidarity-urgence-palestine-repression>

87 Barbarit, Simon. “Summons of Mathilde Panot:...” Public Senat. Retrieved from: <https://www.publicsenat.fr/actualites/politique/convocation-de-mathilde-panot-pourquoi-les-poursuites-pour-apologie-du-terrorisme-sont-en-hausse>. Stetler, Harrison. “Silencing Rima Hassan.” Jacobin. Retrieved from: <https://jacobin.com/2025/03/rima-hassan-france-gaza-censorship>

88 “Rapport de la Rapporteuse spéciale sur la promotion et la protection...” Nations Unies Assemblée générale. Retrieved from: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g19/134/00/pdf/g1913400.pdf>

89 France: Pro-Palestinian activist Amira Zaiter in Nice sentenced to 15 months in prison <https://www.aa.com.tr/fr/monde/france-la-militante-propalestinienne-nicoise-amira-zaiter-condamn%C3%A9e-%C3%A0-15-mois-de-prison-ferme/3816337>

forms of antisemitism» by explicitly conflating anti-Zionism with antisemitism, creating new criminal offenses including things like calling for the destruction of a state or comparing Israel to the Nazi regime. The bill clearly reflects the IHRA definition framework and has sparked fierce criticism among academics and human rights organizations due to its risks to freedom of expression and its inadequacy to effectively combat antisemitism.⁹⁰

Organisations such as CRIF, which actively support such initiatives,⁹¹ are now classified as “trusted flaggers” under the DSA,⁹² granting them privileged access to rapidly report online content they deem unlawful to social media platforms—a dual authority that could significantly influence the restriction of a space for legitimate criticism of Israeli policies and Palestinian solidarity activism.



Taoufiq Tahani, President of Honour of the France–Palestine Solidarity Association. “Twitter (X) forced me to remove two videos showing atrocities perpetrated by Israel in Gaza. This is the condition to get back my account. Yes, these images are unbearable, but they need to be widely shared at the National Assembly for our members of Parliament.”

90 “Yadan Bill No. 575...” Human Rights League. Retrieved from: <https://www.ldh-aix.org/2026/01/13/proposition-de-loi-yadan-n575-visant-a-lutter-contre-les-formes-renouvelees-de-lantisemitisme/>; “The ‘Yadan Law,’ currently being debated...” Le Monde. Retrieved from: https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2026/01/25/la-loi-yadan-en-debat-a-l-assemblee-nationale-confond-volontairement-antisionisme-et-antisemitisme_6664071_3232.html; <https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-884224>

91 “Combating ‘renewed forms of anti-Semitism’...” Crif. Retrieved from: <https://www.crif.org/articles/actualites/2026-01-21/lutte-contre-les-formes-renouvelees-de-lantisemitisme-adoption-dun-texte-en-commission-des-lois-a-l-assemblee-nationale/>

92 “Trusted flaggers under the Digital Services act (DSA).” European Commission. Retrieved from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/trusted-flaggers-under-dsa>

This online repression prevents organizations from publicizing information regarding pro-Palestinian gatherings. “Our Facebook account has been suspended,” explains a representative of Amnesty International in Toulouse, France. “As a result, we were unable to promote a conference on the genocide. The suspension was reportedly linked to copyright issues related to the use of Amnesty International’s national branding, even though we are an official Amnesty group. Our gatherings have already been restricted by the prefecture, and this suspension further prevents us from making our message visible to the communities concerned.”

B. GERMANY



In Germany, support for Israel remains a complex and highly sensitive subject, deeply informed by the nation’s genocidal history toward the Jewish people. Successive German governments have maintained steadfast support for Israel, often despite significant political or diplomatic costs, framing this stance as both moral responsibility and historical redress. This support problematically conflates backing for the Israeli state and Zionist ideology with support for Jewish people, leading to uncritical allegiance to Israel regardless of its actions toward Palestinians. Consequently, criticism of Israel’s colonial violence imposed on Palestinians, as well as Palestine solidarity and advocacy for Palestinian self-determination, are framed as both antisemitic and antithetical to German values.

Germany’s commitment to Israel’s security has been declared «a part of German Staatsräson»,⁹³ creating a context where Palestine solidarity is marked as «fundamentally un-German»⁹⁴ and portrayed as incompatible with German democratic and moral values. As a result, Germany has been among the most repressive European countries when it comes to the Palestine solidarity movement, particularly since October 7, 2023 – with effects across legal, police, cultural, and immigration domains, reaching alarming levels.⁹⁵ Beyond the broadly documented (and criticized)⁹⁶ police brutality in demonstrations,⁹⁷ several events, exhibitions and awards were canceled over statements about Palestine,⁹⁸ migration laws have been weaponized to silence protest,⁹⁹ and associations were proscribed.¹⁰⁰

93 Traverzo, Enzo. “Reason of state endangers democratic culture.” Jacobin. Retrieved from: <https://jacobin.de/artikel/traverzo-gaza-israel-holocaustgedenken>

94 “Repression of Palestinian Solidarity in Germany.” Retrieved from: <http://defenderaquiendefiende.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Repression-of-Palestine-Solidarity-in-Germany.pdf>

95 “Index of Repression.” Retrieved from: <https://www.index-of-repression.org/>

96 “UN experts urge Germany to halt criminalisation and police violence against Palestinian solidarity activism.” United Nations. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/unispal/document/un-experts-16oct25>

97 Al Jazeera Staff. “German police brutality targets pro-Palestine movement:...” Al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/9/10/german-police-brutality-targets-pro-palestine-movement-injured-protester>; Deborah Cole and Rory Carroll. “Berlin police investigate after officer punches Irish activist at protest.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/sep/01/berlin-police-investigate-after-irish-activist-struck-by-officer-at-protest>

98 Hauenstein, Hanno. “Germany is now deporting pro-Palestine EU citizens...” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/apr/03/germany-deporting-pro-palestine-eu-citizens-chilling-new-step>

99 “Germany to deport four Berlin residents for their Palestine solidarity activism.” European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Retrieved from: <https://elsc.support/the-audacity-with-which-german-authorities-bend-and-undermine-the-law-is-shameful/>

100 “Europe’s Proscription of Palestine Solidarity.” European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Retrieved from: <https://elsc.support/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/Europes-Proscription-of-Palestine-Solidarity.pdf>

Germany became the only EU country to label the BDS movement as antisemitic in 2019.¹⁰¹ In June 2024, Germany's main intelligence agency Verfassungsschutz declared BDS under suspicion of being an «extremist group,»¹⁰² claiming it is «related to secular Palestinian extremism.» Authorities have attacked activists for participating in protests and the use of the slogan “from the river to the sea.” This framing of pro-Palestine solidarity slogans as violent hate speech with legal ramifications was increasingly seen in German courts at the start of the war on Gaza, where it was leveraged to threaten individuals' legal status to remain in Germany.¹⁰³ In November 2023, Germany Interior Minister Nancy Faeser banned the slogan in a decree, but since, the slogan is technically permitted, although “law enforcement regularly considers this slogan a criminal offense and seeks to suppress it.”¹⁰⁴

Civil society organisations also play a role in this scenario. RIAS (*Bundesverband der Recherche- und Informationsstellen Antisemitismus e.V.*), responsible for monitoring antisemitism in Germany, utilizes the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as the basis for identifying, categorizing, and documenting incidents, which frequently results in targeting legitimate expression critical of Israel.¹⁰⁵ Offline repression occurs in tandem with digital censorship.

