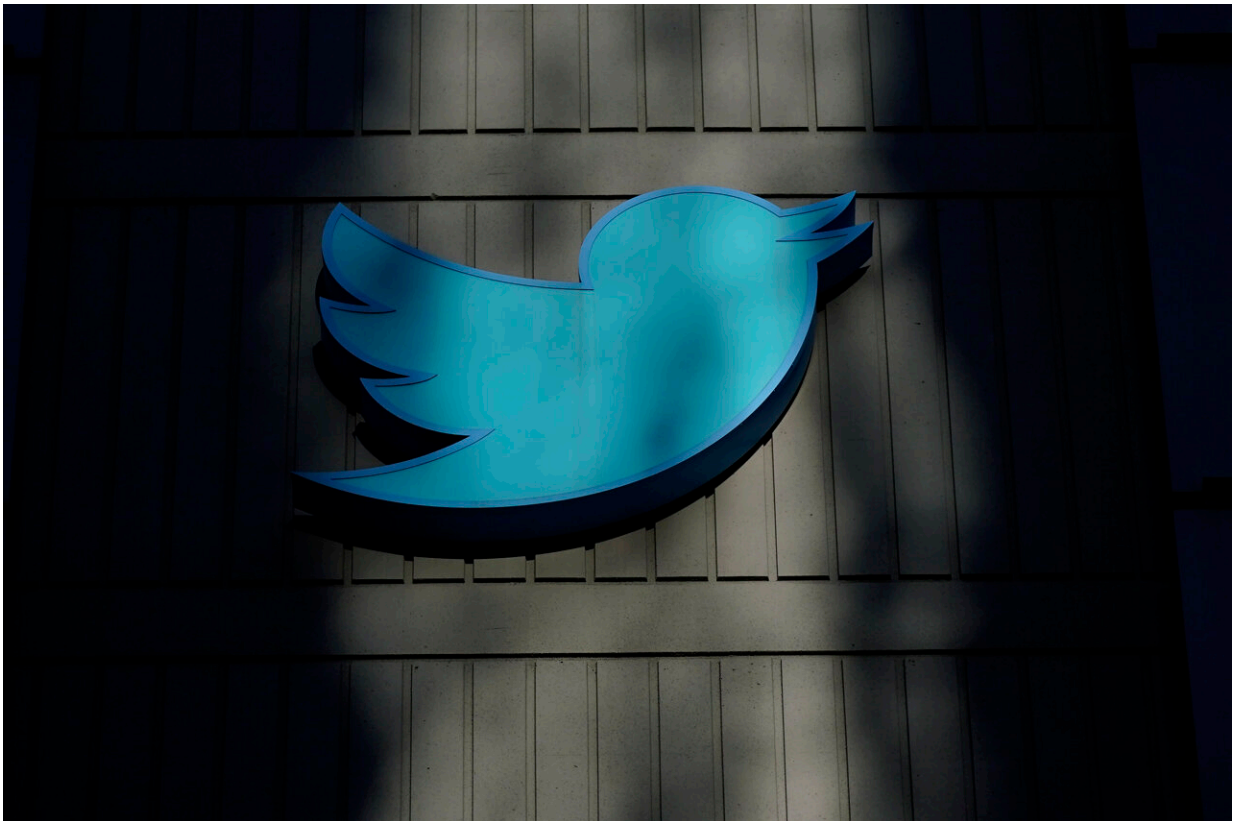


# Twitter, others slip on removing hate speech, EU review says

November 24 2022, by Kelvin Chan

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A sign at Twitter headquarters is shown in San Francisco, Friday, Nov. 18, 2022.  
Credit: AP Photo/Jeff Chiu

Twitter took longer to review hateful content and removed less of it in 2022 compared with the previous year, according to European Union

data released Thursday.

