



## Introduction and informed consent

### Welcome!

You are invited to participate in a study conducted by researchers from the Hertie School, one of the world's leading policy schools.

The goal of this survey is to learn about your opinions on various forms of speech online. Please note that we will present various example statements from social media that you may perceive as offensive.

Your participation is voluntary. You are free to not answer any question or to withdraw from the study at any time. This survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

We hope that you would like to take part!

### Consent

Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Please contact the researchers if you need more information.

### Research Project

The title of the research project is "Global Preferences for Hate Speech Moderation". This research project is being conducted by Simon Munzert, Julia Ellingwood, Lisa Oswald and Richard Traunmüller at the Hertie School, Berlin.

### Purpose of the Research

This is a study on public opinion and policy preferences in the context of online hate speech. Citizens in multiple countries are surveyed. Your participation is voluntary. Participation involves completion of a survey. You may choose not to answer any or all questions.

### Study Procedure

You will be asked a series of questions in an online survey - mostly you will answer by clicking boxes to supply your opinion or experience. You may choose not to answer any questions that you are not comfortable answering. Participation in research is completely voluntary and you can stop any time by simply closing the webpage, at which point data you submitted until then will be recorded. Because the survey is anonymous, we will not be able to determine which survey answers belong to you, so you cannot withdraw information you have provided. You do not waive any legal rights by agreeing to take part in this study.

This survey is anonymous, involves a secure connection, and is being hosted by Qualtrics. Data in transit will always be encrypted and the results of your responses will be stored on an encrypted account which only the researchers will be able to access. However, please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed while data are in transit over the Internet. The survey software provider might use the data for improving product performance and other purposes, excluding personal data. Their services Terms of Service addressing confidentiality may be viewed at <https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>.

### Risks and Benefits

Researchers involved in the study will protect your personal information if you accidentally provide any, and others will not be able to connect your responses to personally identifiable information. Any personal information that could identify you will be removed or changed before files are shared with other researchers or results are made public.

The results of this study will be presented at conferences, published in scientific journals, and linked on the researchers' websites. A fully anonymized version of the data will be made public upon publication of the results and will be hosted in perpetuity by the Open Science Framework: <http://osf.io/>. Anyone will be able to view the data from the study once the data is made public, but your answers contain no identifying information and so no one will be able to link any answer to you personally. As such, the survey involves minimal risk to you, and while there are no direct benefits, you will be helping to further scientific understanding of current public opinion.

This project has been reviewed by the Hertie School's Ethics Board for compliance with federal guidelines for research involving human participants. Please feel free to print this consent form for your records.

### Contact

Questions about this project may be directed to Simon Munzert at [speech-survey@hertie-school.org](mailto:speech-survey@hertie-school.org). Any concerns can be directed to the Hertie School's dean of research, Kai Wegrich at [Dean-of-Research-and-Faculty@hertie-school.org](mailto:Dean-of-Research-and-Faculty@hertie-school.org).

I hereby confirm that I am at least 18 years old, that I have read, understood, and agree with the terms detailed above. Do you wish to participate in this survey?

☐ Yes

☐ No

### Basic sociodemographics

Please state your gender.

