



We Did a Human Rights Impact Assessment. Here's What We're Doing Next

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If you're wondering what a Human Rights Impact Assessment is, that's a fair question. Let's start with what "fundamental human rights" means in the context of a community-based live-streaming service.

Twitch has always had a focus on how our service can help you realize your fundamental human rights to self-expression and participation in building diverse communities. This commitment to human rights also means a commitment to safety. People are only able to exercise their fundamental human rights when they feel safe in doing so—free from discrimination or intimidation. Minimizing harm to our community and advancing human rights are therefore core to our values. In this foundational way, we are guided by the [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#), and the [International Bill of Human Rights](#).

As a part of that commitment, we recently decided to undertake an independent Human Rights Impact Assessment (HRIA). An HRIA is an evaluation—performed or verified by an independent, professional source—that looks for ways that a company or service can best advance and support fundamental human rights. It is a leading practice that allows us to learn from experts about how we can improve.

Today we're sharing those results along with our next steps. As a global service, we want our community to know the areas we're actively working on from as many perspectives as possible. The info from our HRIA will be another useful resource for our work across products, policies, and processes, helping us ensure we're designing, building, and iterating in a way that positively affects human rights.

Let's get to it.

Who conducted Twitch's HRIA?

As we noted above, to be the most useful, an assessment like an HRIA must be thorough and impartial. For that perspective, we enlisted the help of [BSR](#). BSR is a global sustainable business network and consultancy that works with over 300 companies ranging from tech and entertainment companies to Fortune 500, multinational corporations.

This assessment was conducted in 2022 using methodologies based upon the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), including a consideration of the various human rights principles, standards, and methodologies upon which the UNGPs were built. BSR engaged with a diverse range of stakeholders during this assessment and supplemented these inputs with their own insights into the human rights concerns of Twitch's stakeholders.

BSR has independently published findings from the HRIA on the BSR website. We've outlined the key findings and our action plan below, but if you're interested in reading the full assessment, you can do so [here](#).

Key takeaways from the 2022 HRIA

Overall, BSR determined that Twitch poses less risk to human rights than other similar services. This is because of the ephemeral nature of live content and because of our unique approach to moderation that encourages and empowers everyone to participate in community safety.

Or, to be really technical about it, we have "a community-based content governance approach." This just means that we engage streamers and viewers as part of our layered approach to safety, and that we have a strong communication loop that lets our community give and receive feedback.

Despite Twitch's lower risk profile today, as we build and grow, we must continue to acknowledge that not every user has the same experiences, and that some groups are particularly vulnerable to human rights risks and abuses on our service. This is important as we consider whether to expand globally into new markets, and how core product decisions may affect Twitch's evolution as a service.

Recommendations

BSR made 25 recommendations for Twitch, which is on par with other services of our size. We are aligned with and will implement 18 of the recommendations. Out of the seven remaining, we have decided to partially act on one, further assess five, and pause further consideration of one other recommendation. Below we've listed the recommendations (as stated by BSR) with additional context about how we're making our decisions.

Implementing (18 Recommendations)

Several of BSR's recommendations lined up with plans that were already on our roadmap for 2023 and beyond. Similar to safety work on Twitch, there is no end state to this process. Many of these recommendations will be implemented on an ongoing basis to ensure we're continuing to meet the latest safety needs of our community.

1. Explore whether new content policies are needed relating to privacy rights during live streaming.
2. Explore whether exceptions to content policy should exist during certain live events.
3. Establish a human rights policy and assign a human rights lead.
4. Assess and address human rights risks associated with formal market expansion prior to moving forward.
5. Establish a strategy for ongoing stakeholder engagement.
6. Establish a plan for effective content moderation in the likelihood that the Twitch service becomes more widely used in more cultures and languages.
7. Centralize and enhance training for community moderators, and consider adding dedicated moderators for large public livestreams.
8. Create training modules on relevant content-related topics.
9. Develop a comprehensive child rights strategy for Twitch.
10. Investigate feasibility of options for non-user (i.e., logged out user) reporting.
11. Review and update reporting channels with vulnerable users, including those under 18, in mind.
12. Continue seeking to detect discernible patterns of harmful conduct and content
13. Integrate human rights into existing risks assessment processes
14. Assess and address the human rights risks associated with the expansion of recommendation algorithms beyond prominent, trusted creators to surfacing small creators.
15. Assess risks unique to mobile streaming
16. Become a more active participant in the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism
17. Collaborate with civil society actors and industry associations (such as the Technology Coalition) to conduct research and develop rights-based approaches to age assurance.
18. Undertake continuous improvement on Twitch's transparency reporting, including through the use of international reporting standards.

Implementing in Part (1 Recommendation)

1. Address the gaps identified in the human rights gap analysis BSR undertook of the Twitch Community Guidelines.

Our Community Guidelines are a living resource that protects streamers and their communities by clarifying what type of content is allowed on Twitch. We regularly announce new or amended policies to keep pace with the community's changing needs—the last one being a major update in October 2022 that

improved readability and added clearer examples.

In that release, we updated our definition of harm and added specific human trafficking language, a gap identified by BSR. We're exploring the idea of creating additional policies around respect for cultural heritage and educational content, but since we don't have a plan or timeline yet, we cannot commit to making those changes at this time.

For context: educational streams make up a relatively small amount of Twitch's content, and we have not observed issues related to misinformation stemming from false educational content. This is something we will continue to monitor and, if needed, pivot to make sure it doesn't spread on Twitch.

Assessing Feasibility (5 Recommendations)

These five recommendations are generally aligned with our goals. However, they require additional scoping or dedicated support before we'd be able to make them happen. For example, our teams are already iterating on our reporter notification experience, but we haven't yet landed on a solution, and therefore have not yet marked it as "in progress."

1. Increase the number of scenarios where users submitting reports and appeals receive responses.
2. Assess and address the human rights risks associated with targeted advertising.
3. Increase the general capacity and human rights capability of government affairs and public policy teams.
4. Join the Global Network Initiative (GNI)
5. Consider joining the Digital Trust and Safety Partnership (DTSP)

Not Implementing (1 Recommendation)

1. Fund or participate in external research into the potential link between gaming, terrorism, and violent extremism

We stand, unquestionably, against terrorism and violent extremism. There are clear guidelines against this kind of content in our Community Guidelines. While we are not funding external research at this time, we are taking other steps such as doubling down our commitment with the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), and supporting the Fair Play Alliance (FPA), which is focused on helping the gaming industry, and related services, build positive communities for gamers. We will continue to actively monitor this area and change course if needed.

Next Steps

This HRIA isn't a one-off exercise where the goal is to check off as many boxes as possible and move on. With this perspective and context from BSR, we have an opportunity to ensure that human rights considerations are incorporated into all of our policy development and safety design processes moving forward.

We recently shared an [open letter from our Heads of Safety and Community Health Product](#), outlining what you can expect from Twitch on the safety front in 2023. This HRIA builds upon those plans, and we have the support of all teams at Twitch to help us continue moving forward on those goals.

For the latest information, keep an eye on the [Twitch Safety Center](#).

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