Data collection notice for

Content moderation on Telegram

This data is collected in the public interest as part of the research project *'Content moderation on Telegram',* conducted Stijn Peeters at the University of Amsterdam Faculty of Humanities, department of Media Studies.

Purpose of the research project

Content moderation on social media is a hotly debated topic in the light of social media's important role in people's information diets and social interactions. Telegram in particular has been under scrutiny for its relatively light touch concerning the moderation of content that is considered problematic. Compared to other social media platforms, it bans relatively few types of content outright and does not generally actively moderate most of these banned categories.

This research focuses on one of these banned categories, "selling or offering illegal goods and services (drugs, firearms, forged documents)". The goal is to map publicly available content in this category on Telegram (insofar as it is present) and better understand how people in this space operate on the platform on which their activities are nominally banned.

What data is collected?

To this end, I do a basic search for content in publicly available channels in this space, using online Telegram channel indexes such as tgstat.com. By filtering for popular Dutch channels and then again for channels that based on their description belong in the category of interest, I create an initial seed list. Using snowballing via forwarded messages, I then create a broader expert list of approximately 200 relevant channels from which I collect up to 5,000 recent messages using the public Telegram API. These are then categorised using qualitative and quantitative methods and further studied through close and distant reading.

The data only concerns publicly available channels and is not concerned with the identities of message authors. No personal details or direct quotes of messages will be included in the research output.

Data subject rights according to the GDPR

More information about the rights as data subjects under the EU privacy law, the GDPR, can be found online at this website: https://extranet.uva.nl/en/content/a-z/privacy/what-are-my-rights/what-are-my-rights.html.

Confidential treatment of personal data

The information gathered over the course of this research will be used for the purpose of this research project. Personal details will not be used in publications.

Data will be stored for a period of approximately two years, contingent on the publication trajectory of the research. The personal data will only be stored as long as is necessary for the research, will never be published, and will be deleted as soon as possible.

Further information

For further information on the research project, please contact Stijn Peeters (stijn.peeters@uva.nl).

If you have any complaints regarding this research project, you can contact the secretary of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam, commissie-ethiek-fgw@uva.nl; Binnengasthuisstraat 9, 1012 ZA Amsterdam, The Netherlands.