Tech-workers themselves are also targeted, including within their own companies when they voice concerns questioning company complicity in human rights abuses or related to expressions of pro-Palestinian solidarity. A pro-Palestine tech worker organizer at Zalando, Berlin's largest technology company, described how their «Exposing Zalando» group faced suppression both online by platforms and offline by the company. The organizer reported a personal LinkedIn account ban for speaking out about Palestine, and noted that many comments on Zalando's internal worker platforms were deleted or threads locked.

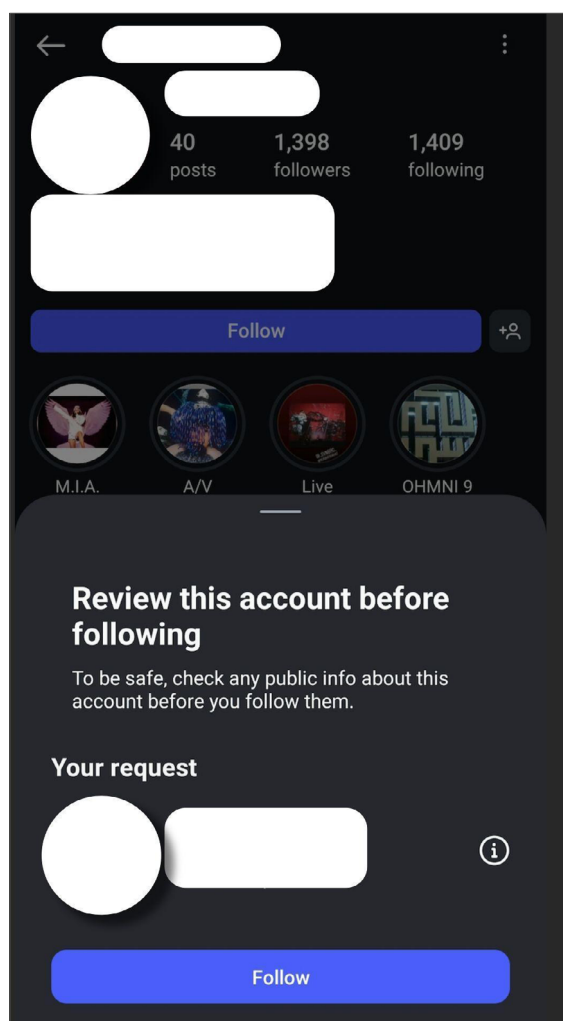
101 “Germany Declares: BDS is Antisemitic.” NGO Monitor. Retrieved from: <https://ngo-monitor.org/reports/germany-declares-bds-is-antisemitic/>

102 Sharma, Heena. “‘Anti-Israel, antisemitic’: Germany’s intel agency labels...” Wion. Retrieved from: <https://www.wionews.com/world/anti-israel-antisemitic-germanys-intel-agency-labels-bds-movement-as-suspected-extremist-case-732957>

103 Lulamae, Josephine. “‘Consistently deport people when we can deport them’.” Journalismus Von Links. Retrieved from: <https://www.nd-aktuell.de/artikel/1183834.pro-palaestinensische-proteste-konsequent-ausweisen-wenn-wir-ausweisen-koennen.html>

104 “‘From the river to the sea’ is generally permitted.” Legal Tribune Online. Retrieved from: <https://www.lto.de/recht/nachrichten/n/vgh-bayern-10cs241062-from-the-river-to-the-sea-demonstration-parole-erlaubt>

105 “The Case of Dr. Anna Younes:...” European Legal Support Center (ELSC). Retrieved from: <https://elsc.support/case/the-case-of-dr-anna-younes-solidarity-outshines-shortfall-of-berlin-civil-courts-ruling/>



Shared from a user based in Germany: "I was not informed in any way that my account comes with a warning to new followers so there was no way to appeal it. I found out from new followers. My account status is all green check marks and says everything is ok. I have just posted daily about Palestine since October 2023. "

Juedische Stimme, a Jewish organization in Germany, fighting for justice in the Middle East, testified: "We were just suddenly restricted from posting anything, we couldn't follow anyone, nothing. People couldn't even tag us in stories. It was everything, all of a sudden."

To the Instagram customers support: we have noticed in the past days that we weren't able to upload any posts or stories and have been notified by instagram, our posts would go against the community guidelines which has not been further specified, nor been the actual case. As a non governmental organization registered with the German state who has build an important platform on socials in the past years, we kindly would like to ask why this is happening and if the restrictions to our account can be explained and relieved. Best, Jüdische Stimme für gerechten Frieden in Nahost e.V.

For their Instagram-based campaign, the group initially attempted to circumvent content suppression by avoiding certain language and using emojis or abbreviations, which proved relatively successful. However, when they launched the «Make Your Voices Heard» initiative with a template letter link to executives, the Instagram post containing this link was banned—though the removal occurred one week after the campaign, making the link to the letter unavailable.

These censorship incidents are not unique to Zalando organizers, but illustrate how platform suppression operates alongside national-level repression, creating additional barriers for pro-Palestine solidarity organizing by making information-sharing and activism more difficult.

The case of Germany demonstrates how the instrumentalization of antisemitism and the conflation of anti-Zionism with antisemitism can be used to create repressive environments, both online and offline, that silences legitimate political speech and dissent, not only undermining freedom of expression but also preventing critical examination of Germany's own complicity in ongoing international crimes.

C. IRELAND



Ireland has become a central node in the global technology ecosystem, hosting the European or EMEA headquarters of nearly all major U.S. tech giants, including Alphabet (Google), Amazon, Apple, Meta, Microsoft, and Oracle. Hence, Ireland is described as “rich but vulnerable,” in part because of its reliance on foreign multinationals—especially American firms—for jobs and economic growth, and because its foreign policy and regulatory positions often reflect that reality, leading to a form of neutrality or cautious engagement in geopolitical debates.¹⁰⁶

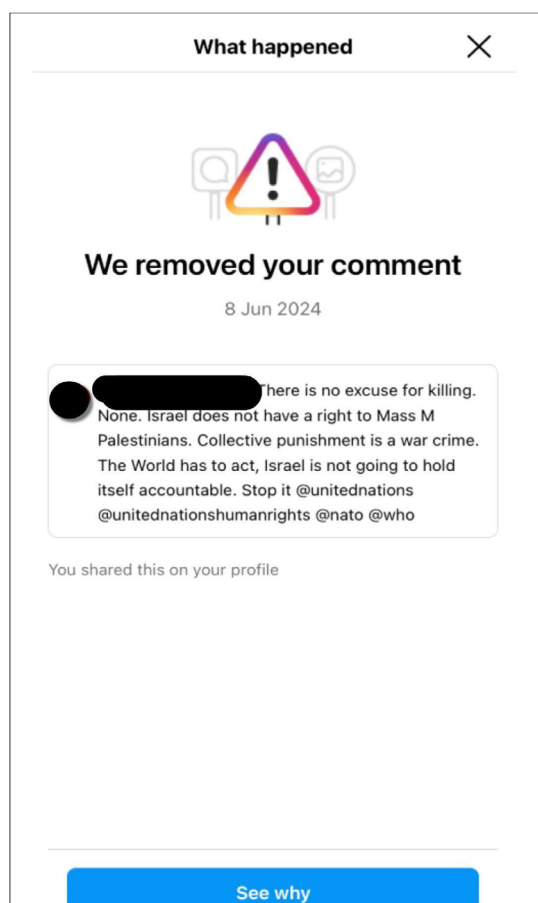
Many observers note that the same applies to the issue of Palestine. As a Dublin-based Microsoft worker and member of No Azure for Apartheid¹⁰⁷ interviewee shared, the government “toes this line of neutrality,” even though “neutrality in the face of oppression is complicity.” The official narrative that the situation is “too complicated” to act decisively glosses over this reality, where government neutrality and the influence of U.S. tech corporations contribute to a nuanced form of complicity. Thus, Ireland's economic dependency and evolving digital regulatory environment together shape both its domestic space for Palestine-related expression and its geopolitical posture, balancing between popular political freedoms and increasing state oversight in digital and public spaces.