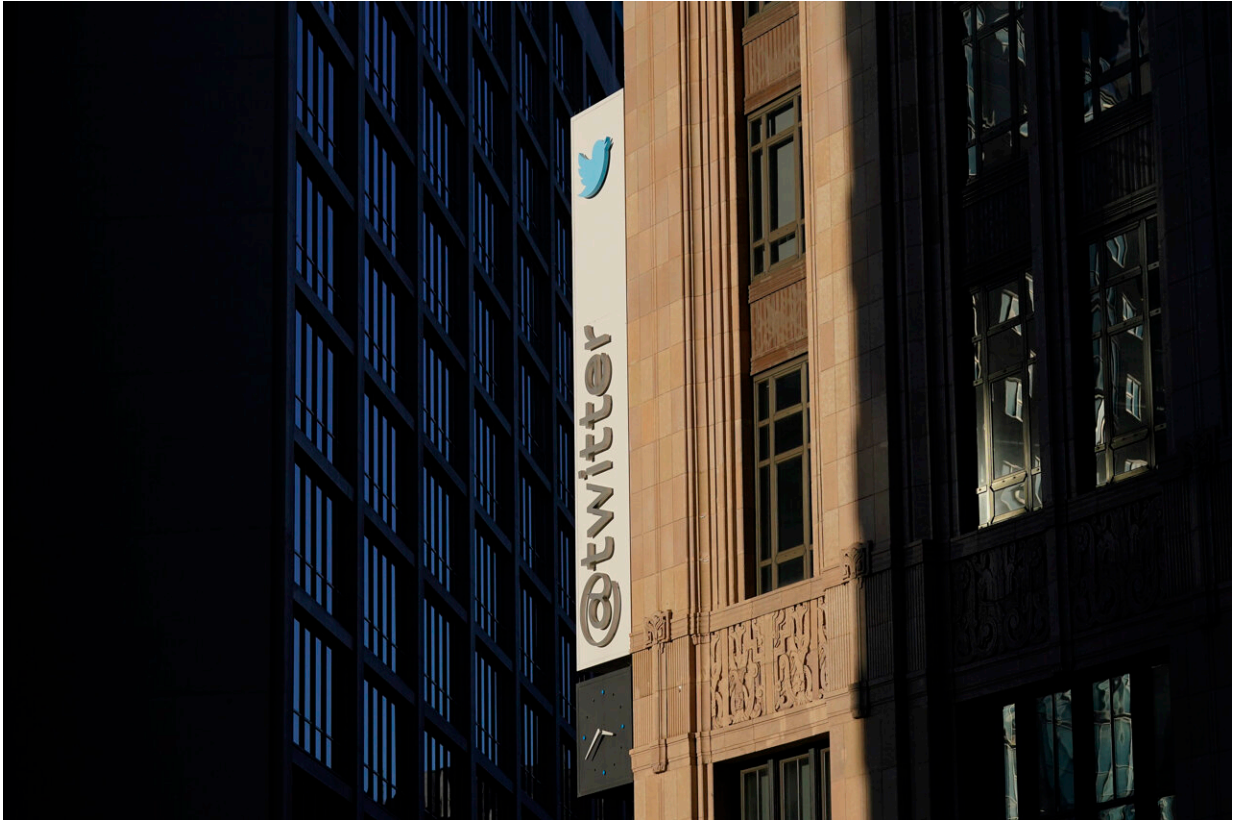
The EU figures were published as part of an annual evaluation of online platforms' compliance with the 27-nation bloc's [code of conduct](#) on disinformation.

Twitter wasn't alone—most other [tech companies](#) signed up to the voluntary code also scored worse. But the figures could foreshadow trouble for Twitter in complying with the EU's tough new online rules after owner [Elon Musk fired many of the platform's 7,500 full-time workers](#) and an untold number of contractors responsible for content moderation and other crucial tasks.

The EU report, carried out over six weeks in the spring, found Twitter assessed just over half of the notifications it received about illegal hate speech within 24 hours, down from 82% in 2021.

In comparison, the amount of flagged material Facebook reviewed within 24 hours fell to 64%, Instagram slipped to 56.9% and YouTube dipped to 83.3%. TikTok came in at 92%, the only company to improve.

The amount of hate speech Twitter removed after it was flagged up slipped to 45.4% from 49.8% the year before. TikTok's removal rate fell by a quarter to 60%, while Facebook and Instagram only saw minor declines. Only YouTube's takedown rate increased, surging to 90%.



A sign at Twitter headquarters is shown in San Francisco, Friday, Nov. 18, 2022.  
Credit: AP Photo/Jeff Chiu

"It's worrying to see a [downward trend](#) in reviewing notifications related to illegal hate speech by [social media platforms](#)," European Commission Vice President Vera Jourova tweeted. "Online hate speech is a scourge of a digital age and platforms need to live up to their commitments."

Twitter didn't respond to a request for comment. Emails to several staff on the company's European communications team bounced back as undeliverable.

[Musk's \\$44 billion acquisition of Twitter](#) last month fanned widespread concern that purveyors of lies and misinformation would be allowed to

flourish on the site. The billionaire Tesla CEO, who has frequently expressed his belief that Twitter had become too restrictive, has been reinstating suspended accounts, [including former President Donald Trump's](#).

Twitter faces more scrutiny in Europe by the middle of next year, when new EU rules aimed at protecting [internet users'](#) online safety will start applying to the biggest online platforms. Violations could result in huge fines of up to 6% of a company's annual global revenue.

France's online regulator Arcom said it received a reply from Twitter after writing to the company earlier this week to say it was concerned about the effect that staff departures would have on Twitter's "ability maintain a [safe environment](#) for its users."

Arcom also asked the company to confirm it can meet its "legal obligations" in fighting [online hate speech](#) and that it is committed to implementing the new EU online rules. Arcom said it received a response from Twitter and that it will "study their response," without giving more details.

Tech companies that signed up to the EU's disinformation code agree to commit to measures aimed at reducing disinformation and file regular reports on whether they're living up to their promises, though there's little in the way of punishment.

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