

# Elon Musk Visits Auschwitz While Allowing Antisemitism to Surge on X

By Tim Hume  
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Billionaire visited former death camp on Monday ahead of a conference on tackling surging online antisemitism. But a Polish anti-racism group says his platform is allowing anti-Jewish hate to proliferate.

Elon Musk is not doing enough to stem a “spectacular” amount of anti-Jewish hate on ‘X’, a Polish anti-racist group said on Monday, as the billionaire visited Auschwitz ahead of a conference tackling online antisemitism.



Musk, the self-titled “chief troll officer” at X, formerly Twitter, landed in Krakow, Poland on Sunday night to speak at a two-day symposium addressing what its organiser, the European Jewish Association, said was a “disconcerting surge of antisemitism in Europe.”

Ahead of his appearance at the conference on Monday, the billionaire made a visit to the site of the former Auschwitz-Birkenau Nazi death camp, accompanied by right-wing US commentator Ben Shapiro, who is also attending the conference.

The trip comes in the wake of consistent reports that X has allowed antisemitic hate to proliferate on its platform since Musk’s takeover in October 2022 – with Musk having personally amplified antisemitic conspiracy theories himself.

The CEO of Tesla and SpaceX ignited a firestorm of criticism in November when he agreed with an X user who had posted that Jewish communities promoted “hatred against whites”; in a subsequent live discussion with the head of the European Jewish Association, he agreed to pay a visit to Auschwitz.

But despite Musk’s gestures towards addressing the issue, a Polish anti-racist group said this was not being reflected in X’s moderation practices, amid a deluge antisemitic content in Polish on the platform in recent months.

Rafal Pankowski, head of Never Again, told VICE News that his organisation had flagged 32 antisemitic posts in the platform since the start of December, with none of them being removed. This was despite Never Again being a participant in the SafeNet project, giving them “trusted flagger” status with the major social media platforms, as part of a European Commission-supporter initiative intended to provide a useful channel of communication in the fight against online racism and hate.

“We do not understand how this type of antisemitic hatred is allowed to be promoted on X, despite having been reported by a trusted partner organisation - and shortly before Musk’s planned visit to Auschwitz,” he said. Never Again had been told in responses from X that, in each case, moderators had reviewed the content and determined it did not violate the platform’s rules.

Monitoring groups have reported a recent surge in online antisemitism worldwide since Hamas’s October the 7th attack on Israel. But Polish-language social media has also seen a further spike in anti-

Jewish hate in response to a far-right MP's attack on a menorah displayed in Poland's parliament on December the 12th, Pankowski said, describing the incident as the "biggest antisemitic scandal in the history of the Polish parliament."

"There has been a very spectacular phenomenon of tweets celebrating Braun's violent antisemitism," he said. He said the surge of anti-Jewish tweets had resumed last week, when the Polish parliament voted to strip Braun of his legal immunity, allowing the public prosecutor to indict him on seven charges relating to the menorah attack and other stunts.

VICE News reported last month how Braun's assault on the menorah, putting out its candles with a fire extinguisher, had become a cause celebre for antisemites around the world, with white nationalists creating memes glorifying the act and heavily featuring fire extinguishers.

Among the recent posts reported by Never Again were one made by Braun on the day of his assault on the menorah, attempting to justify his actions and disparaging Judaism.

"There can be no place for acts of racist, tribal, wild, Talmudic worship on the premises of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland!" read the post.

Another post justifying Braun's attack on the menorah, made by Polish journalist Piotr Korczarowski, pushed the antisemitic trope that those who condemned Braun's actions were somehow "hidden Jews" who were a threat to Poland.

"The collective hysteria over Grzegorz Braun's act perfectly illustrates how many Jewophiles and Jews hiding under our names there are in Poland. However, the act itself proves that POLAND HAS NOT PERISHED!" he wrote.

Pankowski said that antisemitism and racism had been rampant on the social media platform prior to Musk's takeover. "There had been a long-term and well-documented issue with the platforms just not paying attention to hate speech in 'lesser' languages, not willing to invest energy in content moderation in the less profitable markets," he said.

But in recent months, the problem had become markedly worse. "Before, we could count on removal of at least some of the most obvious cases of racist tweets when we reported them," he said. This was no longer the case, he said.

Some of the reported posts that had been allowed to stand in recent months included some boldly stating "fuck the Jews," he said. The group had also reported 26 Polish-language posts for other forms of racism and hate since December the 1st, but these had also been allowed to stand, he added.

Musk backtracked on his endorsement of the antisemitic post in November - which drew condemnation from the White House and prompted major advertisers to announce a boycott of the platform - calling it "literally the worst and dumbest post that I've ever done."

'X' did not respond to VICE News' requests for comment.

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