¹⁰⁶ The country's alignment with the United States further complicates this picture: as reported in mid-2024, eleven U.S. military flights bound for Israel had transited Shannon Airport since October 2023, prompting accusations that such facilitation breaches Ireland's duty under international law to prevent genocide.

¹⁰⁷ “No Azure for Apartheid.” Retrieved from: <https://noazureforapartheid.com/>

When censorship becomes a running joke

"Since October 2023, countless of my posts have been removed, or hidden from the view of my followers. I've also been heavily shadowbanned since then, with stories and posts views, which used to count in the several hundreds, now often reaching just 15-20 followers," reports a user from Ireland. "Followers report URLs not working, censored/hidden notices on stories content that does not depict sensitive images or text, and I had to stop sharing my viewpoint in comments sections as I would repeatedly have my account functionality restricted after advocating for the lives of Palestinian civilians. This has gone on so often and so consistently among me and like-minded friends that it's become a running joke. The fact that it violates our rights to free discourse online seems not to be of concern to Meta's platforms."



An Irish user who had several comments removed shared, "Meta has consistently targeted my posts about Palestine. When the ban began, there was no notification from Meta, it just didn't let me like posts. I have been unable to write comments on posts or like posts across a wide range of subjects for as long as 4 weeks. It has been the case from November 2023 to date."

These cases are not isolated, and censorship also targets influencers and celebrities. For example, in January 2026, Meta permanently removed Irish comedian Tadhg Hickey's Instagram accounts after more than two years of speaking out in support of Palestinian rights and opposing imperialism, making it seem clear that the move appeared aimed at muting his platform. This censorship is especially clear as Hickey's content was explicitly *not* hate speech.¹⁰⁸

Another Irish-based user shared, "My problem is that my comments won't post... This happens when I post something that involves mentioning Israel and the genocide. My comments could not be posted for hours after both The Madleen and The Handala freedom flotilla ships [a maritime initiative organized to challenge the blockade of Gaza] were illegally boarded by the Israelis. As soon as I had posted about this and commented, my comments were not allowed to be posted. I got no explanation from Meta."

Despite employing cautious and official tone, the Irish public sphere, particularly in Dublin and most of the Republic of Ireland, has shown strong pro-Palestinian sentiment, with ongoing demonstrations and civic organizations calling for a more explicit governmental response. Despite the government's January 2025 endorsement of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism,¹⁰⁹ it has not enforced this definition extensively among the public, allowing visible expressions of pro-Palestinian support, such as protests and flag displays, without accusations of antisemitism.

D. ITALY



Italy provides a striking illustration of the contradictions and tensions that shape expressions of solidarity with Palestine across Europe. In October 2025, widespread demonstrations in support of the Global Sumud Flotilla highlighted the strong popular backing for the Palestinian cause among Italians.¹¹⁰ However, this wave of civic engagement was met with growing government repression, which received limited attention in international media. Several protests were banned or heavily restricted under the pretext of maintaining public order, such as a protest scheduled for Bologna to commemorate two

108 Tadhg Hickey speaking on "In Palestine Today." Retrieved from: <https://www.facebook.com/reel/1218499773137910>; Zahzah, Omar. "Meta's banning of two anti-Zionist comedians from Instagram is the latest example..." Mondoweiss. Retrieved from: <https://mondoweiss.net/2025/07/metas-banning-of-two-anti-zionist-comedians-from-instagram-is-the-latest-example-of-big-techs-deep-anti-palestinian-bias/>

109 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. "Tánaiste announces endorsement of Global Guidelines for Countering Antisemitism and the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism." Government of Ireland. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.ie/en/departments/department-of-foreign-affairs/press-releases/t%C3%A1naiste-announces-endorsement-of-global-guidelines-for-countering-antisemitism-and-the-ihra-working-definition-of-antisemitism/>

110 See the following: Sage, Alexandria. "Protests, strikes across Italy for Gaza flotilla." Al-Monitor. Retrieved from: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2025/10/protests-strikes-across-italy-gaza-flotilla>; "Global protests erupt over Israeli interception of Gaza aid flotilla." Al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/gallery/2025/10/3/global-protests-erupt-over-israeli-interception-of-gaza-aid-flotilla>; Seçkin, Barış. "Protests break out in Italy over Israeli attack on Freedom Flotilla." Anadolu Ajansı. Retrieved from: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/protests-break-out-in-italy-over-israeli-attack-on-freedom-flotilla/3711865>

years since October 7, while students, activists, and journalists faced increased police violence and disciplinary measures.¹¹¹

An Italian user shared: “My partner doesn’t even see my stories. I usually get around 200 views of my stories now that my profile is private due to people commenting and insulting me because I defend the Palestinian cause... However, when I post or share content regarding Palestine, I reach only a few accounts, no more than 30 or 40, and on both Instagram and Facebook stories. My partner, for example, who’s with me almost 24/7, doesn’t even see my stories unless he searches for me on Instagram.”

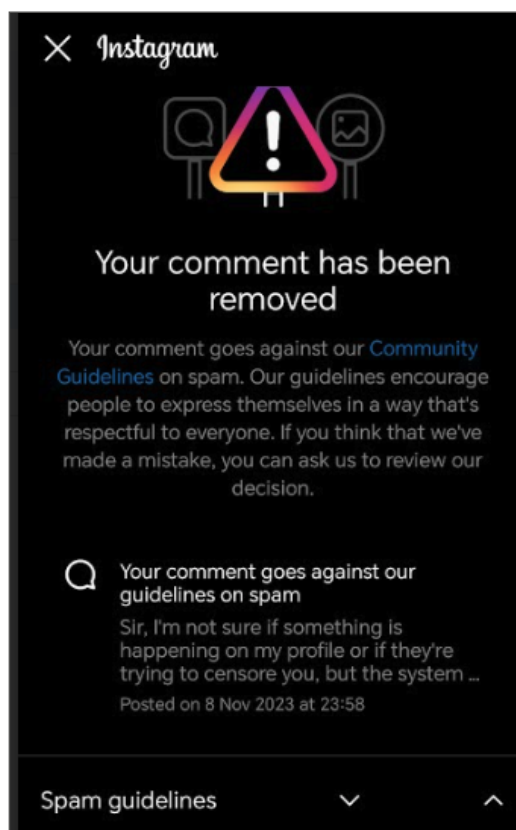
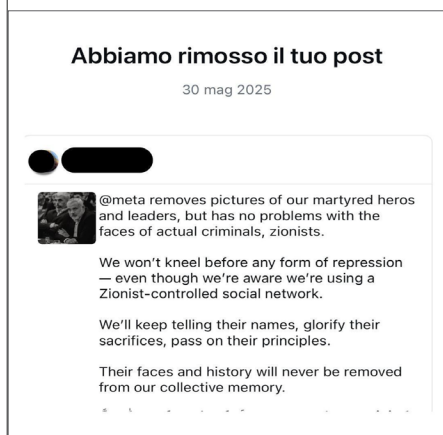
Another Italian user reported that their content often disappears from their feed, stories, or stories archive, without the platform informing them. They explain, “Meta deletes content related to Israel and Palestine without communicating it, and it is a continuous practice. I am perpetually shadow banned but if I look at the account status I have no limitations.” Additionally, the Italian government is considering a Senate bill that incorporates the IHRA’s working definition of antisemitism, despite this being incredibly unpopular with the general population.¹¹² A Rome-based journalist we interviewed noted that Italy’s version of the “Israel lobby” is much weaker compared to elsewhere in Europe, explaining that the pro-Israel communities in Italy are smaller and weaker politically, and “do not have the same influence as pro-Israel groups in other EU countries.” Despite this relatively weaker influence compared to other countries in the EU, politicians have still expressed pro-Israel sentiment.¹¹³