☐ Male

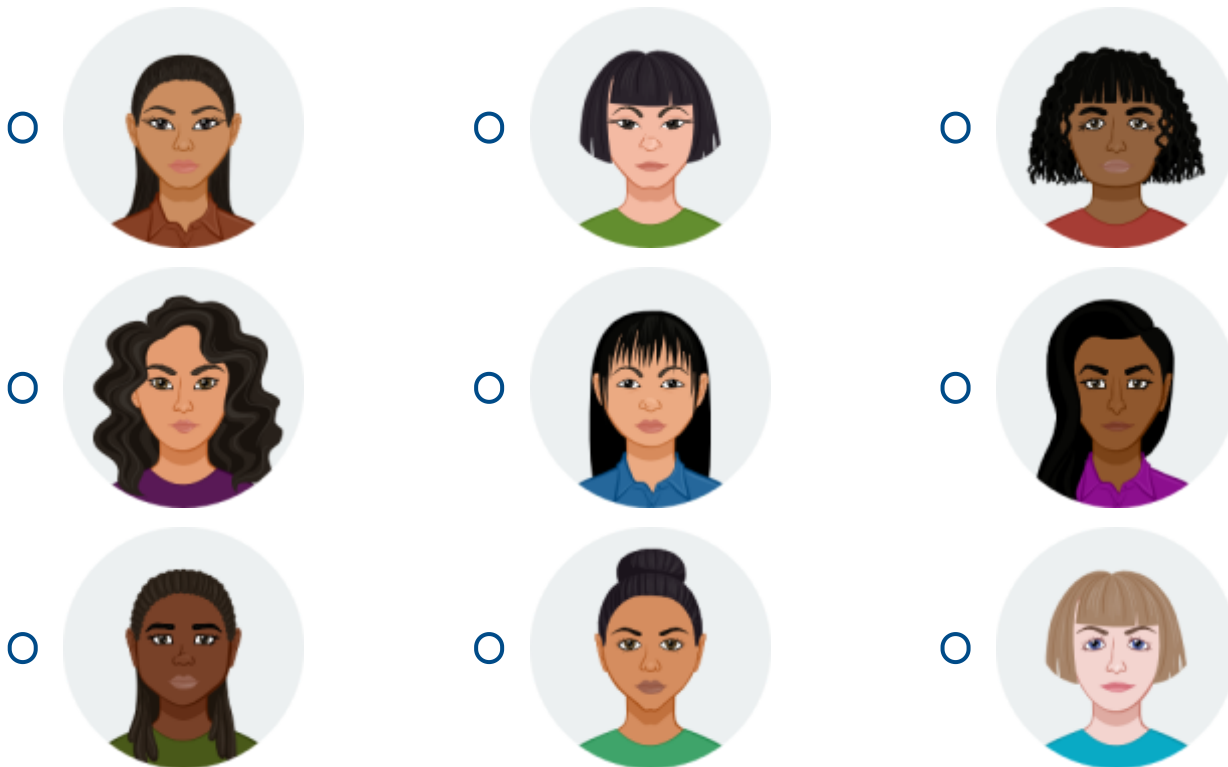
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Other

What is your year of birth?

