

Polish media petition to Big Tech regarding Ukraine

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War broke out in Europe on Thursday, February 24, 2022. Russia invaded Ukraine. A democratic country and its citizens were brutally attacked from land, air, and sea.

The Russian aggression stretches into cyberspace, too. Russians have been attacking Ukrainian IT and web infrastructure, its institutions and state agencies, as well as Ukrainian companies for many weeks now. In addition, enormous Russian forces were used to wield a mass-scale disinformation operation.

This is not limited to Ukraine. And it's not just today.

For years, Kremlin-led disinformation efforts have been underway. They targeted civil society, science, homeland security, and free and elections.

Regretfully, we notice that large corporations have become involuntary allies of the Kremlin. These corporations provide the Russian propaganda machine with an increasingly important platform – both from communication and information standpoints – for social media activity.

The official, state-controlled Russian media as well as other, tightly related outlets – used to legitimize and echo the official narrative – are still free to operate on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and TikTok.

It is clear that in order to turn the tide in the information war Russia has been waging for years, DIGITAL PLATFORMS MUST ACT UNEQUIVOCALLY AND MUST ACT NOW.

Importantly, these digital platforms are run by companies hailing predominantly from the United States – a country founded on democratic values, which appreciates that truth and the freedom of the media are essential elements of a democratic and peaceful world.

We, the undersigned – journalists, freelancers, and others working in the largest Polish media outlets – demand that Meta, Google, and Twitter immediately and actively join the fight against the Russian disinformation campaign.

Harnessing our own experience as well as the opinions of experts working in media and non-governmental organizations, we call for the following steps to be taken:

- Social media profiles and accounts of all Russian state media outlets clearly marked as propaganda must be blocked.
- Reporting of posts and/ or users on social media must include reporting on the grounds of spreading disinformation and fake news.
- More content moderators and administrators who are fluent in local languages must be employed.
- Financial outlays and human resources must be increased, and genuine action in the fight against disinformation needs to be taken – also outside the English-speaking world.

We believe that only a firm stance by the social media companies can stop the global disinformation disease, which affects both the media and the society at large. We do not accept the apparent helplessness of companies – which, by all accounts, are global financial and information powerhouses.

We must stem the Russian online disinformation campaign now. This is the very last moment to rise to the challenge.

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OKO.press

Interia

Redakcja informacji Radia ZET

Łukasz Frątczak, Superwizjer TVN

Michał Fuja, Superwizjer TVN

Magazyn „Nigdy więcej”

4miasta.pl

Głos 24

Rzeszów-News.pl

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We encourage other editorial offices and journalists to follow the letter. If you agree with what we have written and want to join the group of signatories, come and join us! Sign our letter! Send your application to apel@zamenhof.pl.

<https://zamenhof.pl/2022/02/28/polish-media-petition-to-big-tech-regarding-ukraine/>