111 “Italy bans pro-Palestinian October 7 demonstration in Bologna as tensions rise.” Reuters. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/italy-bans-pro-palestinian-october-7-demonstration-bologna-tensions-rise-2025-10-06/>; See @cua.bologna on Instagram. Retrieved from: https://www.instagram.com/p/DPYdsMljEjp/?img_index=1&igsh=MWtnMTAXa2Q1amtnYg%3D%3D; Rital.e.s_avec_la_Palestine. “‘Blocchiamo tutto’: témoignages depuis l’Italie en révolte pour Gaza.” Frustration. Retrieved from: <https://frustrationmagazine.fr/italie-gaza>; Baroud, Dr. Ramzy. “Meloni’s Gaza challenge: The people vs. Netanyahu’s cronies.” Middle East Monitor. Retrieved from: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20251002-melonis-gaza-challenge-the-people-vs-netanyahus-cronies/>

112 Greco, Angelo. “Legge anti-antisemitismo, il ddl che rischia di rendere illegale la critica a Israele.” La Legge Per Tutti. Retrieved from: <https://www.laleggepertutti.it/739016-legge-anti-antisemitismo-il-ddl-che-rischia-di-rendere-illegale-la-critica-a-israele>

113 Carlino, Di Andrea. “Fedriga: ‘Intollerabili le lezioni unilaterali dei docenti sul conflitto a Gaza senza contraddittorio o critica’. L’opposizione attacca: ‘Niente minacce’.” Orizzonte Scuola Notizie. Retrieved from: <https://www.orizzontescuola.it/fedriga-intollerabili-le-lezioni-unilaterali-dei-docenti-sul-conflitto-a-gaza-senza-contraddittorio-o-critica-lopposizione-attacca-niente-minacce/>

“We have removed your story.” Shared by an Italian user who reported being censored for sharing Pro-Palestinian content.



“Being from the Mediterranean, I’ve always been close to Palestinian,” says an Italian woman interviewee who is now based in the UK. “I can’t say I am an activist, I am an individual citizen with a knowledge of history and geopolitics. Sometimes, I can’t publish comments. I wanted to like a post from Palestinian ambassador Husam Zomlot to the UK, posted on LBC account, a radio program in the UK. I was banned from commenting on Instagram. I didn’t not believe that these things would happen to me... I am no one. I was told that [my] comment goes against our guidelines on Spam.”

E. THE NETHERLANDS



Since October 7, 2023, the Netherlands has seen intensified repression of Palestine solidarity. Police dismantled a Gaza solidarity encampment at the University of Amsterdam in May 2024, arresting over 100 students. That same month, dozens were detained at banned pro-Palestinian demonstrations in Amsterdam.¹¹⁴ In March 2025, a protester from Amersfoort was visited by the police at her home. They wanted to know why she joined pro-Palestine protests, which made her think that the police monitor her social media.¹¹⁵

Noticing “Delayed Visibility” on Event Posts

According to a tech worker who formerly worked in user experience at [Booking.com](https://www.booking.com), which is based in Amsterdam, there has been a clear increase in censorship in digital spaces since October 7, 2023. They have been tracking various forms of “soft censorship” on Instagram, such as delayed visibility of event-related posts, account-disabling, and like removals, noting inconsistencies within content moderation practices. They described these inconsistencies as “gaslighting,” especially when the algorithm seems to suppress or hide posts related to current happenings, such as the Freedom Flotilla, and then flood one’s page with distracting advertisements that correspond to one’s demographic.

This tech worker also addressed internal censorship at Booking.com, which was understood in the context of company investments in the Occupied Palestinian Territories¹¹⁶ and their monopoly over users’ travel data, which they explained is completely managed by the Tel Aviv team. Many of these workers based in the Tel Aviv office, in addition to other pro-Israel workers, are responsible for reporting any content they don’t agree with – namely pro-Palestinian content or content critiquing Israel or Zionism – posted on internal worker platforms. Once reported, this content is swiftly removed. Workers posting pro-Israel content on the internal platforms, however, have never seemed to have comments or posts removed.

114 News Wires. “Amsterdam police detain pro-Palestinian protesters at banned demonstration.” France 24. Retrieved from: <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20241110-dutch-court-bans-pro-palestinian-rally-after-amsterdam-football-clashes>
 “Amsterdam police detain pro-Palestine protesters defying ban.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/13/amsterdam-police-detain-pro-palestine-protesters-defying-ban>

115 “Pro-Palestine protester Elise visited at home: ‘The visit is not an isolated incident.’” RTL. Retrieved from: <https://www.rtl.nl/nieuws/binnenland/artikel/5500963/intimidatie-demonstratie-politie-elise-pro-palestina>

116 Zeke Hunter-Green, Carmen Aguilar García, Anna Leach, Mark Townsend, Pamela Duncan and Prina Shah. “Seized, settled, let: how Airbnb and Booking.com help Israelis make money from stolen Palestinian land.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2025/feb/27/seized-settled-let-how-airbnb-and-booking-com-help-israelis-make-money-from-stolen-palestinian-land> ,

They view platform repression to be reflective of what is happening on the ground in the Netherlands, and specifically in terms of police repression¹¹⁷ “The application of these policies by police do not protect pro-Palestinian protesters, but reflects a selective application of the law, they say, “Police should follow the laws as they are written.”

This worker noted that in the Netherlands it would “not be likely to find a platform saying the word ‘genocide’ or platforming Palestinians, this content would likely be suppressed.” But, at the same time, they noted from experiences traveling to other locations in the EU, that social media content related to pro-Palestine solidarity in the Netherlands felt relatively more accessible than in other countries.

From our survey, we found several other users from the Netherlands mentioned experiences with censorship and shadowbanning. One reported, “DM function is unable to be used. I’ve had content taken down, accounts taken down, functions such as going live and collaboration taken away.” Free Palestine Netherlands also shared their experiences with content being censored; they explain, “We would have to wait hours for stories or posts to upload and sometimes after uploading a story or post it would be taken down without any notification... We started hearing from people we knew in real life that suddenly they were no longer following us, Meta had removed them automatically. ... And we discovered we had hundreds of ‘follow requests,’ despite being a public page, and those were not easily found. If we didn’t accept those requests they would automatically delete. We should also note our page and/or a page under a similar name were also referred to be investigated for terrorism after the Maccabi hooligan events.¹¹⁸ At which point we assumed our data was even less safe on Instagram.”

Another user from the Netherlands mentioned difficulties with finding the account of a journalist who shares news related to Palestine. They recall, “I wanted to follow her on Instagram but when I typed in her name, or even her username, her account didn’t show up in the results. I had to Google her Instagram to get to her account and follow her.”