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

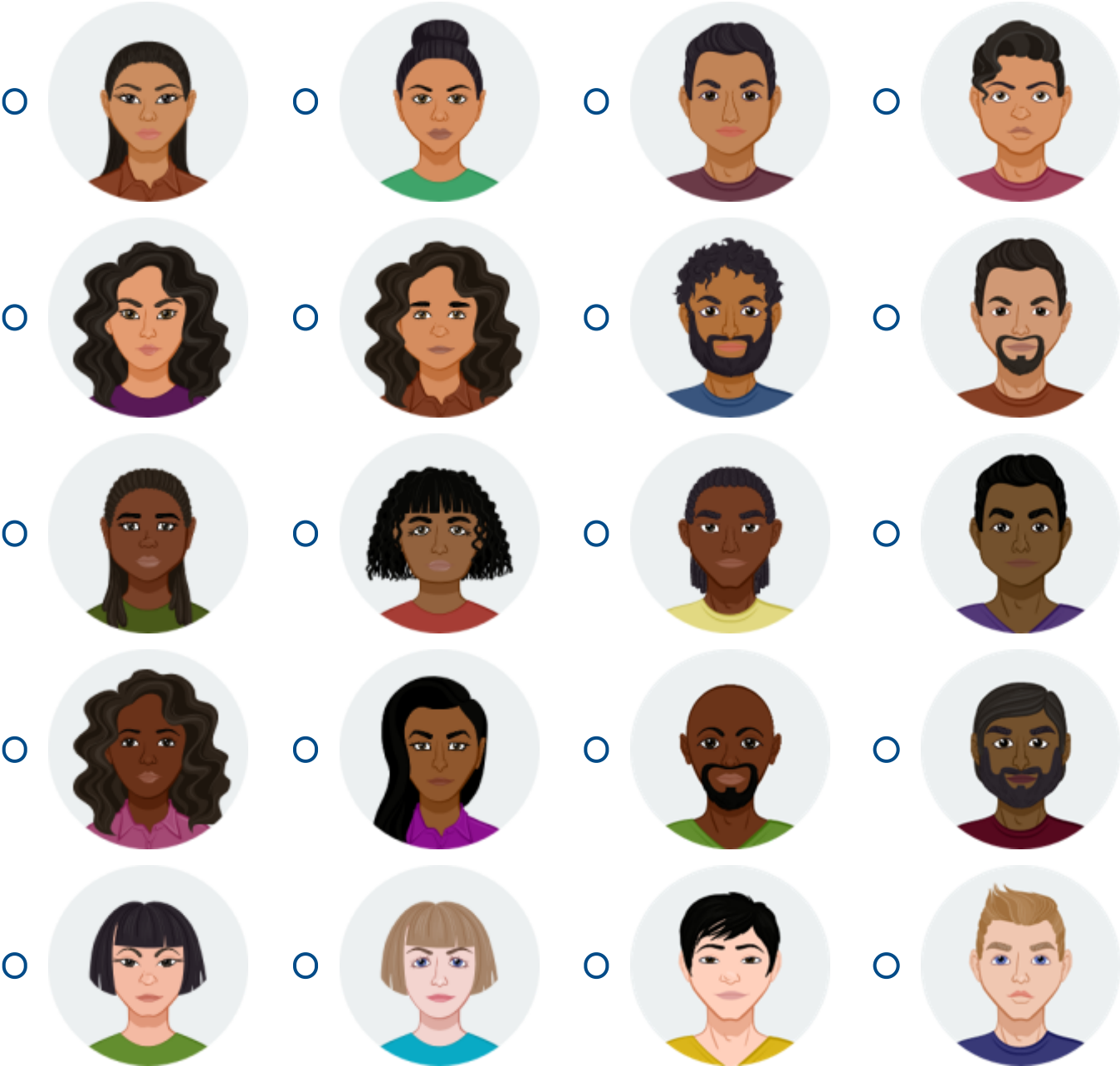
- ☐ Below class 10
- ☐ Till class 10
- ☐ Till class 12
- ☐ Enrolled in a college or university but do not have a degree
- ☐ Received a Bachelor's degree [Graduate]
- ☐ Master's Degree or Professional Degree like Medicine or Law [Post Graduate]

Which character do you think most closely resembles you?





Which character do you think most closely resembles you?





Which character do you think most closely resembles you?



Are you considering yourself being part of a minority in your country because of your ethnicity or race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, political belief, or another aspect of your identity?

- ☐ Yes, I'm part of a minority in my country.
- ☐ No, I'm not part of a minority in my country.

Do you tend to agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
It should be fine for men to cry!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We would be better off if everybody were vegan.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our institutions are built on the foundation of casteism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
One woman is enough to rule everyone	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's not my problem if others are hurt by my opinion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
Immigration makes our society stronger and better!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We need strong and independent men!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
India should be for the Indian people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate change is overrated - climate has always changed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Climate change is a fundamental threat to humanity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
Casteism is an overblown issue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stay-at-home mums are the best!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's my right to eat meat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minority harassment has to disappear from the discourse.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure

## Political preferences and behavior

How interested in politics are you?

- ☐ Very interested
- ☐ Moderately interested
- ☐ Slightly interested
- ☐ Not interested at all

Which of these statements comes closest to your opinion?

- ☐ People in this country are **more free** to say what they think than they used to.
- ☐ People in this country are **just as free** to say what they think as they used to.
- ☐ People in this country are **less free** to say what they think than they used to.
- ☐ Don't know

In politics people often talk about the "left" and the "right". On a scale between 1 (furthest left) and 11 (furthest right), where would you place yourself?

