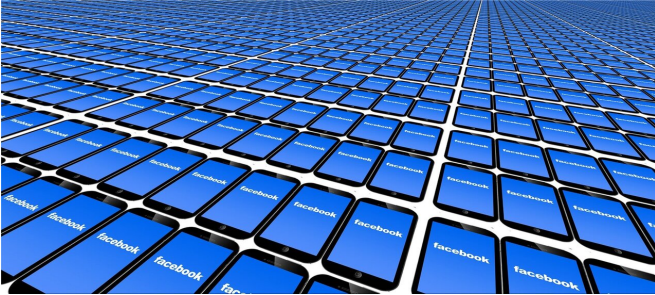


# Mark Zuckerberg: Facebook has stopped Russia and Iran campaigns to meddle in 2020 election

22 October 2019, by Kristin Lam



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Facebook has shut down attempts from Russia and Iran to interfere in the 2020 elections, CEO Mark Zuckerberg said in an interview aired Monday night on NBC.

The interference campaigns show manipulation tactics are evolving, Zuckerberg said on "NBC Nightly News," as the company continues to face scrutiny for how it handles misinformation.

Facebook announced it removed four networks of accounts, pages and groups for "coordinated inauthentic behavior" earlier Monday. Three came from Iran and one from Russia, the company said in a blog post. The networks on both Facebook and Instagram allegedly misrepresented themselves and their actions, targeting the United States, North Africa and Latin America.

"That we've been able to proactively identify them and take them down is somewhat of a signal that our systems are much more advanced now than they have been in the past," Zuckerberg said on NBC.

After heavy criticism from lawmakers for failing to

detect and purge election meddling in 2016, Facebook has made safeguarding elections around the world one of its top priorities. The company this week released new plans to protect 2020 [election](#) integrity, including plans to create a tracker showing how much presidential candidates spend on ads.

The plans do not update Facebook's advertising policy, which allows politicians to present false or misleading information due to the belief that any statement from a political figure is important to the public interest.

Politicians have slammed the fact-checking policy in the wake of Facebook running a Trump [campaign](#) ad featuring claims, without evidence, about former Vice President Joe Biden's involvement with Ukraine.

"I believe that it is important for people to be able to hear and see what politicians are saying," Zuckerberg told NBC. "That speech will be heavily scrutinized by journalists, by other people."

For upcoming elections, Zuckerberg added the removal of foreign manipulation efforts Monday indicates authoritarian regimes will actively run misinformation campaigns.

Last year, Facebook said it foiled political influence campaigns originating out of Iran and Russia that targeted U.S. users ahead of the midterm elections. The campaigns, which mimicked previous Kremlin-linked efforts to stir political discord around hot-button issues, also targeted users in the U.K., the Middle East and Latin America in a bid to sway world politics.

Iran and Russia have previously denied any involvement in Facebook disinformation

campaigns.

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