117 See the following: News Wires. “Amsterdam police detain pro-Palestinian protesters at banned demonstration.” France 24. Retrieved from: <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20241110-dutch-court-bans-pro-palestinian-rally-after-amsterdam-football-clashes>; “Dutch authorities investigate alleged police violence after pro-Palestinian protest.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/14/dutch-authorities-investigate-alleged-police-violence-after-pro-palestinian-protest>; “Statement against police repression of the Palestine movement in the Netherlands.” Samidoun. Retrieved from: <https://samidoun.net/2024/02/statement-against-police-repression-of-the-palestine-movement-in-the-netherlands/>; “Amsterdam police detain pro-Palestine protesters defying ban.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2024/nov/13/amsterdam-police-detain-pro-palestine-protesters-defying-ban>; Phillips, Aleks. “Dozens detained after protesters defy ban in Amsterdam.” BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cx243z69w4no.amp>; Burnett, Stephanie. “Police detain pro-Palestinian protesters defying Amsterdam ban.” Reuters. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/pro-palestinian-protesters-again-defy-amsterdam-ban-2024-11-13/>; “Netherlands’ crackdown on student protests...” Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor. Retrieved from: <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6316/Netherlands%E2%80%99-crackdown-on-student-protests-is-part-of-growing-suppression-of-pro-Palestinian-voices-in-EU>; “Amsterdam pro-Palestinian student protest broken up by police.” Reuters. Retrieved from: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/pro-palestinian-protesters-occupy-amsterdam-university-overnight-local-media-2024-05-08/>

118 “Israeli football fans clash with protesters in Amsterdam.” Al Jazeera. Retrieved from: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/11/8/israeli-football-fans-clash-with-protesters-in-amsterdam>

We've removed your story

8 May 2025

Why this happened

The story may contain symbols, glorification or support of people and organisations that we define as dangerous.

I'm beyond broken

7 May 2025

You shared this on your profile

This goes against our Community Standards on dangerous organisations and individuals.

[See rule](#)
>

What you need to know

- [How to prevent further restrictions](#)
>
- [How we made this decision](#)
>
- [Information for people in the EU](#)
>

A user based in the Netherlands posted “I’m beyond broken,” accompanied by broken-heart emojis, to denounce the genocide and the suffering of the Palestinian people. The story was removed with the explanation “The story may contain symbols, glorification or support of people and organisations that we define as dangerous.”

This broader climate of repression shapes and is shaped by Dutch legal frameworks regulating speech. In May 2024, the Dutch House of Representatives passed a motion calling for the criminalization of the slogan “From the river to the sea”, signalling growing institutional hostility. This motion is political and symbolic (non-binding), so it does *not* immediately change the law, but it indicates political pressure or intent to see restrictions put into place.¹¹⁹

Parallel to this, the Ministry of Justice and Security in the Netherlands submitted a draft bill in August that criminalizes “glorification of terrorism.”¹²⁰ The Cabinet approved the consultation of the bill in June 2025; the bill would make it a criminal offense to publicly praise terrorist acts, share material that glorifies terrorism, or express support for banned groups, including through slogans, statements, or symbols,

119 “Single MP majority asks Cabinet to criminalize ‘From the River to the Sea’ statement.” NL Times. Retrieved from: <https://nltimes.nl/2024/05/21/single-mp-majority-asks-cabinet-criminalize-river-sea-statement>

120 “Cabinet approves bill to criminalize glorification of terrorism.” Dutch National Government. Retrieved from: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/actueel/nieuws/2025/06/20/ministerraad-stemt-in-met-wetsvoorstel-om-verheerlijken-van-terrorisme-strafbaar-te-stellen>

making such praise punishable by law regardless of context.¹²¹

Although not yet in effect, the proposal has been criticised for its potential to chill political speech, especially in the context of Palestine solidarity.¹²² “Amnesty International in the Netherlands has received concerned messages from activists who, in light of this law, are now unsure about what they are permitted to say and what is prohibited. For journalists, this proposed law could have major consequences; for example, if journalists want to share information about war crimes, it is unclear if and when they would be in violation of this law.¹²³ This puts freedom of expression and the right to demonstrate under pressure,” according to Vera Prins, Senior Policy Advisor on Technology and Human Rights at Amnesty International in the Netherlands.

F. THE UK



In July 2025, the UK government had officially proscribed Palestine Action under the Terrorism Act 2000, marking the first time an organization primarily focused on property damage was designated a terrorist group.¹²⁴ Civil liberties groups, including Netpol and Amnesty International, had denounced the decision, warning of a chilling effect on legitimate expression in support of Palestinian rights.¹²⁵

Under Section 12 of the Terrorism Act 2000, it is an offense – with penalties up to 14 years – to express support for a proscribed organization, including through statements of opinion, visual symbols, or publications. Section 13 further criminalizes displaying items or clothing suggestive of support. Furthermore, proposed expansions to the definition of «extremism» would further lower the threshold, capturing individuals or groups that merely “undermine UK institutions or democracy.”¹²⁶

Such proscription has far-reaching consequences, with over 2000 arrests - many during peaceful protests¹²⁷ - until February 2026, when the London’s High Court ruled that the government’s decision

121 “Cabinet approves bill criminalising...” Government of the Netherlands. Retrieved from: <https://www.government.nl/latest/news/2025/06/20/cabinet-approves-bill-criminalising-the-glorification-of-terrorism>

122 “Dutch bill criminalising ‘glorification of terrorism’...” Somo. Retrieved from: <https://www.somo.nl/dutch-bill-criminalising-glorification-of-terrorism-threatens-democratic-rule-of-law-and-must-be-withdrawn/>

123 “Dutch government prepares bill...” Amnesty International Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.nl/actueel/nederland-wetsvoorstel-voor-dat-verheerlijken-van-terrorisme-strafbaar-stelt>

124 Home Office and the Rt Hon Yvette Cooper MP. “Three groups to be proscribed.” Gov.UK. Retrieved from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/three-groups-to-be-proscribed>

125 “UK: Letter from leading rights groups warn Government of ‘chilling effect’ on protests.” Amnesty International. Retrieved from: <https://www.amnesty.org.uk/latest/uk-letter-leading-rights-groups-warn-government-chilling-effect-protests/>; “Silencing the Streets: The Right to Protest Under Attack in the United Kingdom.” Human Rights Watch. Retrieved from: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2026/01/07/silencing-the-streets/the-right-to-protest-under-attack-in-the-united-kingdom>

126 Jon Ungood-Thomas and Mark Townsend. “Revealed: plan to brand anyone ‘undermining’ UK as extremist.” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/nov/04/plans-to-redefine-extremism-would-include-undermining-uk-values>

127 “UK: Palestine Action ban ‘disturbing’...” United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. Retrieved from: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2025/07/uk-palestine-action-ban-disturbing-misuse-uk-counter-terrorism-legislation>

was unlawful as it constituted a “very significant interference” with the right to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly.¹²⁸ Although the decision can still be appealed, it marks a significant victory for the civil liberties and the Palestine solidarity movement.