1 -  
Left

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4

☐

5

☐

6

☐

7

☐

8

☐

9

☐

10

☐

11 -  
Right

☐

Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a

- ☐ BJP
- ☐ Congress
- ☐ Trinamool Congress
- ☐ Aam Aadmi Party
- ☐ Communist Party
- ☐ Independent
- ☐ Other
- ☐ None

Do you tend to agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
I am ashamed of my country!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gay marriage has to be legal.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religion has done more harm than good to our society.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am proud of my country!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Life is meaningless without faith in god	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
Marriage has to be between a man and a woman.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tax the rich!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Stop police atrocities!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Congress Party is the one and only party.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Driving my SUV is pure freedom!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure
The poor are to blame for their poverty.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Bharatiya Janata Party is the one and only party.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empower the police!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
SUVs should be banned!	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Unsure

Speech traits

Do you feel more or less free to speak your mind than you used to, or about the same?

- ☐ More free than I used to.
- ☐ Less free than I used to.
- ☐ About the same.
- ☐ Don't know

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Sometimes even in a democracy harmful views need to be silenced.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We must not let people saying unacceptable things be heard. We must act against them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I find it easy to take the perspective of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am an empathetic person.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am good at predicting how others feel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Online behavior

How often has the following happened to you on the internet, including social media?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Don't know
I have witnessed how someone else has been offended, insulted, or threatened.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have personally been offended or insulted.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have personally been threatened.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have seen views that make me angry.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have seen views I disagree with.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How often has the following happened to you on the internet, including social media?

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Don't know
I posted or shared something that could be seen as offensive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I posted my opinion on a political issue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I posted or shared something that I later regretted or felt ashamed of.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Speech governance preferences

Here you can find different arguments people make on current issues.  
Which side do you agree with more?

People should be able to speak their minds freely online.

☐

People should be able to feel welcome and safe online.

☐

Which side do you agree with more?

Online services should not be responsible for the content users post on their site, even when it's harassing.

☐

Online services have a responsibility to step in when harassing behavior occurs on their site.

☐

Which side do you agree with more?

Government should prevent people from engaging in hate speech against certain groups in public.

☐

People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions in public, even those that are deeply offensive to other people.

☐

To what extent, if at all, do you think each of the following groups have responsibility to act against online hate speech?

	No responsibility at all	Rather no responsibility	Some responsibility	Full responsibility	Don't know
People who are victims of online hate speech	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other users who witness the behavior	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Online services such as social media platforms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lawmakers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Justice system	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Employers of writers of hate speech	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please indicate who - if any - should mainly be responsible for regulating content on social media platforms:

- ☐ The social media companies
- ☐ The national government
- ☐ Both the social media companies and the government
- ☐ There should be no corporate or government regulation of content on social media

## Vignettes introduction



You will now see different examples of conversations that could typically be found on social media. Many of these conversations contain controversial language and content.

**How would you act if you had to decide what happens with the messages?**

Please read the statements carefully and answer a few questions for each of them. There is no right or wrong, please answer spontaneously.

**Important note:** We also want to point out that the contents of some of these messages may be unpleasant or repugnant to you. If you do not want to see any more such messages, you can skip these questions without answering.

- ☐ I have read and understood those instructions.



**You will now see different examples of conversations that could typically be found on social media. Many of these conversations contain controversial language and content.**

**Imagine you were a content moderator for a social platform that vows to promote free speech and takes a critical stance against any form of censorship. How would you act if you had to decide what happens with the messages?**

Please read the statements carefully and answer a few questions for each of them. There is no right or wrong, please answer spontaneously.

**Important note:** We also want to point out that the contents of some of these messages may be unpleasant or repugnant to you. If you do not want to see any more such messages, you can skip these questions without answering.

- ☐ I have read and understood those instructions.



You will now see different examples of conversations that could typically be found on social media. Many of these conversations contain controversial language and content.

Imagine you were a content moderator for a social platform that vows to protect their users from hate speech and takes a committed stance against hateful content on their pages. How would you act if you had to decide what happens with the messages?

Please read the statements carefully and answer a few questions for each of them. There is no right or wrong, please answer spontaneously.

