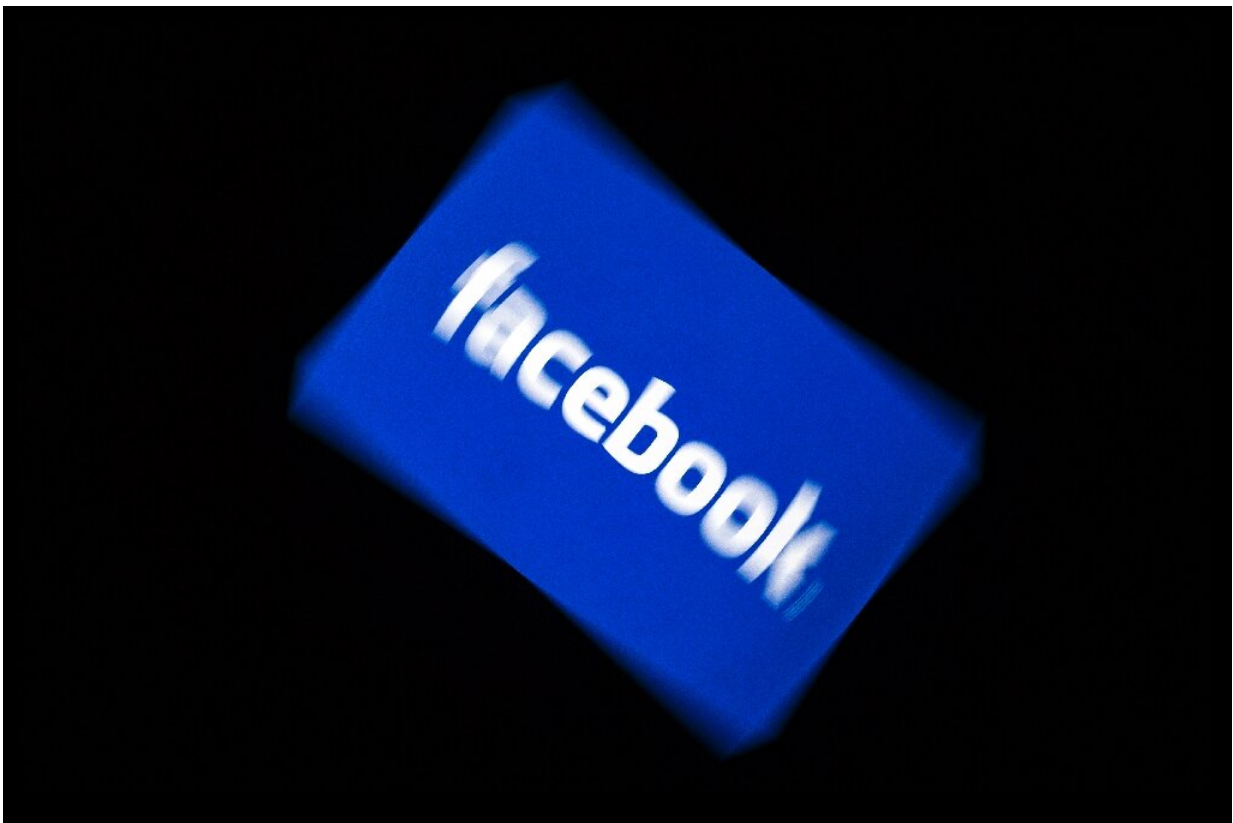


Facebook bans false information about US census

December 19 2019



Facebook said it would ban false claims about the 2020 US census, even from politicians, as part of its crackdown on misinformation

Facebook on Thursday banned posts or ads that interfere with people taking part in the US census, which will have an online participation

option next year for the first time.

New policies go into effect next month at Facebook and its image-centric Instagram community, according to an online post by public [policy](#) vice president Kevin Martin and civic engagement product management director Samidh Chakrabarti.

"We must do our part to ensure an accurate [census](#) count, which is critical for the distribution of federal funds, the apportioning of electoral representatives and the functioning of a democracy," the executives said.

The census [interference](#) policy bans deception about when or how to take part in the US census, or the significance of participating, according to the California-based internet titan.

Also banned are ads that portray taking part in the US count of its residents as meaningless or advise people not to be counted.

"Next year, all US households will be able to complete the US census online for the first time," said Chakrabarti and Martin.

"This means we have to be more vigilant about protecting against census interference across posts and ads on Facebook and Instagram and help promote an accurate count of every person in the country."

Facebook, which has faced criticism for its hands-off policy on misleading comments from politicians, said it would not allow political actors to post false information about the census, in a policy similar to that on "voter interference."

"Content that violates our census interference policy will not be allowed to remain on our platforms as newsworthy even if posted by a politician," the statement said.

The move comes with online platforms struggling to deal with an avalanche of disinformation while remaining open to for political debate and free speech.

Google last month placed restrictions on how advertisers can target specific groups of voters, while clarifying its policy by indicating it does not allow "false claims" in advertising, political or otherwise.

Twitter has banned most kinds of political ads to steer clear of checking the veracity of claims by politicians, but some analysts say the ban ends up helping incumbents and well-financed candidates.

© 2019 AFP

Citation: Facebook bans false information about US census (2019, December 19) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2019-12-facebook-false-census.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.