Online expression has also been an object of concern. In the UK, under the Online Safety Act (OSA), which became law in October 2023, online services are legally required to assess and mitigate the risks of content that may be illegal under UK law. This includes “terrorism content” – defined broadly to encompass promotion of terrorism or support for proscribed organizations, as per the Terrorism Act 2000. The broad risks of misidentification and the threats to public debate have been addressed by several organizations acting to pressure Ofcom to provide clear guidance to platforms in order to avoid disproportionate censorship.¹²⁹

The risks are compounded by the OSA’s lack of safeguards: unlike the EU’s DSA, it does not guarantee users a right to appeal takedowns or challenge moderation decisions. In practice, this has already led to over-removal. In one case reported by *BBC Verify*, a non-graphic video showing a Palestinian man searching through the rubble for his family was flagged as harmful content by X (formerly Twitter) and restricted, despite not violating the platform’s guidelines. Ofcom’s own guidance acknowledges that the Israel-Gaza conflict poses unique “hate and terrorism” risks and has advised platforms accordingly, increasing the likelihood that pro-Palestinian expression is misclassified and removed.¹³⁰

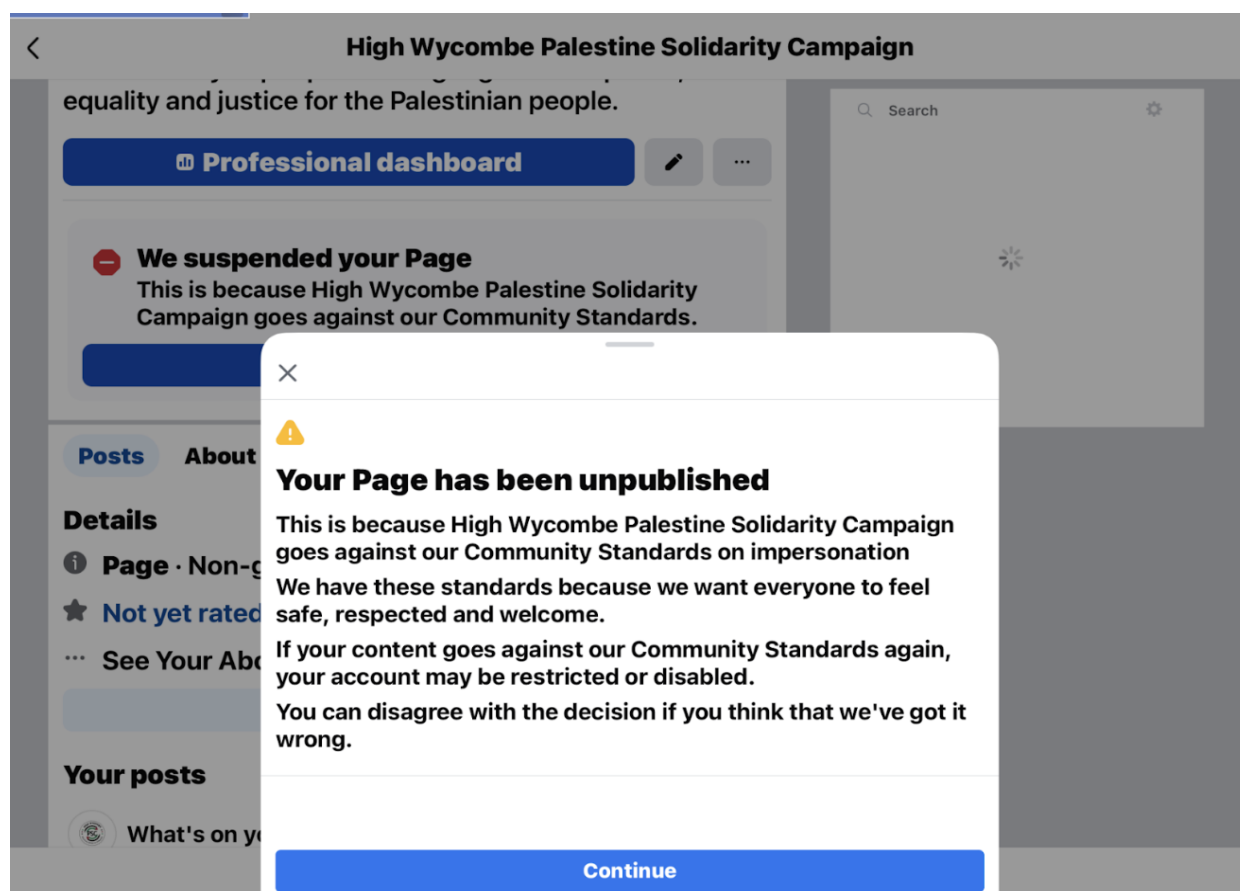
A few people interviewed from the UK mentioned having their social media accounts restricted when sharing pro-Palestinian content. «My Instagram account would become restricted, I couldn’t follow accounts, story sharing was stopped, I was continuously told my account was compromised. People I was following were being restricted as well, after I tried to share a page of Palestinian children to ‘humanise’ them.»

Several UK users also mentioned shadow banning. Reflecting on being censored, one UK-based user says, “I don’t post actively online but when I have, mentions of Israel, Palestine, or ‘genocide’ in posts result them in getting less views. I have however seen a lot of others who are active also face this.”

128 “UK Palestine Action ban ruled unlawful...” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2026/feb/13/uk-ban-palestine-action-unlawful-high-court-judges-rule>

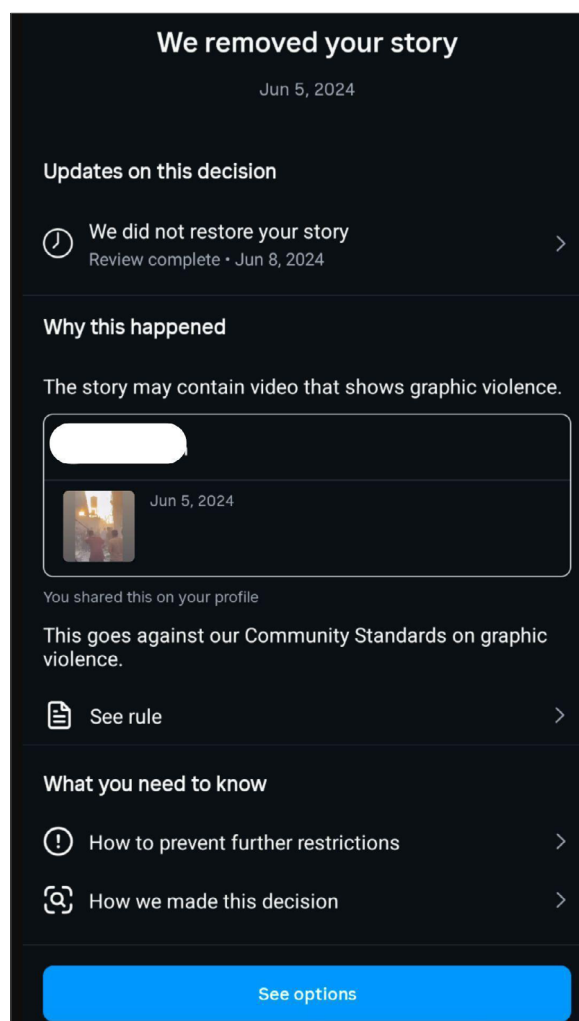
129 Siddique, Haroon. “Palestine Action ban coupled with Online Safety Act...” The Guardian. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/aug/02/palestine-action-ban-coupled-with-online-safety-act-are-threat-to-public-debate>; “Open Letter: Implementation of Palestine Action Proscription on Social Media.” Open Rights Group. Retrieved from: <https://www.openrightsgroup.org/publications/open-letter-implementation-of-palestine-action-proscription-on-social-media/>

130 “Protecting people from hate and terrorism under the online safety regime.” Ofcom. Retrieved from: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/online-safety/illegal-and-harmful-content/protecting-people-from-hate-and-terrorism-under-the-online-safety-regime?language=en&utm>



A Palestine Solidarity Campaign organizer testified: "The suspension of our page happened after unpleasant interactions from some pro-Zionists. I can only guess they got lots of people to report our page. At no point have we ever posted anything which could be considered grounds for suspension. We are High Wycombe Palestine Solidarity Campaign. Who are we supposed to be impersonating? I can only conclude this was an AI decision."

Another user expressed sadness at the permanent removal of their page, and said, "I really felt bad losing that page because I had a lot of memories there. I had that page since 2007, but at the end I thought, it doesn't matter. I'll keep the memories in my heart and continue the fight for Palestine and other situations of oppression in the world."