**Important note:** We also want to point out that the contents of some of these messages may be unpleasant or repugnant to you. If you do not want to see any more such messages, you can skip these questions without answering.

☐ I have read and understood those instructions.

## Vignettes

### Conversation 1/8

Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.



After having read the entire conversation, consider the **SECOND** post.

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

## Conversation 2/8

Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.



After having read the entire conversation, consider the **SECOND** post.

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech

- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

### Conversation 3/8

Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.



After having read the entire conversation, consider the **SECOND post**.

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?



- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

#### Conversation 4/8

**Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.**



**After having read the entire conversation, consider the SECOND post.**

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

### Conversation 5/8

**Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.**



**After having read the entire conversation, consider the SECOND post.**

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

### Conversation 6/8

**Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.**



**After having read the entire conversation, consider the SECOND post.**

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences

- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

### Conversation 7/8

**Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.**



**After having read the entire conversation, consider the SECOND post.**

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer,

such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

### Conversation 8/8

Please consider the entire conversation before you answer the questions.



After having read the entire conversation, consider the **SECOND** post.

Do you think the **second post** constitutes hate speech, offensive speech, or neither of them?

- ☐ Hate speech
- ☐ Offensive but not hate speech
- ☐ Neither offensive nor hate speech

Do you think the **second post** should be removed from the platform or not?

- ☐ Post should be removed
- ☐ Post should not be removed

Do you think the **sender of the second post** should be banned from the platform or not?

- ☐ Person should be banned
- ☐ Person should not be banned

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face legal consequences, such as a fine?

- ☐ Person should face legal consequences
- ☐ Person should not face legal consequences

Do you think that the **sender of the second post** should face consequences from their employer, such as being fired?

- ☐ Person should face consequences by employer
- ☐ Person should not face consequences by employer

## Post experiment

In the previous questions we asked you to evaluate various conversations as they could have happened on a social platform. When answering those messages, which kind of social platform did you have in mind?

- ☐ A social platform that vows to promote free speech and takes a critical stance against any form of censorship
- ☐ A social platform that vows to protect their users from hate speech and takes a committed stance against hateful content on their pages
- ☐ Another kind of social platform
- ☐ I did not have a particular kind of social platform in mind

## End

**Before we come to the end, we have two last questions.**

People have different ideas about what constitutes "hate speech." What about you - how would you personally define hate speech?

And, in your own words, what do you think:

What - if anything - should not be allowed to say on social media?

**Thank you very much for participating in the survey.**

With this study, we aim to understand what people think about speech online and how they prefer hate speech to be moderated and regulated. We believe that our research is important to inform the scientific and public debate about everybody's opinions about the issue. In particular, we are

interested in how social media users think about the dilemma between protecting free speech online, and protecting people from potential harm from speech online.

The social media messages you saw in the survey were composed of different features, such as sender and target characteristics and messages of different type and degree. The statements were artificially created by the research team and as such were not based on real users or content from online platforms. The content you saw can be considered toxic and offensive, and some of the statements, if they were expressed online, might violate community standards on social media or result in criminal prosecution. **Neither the researchers nor the Hertie School endorse the views depicted in the messages and pictures, and we kindly ask you not to re-use the material online.** It was necessary, however, to present you with statements of this kind to be able to inform our research question.

Furthermore, in the survey you were randomly assigned to one of three experimental treatments, which introduced the task to evaluate the social media messages in different ways. In one version of the instructions, we asked participants to imagine they were a content moderator for a social platform that vows to promote free speech and takes a critical stance against any form of censorship. In another version of the instructions, we asked participants to imagine they were a content moderator for a social platform that vows to protect their users from hate speech and takes a committed stance against hateful content on their pages. In the third version, none of those frames were presented. We used this experimental setup to study whether participants' perceptions and evaluations of hate speech can be affected by the information provided in the instructions.

If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact the principal investigator of the study, Prof. Simon Munzert, Hertie School: [speech-survey@hertie-school.org](mailto:speech-survey@hertie-school.org).

Thank you!

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