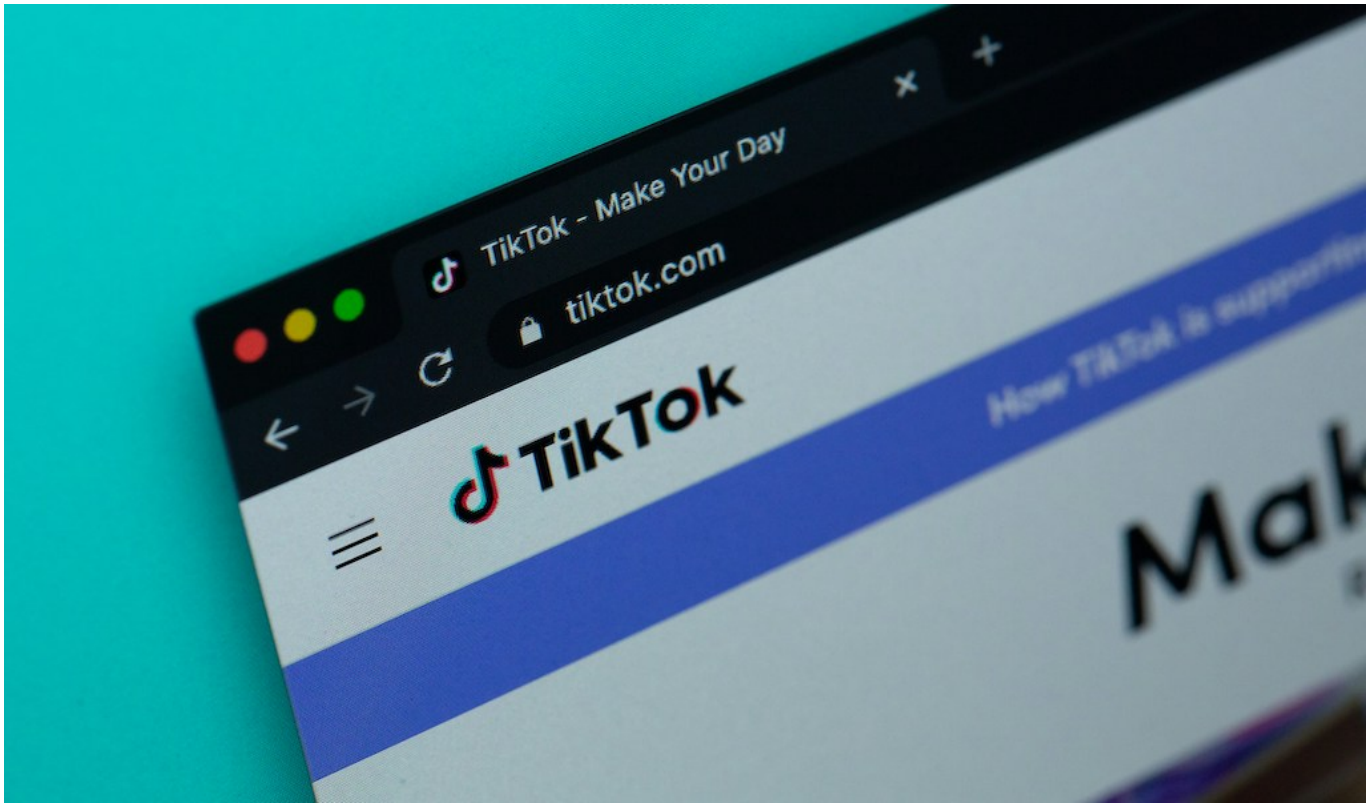
On TikTok, hatred of Israel and anti-Semitism are spreading with unprecedented speed among the predominantly young audience. False information is being turned unfiltered into supposed truths. This was already the case before October 7, but has since reached a new level of escalation. This is shown by new studies.



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An American study of the behavior of around 1,300 young TikTok users assumes that TikTok is an important driver of the current rise in anti-Semitism: The probability that someone holds anti-Semitic or anti-Israeli views increases by 17 percent if you spend 30 minutes a day on TikTok – compared to 6 percent on Instagram and 2 percent on X.

A second recently published analysis by the Anne Frank Educational Centre even speaks of a “speed radicalization” of young people. “No other social medium provides such a vulnerable target group with such disturbing content – largely without supervision,” criticizes the report.

Fake news and fake images

For example, posts on TikTok cast doubt on whether the massacre of October 7, 2023 even took place, or attribute it to the Israeli government. AI-generated images of allegedly killed Palestinian children are shared millions of times to serve anti-Semitic motives. “It is a war of images and allegations in which individuals can hardly find their way around,” the educational institution sums up.

Distinguishing fact from fiction falls by the wayside given the rapid pace at which images and videos are shared. If information is exposed as fake news, it has long since made the rounds and the message is in place. One photo, for example, which was passed around on TikTok, Instagram and X, showed a man in ruins carrying five children. However, the picture is a fake. Three weeks after the Hamas attack, the Associated Press news agency, for example, felt compelled to warn against the many fake news stories about the Gaza war doing the rounds on social media.

At the beginning of February 2024, Israeli President Yitzchak Herzog invited two representatives from TikTok to highlight the anti-Semitism and hatred of Israel that is spread via the platform and to look for solutions. During the discussion, Herzog emphasized: “We must fight lies and hatred where we find them, on the street or on social networks.” At the end of 2023, TikTok had almost 1.7 billion users worldwide, 1.1 billion of whom are regularly active. The majority are Generation Z (1997-2010) and millennials (1981-1996): Just under 70% of users belong to the 16 to 24 age group. In Switzerland, more than a third of the population actively uses TikTok.

Editor’s recommendation
TikTokis an information and surveillance platform of the Chinese government