A UK based user, whose story was removed. They shared, "I have 1700 followers, but I'm lucky if 10 people view my stories on Instagram. I am running 38 marathons to raise money for charities, including those working in Occupied Palestine. Meta's platforms have made the fundraising challenging, Meta introduced political censorship in February 2024, which targeted people like me who share posts about what's going on in the occupied territories."

Groups leading solidarity efforts for Palestine are directly impacted by these policies. One user explained, "We are a small local solidarity group. I am admin of the Facebook group. In June 2025, I was informed that content I had posted in July 2024 contravened the platform's rules on terror and support for terrorist organisations. I was told that my post had been removed, that our group was to be suspended. I was not told what the content was. I was not told how long we were to be suspended for. I was not told how to appeal. I was so scared that I might have done something wrong, compromised our group's Facebook group, been so careless.... but actually, I don't think I did anything wrong whatsoever and this was a malicious mass reporting."

These user experiences align with reports from 2025 indicating a wave of AI-driven moderation updates on Instagram disproportionately affecting UK users,¹³¹ including restrictions and account suspensions, and often without clear explanations.¹³²

131 Adam. "Instagram Account Bains in the UK – July 2025 Explained." Social-Me. Retrieved from: <https://social-me.co.uk/blog/21>

132 Fraser, Graham. "Angry, confused and worried about police – behind Instagram bans." BBC. Retrieved from: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ce8307ge49eo>

VI.

How to Fight Back? A Short Guide for EU-Based Users

The online censorship of pro-Palestine content has proven to be systematic and cross-platform, often leaving users feeling unsafe, silenced, and powerless. For EU-based users, however, the Digital Services Act introduces important new rights that can be used to push back against unjustified moderation and over-censorship. While far from perfect, these safeguards provide concrete tools to demand transparency, contest removals, and hold platforms accountable.

Right to a Statement of Reasons (Article 17)

When a platform removes content, suspends an account, or applies any moderation measure, it must provide a clear and specific Statement of Reasons. This explanation should include the exact rule or legal provision allegedly violated, the type of moderation action taken, information about whether automated means were used in the decision-making process, and clear guidance on how the user can contest the decision -- including through out-of-court dispute settlement and judicial redress.¹³³

These rights are crucial because many moderation decisions affecting pro-Palestine content are vague or unexplained, often simply citing a «violation of the Community Standards» without further detail. Without a clear justification, users cannot determine the exact reasons why their content was moderated, which frequently leads to self-censorship as people avoid posting content they fear might be removed.

Requesting and preserving a proper Statement of Reasons is often the first step to challenge censorship. According to the testimonies and reports received, platforms are still not fully complying with Article 17, and instead only providing broad, and often seemingly disconnected, explanations when content is removed. A UK Pro-Palestine group administrator, after having their page removed from Instagram, mentioned that they had no idea what they were accused of or how to challenge the decision as there was not enough information; they said, "It felt very dystopian."

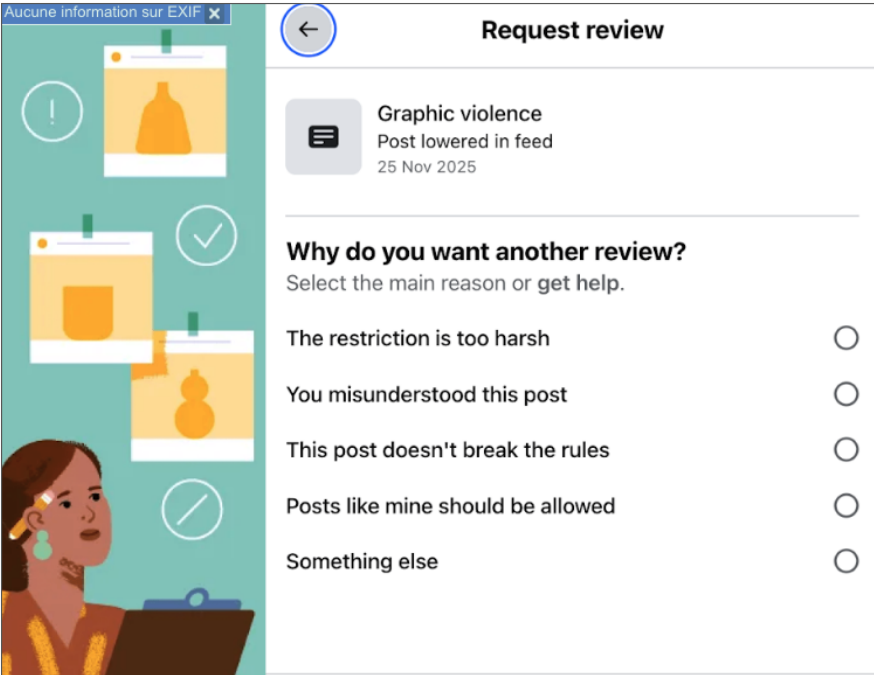
¹³³ "Out-of-court dispute settlement bodies..." European Commission. Retrieved from: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/dsa-out-court-dispute-settlement>

This user feedback corresponds to data received from our survey, wherein 64% of respondents claimed they did not receive any notification from the platform upon content being removed, 42% only received a response from the platforms when appealing for the decision, and most of them mentioned being unaware of appealing mechanisms in the first place.

Internal Appeals and Complaints (Article 20)

Article 20 of the Digital Services Act legally requires online platforms to establish internal complaint handling systems that allow users to appeal moderation decisions. When your pro-Palestine content is removed, your account is suspended, or your monetization is restricted, the platform must provide you with the opportunity to challenge these actions. The law mandates that platforms review appeals «in a timely, non-discriminatory, diligent and non-arbitrary manner,” and provide clear statements of reasons explaining their decisions.

While many platforms have historically ignored or undermined appeals, the DSA transforms this into a legal obligation, giving users a stronger basis to demand accountability and document non-compliance.



Aucune information sur EXIF x

Request review

Graphic violence
Post lowered in feed
25 Nov 2025

Why do you want another review?
Select the main reason or get help.

- ☐ The restriction is too harsh
- ☐ You misunderstood this post
- ☐ This post doesn't break the rules
- ☐ Posts like mine should be allowed
- ☐ Something else

A user in the UK asked for another review after noticing that their content was removed by Meta.

Out-of-Court Dispute Settlement (Article 21)

When a platform's internal appeal process under Article 20 fails, the Digital Services Act provides an important additional safeguard through Article 21's out-of-court dispute settlement mechanism. This provision allows users to escalate their cases to independent bodies specifically designed to review moderation decisions, bypassing the need for lengthy and expensive court proceedings.

Several certified dispute resolution bodies are already operating across Europe,¹³⁴ offering a viable path to challenge censorship when platforms refuse to correct their actions despite appeals.

Cases can be submitted through their website, and after the body contacts the platform, a decision must be issued within a maximum of 90 days. The decisions are *non-binding*, meaning the platform can decide whether or not to comply. This creates a significant enforcement gap in the DSA, as there is no guarantee that platforms will actually implement the decisions reached through these dispute settlement processes.

It is worth noting that none of the respondents of our questionnaire and survey had reached out to an out-of-court dispute body, although most of them reported censorship of their social media content and difficulties with accessing or understanding the appeal process. Many of them mentioned not being familiar with any of these mechanisms.

Limitations

Many of the DSA's provisions are still in early stages of implementation, and as enforcement varies between countries, some platforms resist full compliance. Nevertheless, it offers a meaningful framework that EU-based users can rely on to assert their rights, challenge unjust moderation, and push platforms toward greater transparency and accountability.

Crucially, gathering evidence (including taking screenshots of content, moderation notices, and platform communications) is essential for any accountability action to be taken under the DSA, as this documentation helps record and archive discriminatory practices, and strengthens cases for challenging unjust moderation decisions.

¹³⁴ The complete list of certified out-of-court dispute settlement bodies, along with details about the specific types of cases they handle, is available on the European Commission website. See: <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/dsa-out-court-dispute-settlement>

VII.

Recommendations

Based on the key findings of this report, it is clear that online censorship of pro-Palestine voices in Europe is systematic, affecting users across different countries. To address these challenges and safeguard freedom of expression, the following recommendations provide concrete, actionable steps for social media platforms, civil society organizations, national governments, and the EU Commission.

1. Social media platforms

- **Respect Fundamental Rights (DSA):** Platforms should apply content moderation with respect for users' freedom of expression – in respect of Article 14(4) DSA – only removing content that genuinely poses harm, avoiding over-censorship.¹³⁵
- **Support Workers' Advocacy:** Platforms must ensure workers retain their rights to free speech, allowing them to advocate for Palestinians rights without fear of retaliation.
- **Transparency in Government Requests:** Platforms should disclose more details about the kinds of requests they receive from governments (for example, under which provisions of laws they are based) and its outcomes, avoiding broad and opaque categories as "Other."
- **Scrutinize Government Requests:** Platforms should review government requests carefully to ensure they align with human rights and fundamental freedoms,¹³⁶ rejecting those targeting content that documents, denounces and/or discusses topics of general interest.
- **Accessible Transparency Reports:** Transparency reports required by the DSA should be easily accessible for general audiences, detailing the reasons for content removals and the decision-

¹³⁵ "Principles for a Human Rights-Centred Application of the Digital Services Act: A Global Perspective." DSA Human Rights Alliance. Retrieved from: https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/dsa_principles_pdf.pdf

¹³⁶ "Principles for a Human Rights-Centred Application of the Digital Services Act: A Global Perspective." DSA Human Rights Alliance. Retrieved from: https://www.article19.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/dsa_principles_pdf.pdf

making processes behind them. They should also differentiate content removed by violating laws at either the EU or national level, and content that violates community guidelines.

- **Detailed Statement of Reasons:** Platforms should provide users with detailed explanations for content removals in line with DSA Article 17 and add these accordingly to the Transparency Database, so that oversight bodies and civil society can ensure accountability.
- **Risk Assessments for Marginalized Voices:** Platforms should conduct regular assessments having special consideration to impacts of content moderation tools and practices, and revenue distribution programs and monetization incentives, especially with regard to marginalized voices, including pro-Palestine advocates, and particularly in the context of human rights abuses.
- **Guarantee Human Oversight with AI:** When using AI for content moderation, platforms must ensure human oversight is involved in decision-making processes to prevent automated biases and unjust censorship.

2. Civil Society Organizations

- **Document Censorship:** CSOs should continue to actively monitor and document instances of censorship related to the Palestine solidarity movement (e.g., through screenshots, tracking shadow banning, and reporting account suspensions).
- **Denounce Censorship:** CSOs should keep denouncing and calling attention to this disproportionate censorship publicly and push for accountability.
- **Leverage DSA Safeguards for Users:** CSOs should encourage users to understand and rely on the rights guaranteed by the DSA, including appealing content removals, referring cases to out-of-court dispute settlement bodies, and demanding respect for users' fundamental rights, particularly freedom of expression.
- **Advocate for Non-Discriminatory Application of National Laws:** CSOs should lobby governments to apply national laws related to content moderation in a non-discriminatory and rights-respecting manner, ensuring that Palestine-related advocacy is not unfairly targeted or suppressed.
- **Test the EU's Legal Framework Through Litigation:** CSOs should explore litigation as a tool to hold platforms accountable for violating the DSA or discriminating against pro-Palestine advocacy. They should utilize the new EU framework to challenge content moderation decisions that infringe on fundamental rights (such as freedom of expression) and to seek remedy through the courts, pushing platforms to comply with their legal obligations under EU law.

3. National Governments

- **Push for Platform Transparency Through DSA Supervisory Authorities:** National governments should push for greater transparency from platforms, particularly through the DSA supervisory authorities. They should ensure platforms are held accountable for reporting on content removals, government requests, and the decision-making process, making this information more accessible to the public.
- **Guarantee Higher Thresholds for Hate Speech and Terrorism Laws:** Governments should establish clearer, higher thresholds for applying hate speech and terrorism laws to ensure that content related to the Palestine solidarity is not arbitrarily censored. These laws should be narrowly tailored to prevent overreach that risks silencing dissent or legitimate political expression.
- **Engage Meaningfully with Civil Society:** National governments should actively engage with civil society, especially organizations representing affected groups, providing financial and institutional support to continue advocating for freedom of expression. This includes resources for investigating content moderation practices and pushing for the protection of pro-Palestine voices in both digital and physical spaces.
- **Invest in Research on Content Moderation:** Governments should invest in research that analyzes the bias in content moderation practices and tools, and how these mechanisms affect marginalized groups. This research will help identify where content moderation practices disproportionately silence the Palestine solidarity movement.
- **Support Legal Remedies and Litigations:** National governments should facilitate legal avenues for redress, supporting users or groups who seek legal action against platforms that improperly remove content or fail to adhere to fundamental rights frameworks. Governments can support out-of-court dispute settlement bodies and provide access to justice for individuals whose content was unjustly removed.

4. The European Commission

- **Leverage DSA Powers to Investigate Platform Algorithms:** The EU Commission should leverage its powers under the DSA to investigate how platforms' algorithms and AI tools impact the Palestine solidarity movement.
- **Ensure Effective Enforcement of the DSA:** The EU Commission must ensure that DSA enforcement mechanisms are robust and effective, particularly in holding platforms accountable for violating users' fundamental rights under Article 14(4).

- **Encourage Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**¹³⁷: The Commission should facilitate a multi-stakeholder dialogue that includes platform representatives, civil society organizations, human rights experts, and affected groups, to develop best practices for content moderation that protect freedom of expression and ensure non-discriminatory policies.
- **Push Back Against Big Tech Collusion**: The EU Commission must actively push back against any collusion between governments and Big Tech that undermines democracy, free expression, and the rule of law.
- **Guarantee Detailed Risk Assessments Under Articles 34 and 35 DSA**: The EU Commission must ensure that risk assessments conducted under Articles 34 and 35 of the DSA are thorough and detailed, specifically addressing the impact of content moderation tools and practices on marginalized voices in the context of conflict, war, or genocide.
- **Provide Resources to Civil Society for Enforcement and Accountability**: The EU Commission should provide resources to civil society organizations to empower them to independently contribute to enforcement and accountability processes under the DSA. This should include toolkits on users' rights under the DSA, guidance on appealing content moderation decisions, and best practices for documenting and challenging censorship.
- **Invest in Independent European Social Media Alternatives**: The EU Commission should invest in developing and supporting European social media platforms that are independent from U.S. political influence and lobby groups. These should be built on principles of transparency, accountability, and respect for the EU framework for fundamental rights. Such investment would promote digital sovereignty and help foment a plural, democratic online ecosystem less vulnerable to censorship driven by external interests.

137 "Framework for Meaningful Engagement." European Center for Not-For-Profit Law. Retrieved from: <https://ecnl.org/sites/default/files/2023-03/Final%20Version%20FME%20with%20Copyright%20%282%29.pdf>

CONTACT US

info@7amleh.org | www.7amleh.org

Our Social Media Pages:
7amleh

