

POLICY FORUM

facebook

Soliciting Human Smuggling Services or Information

Organic Content Policy

Policy Forum Update - December 2022

- In December 2021, we held a Policy Forum to consider policy options for content soliciting human smuggling services. Since that time, we have continued consultations with expert organizations including the United Nations International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
- As a result of this policy process and consultations with experts, we have shaped our policy to promote safety and focus on providing resources about safe, legal migration options to people who most urgently need the support. Under our new policy launching December 7, 2022, we will **remove content that solicits human smuggling services while also delivering informational resources to people who post the content.**
- The informational resources were developed in consultation with external experts such as IOM and OSCE and align with international law and human rights standards.
- The following slides highlight information about options considered and our consultation process that was originally shared at the Policy Forum in December, 2021, along with updated information about our new policy.

Policy Forum Background - December 2021

At our December 2021 Policy Forum, we outlined the issue, consultation process, options, and stakeholder feedback for content soliciting human smuggling services.

Issue Statement:

While our Human Exploitation policies prohibit people from providing or facilitating human smuggling services, our policies do allow people to seek or share information about smuggling or how to cross borders. Allowing this content can make it easier for bad actors to identify and connect with vulnerable people, however, removing it could prevent people from using our platforms to seek safety or exercise their human rights.

Number of Working Groups: 4

Number of External Engagements: 71

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Dec. 2021 Research and External Engagement Summary

Research

- Internal research conducted in 11 countries finds support for allowing posts that seek information about ways to cross borders, especially in challenging circumstances such as war and famine. Many also say that the government—not Meta—should make decisions about whether or not to allow these posts.
- Research suggests that allowing posts that seek or share smuggling information can help migrants find the help they need, but can also heighten their vulnerability.
- In other domains (such as suicide prevention), tech companies have used interstitials as a means of directing at-risk users to authoritative resources to reduce these risks.

External Engagement

- While a few stakeholders expressed that Meta subjected people to exceptional risks, many expressed skepticism about the role of social media in exacerbating the risks associated with human smuggling. They also pointed to a lack of rigorous research on this issue.
- Int'l organizations focused on migration, human rights, and transnational crime said that retaining solicitation content allows people to verify information, identify helpful resources, and avoid risky alternatives.
- Most safety orgs focused on trafficking believe keeping the solicitation content up further exposes victims to harm while also signaling to smugglers/potential criminal networks that they can continue preying on potential victims on our platforms.
- A majority of stakeholders felt that some type of information label affixed to content would help highlight the dangers and provide helpful resources.

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Dec. 2021 Options Analysis Summary + New Policy Launching Dec. '22

Option	Rationale
<p>Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow content soliciting human smuggling services Allow content soliciting or sharing information related to illegal border crossing 	<p>Protects voice, does not limit migrants' agency or rights.</p>
<p>Option 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send support resources to users who post content soliciting human smuggling services Send support resources to users who post content soliciting or sharing information related to illegal border crossing 	<p>Balances voice and potential safety concerns, prioritizes migrants' agency and rights.</p>
<p>Option 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove content soliciting human smuggling services (and send resources to the responsible user) Send support resources to users who post content soliciting or sharing information related to illegal border crossing 	<p>Balances voice and potential safety concerns, prioritizes limiting risks of migrants connecting with exploitative actors.</p>
<p>Option 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove content soliciting human smuggling services Remove content soliciting or sharing information related to illegal border crossing 	<p>Minimizes risk of migrants connecting with exploitative actors, but limits free expression of migrants.</p>
<p>New Policy Launching December 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove content soliciting human smuggling services, including services for illegal cross border travel and send informational resources to the responsible user Allow content asking for or sharing information about personal safety and border crossing, seeking asylum, or how to leave a country 	<p>Balances voice and potential safety concerns, prioritizes limiting risks for migrants potentially connecting with exploitative actors..</p>

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December 2021 External Outreach Option Preferences



Option 1

Refugee rights advocates

Religious freedom advocates

Option 2

Int'l organizations focused on migration, refugee protection, and organized crime

Int'l NGOs focused on human rights and transnational crime

Afghan asylum seeker

Pakistan-Afghanistan border expert

Academics focused on human smuggling

NGOs working with migrants at US-MX border

Option 3

Counter-trafficking organizations

Criminologists

Academic leading project on migration misinfo online

Academic focused on nexus of smuggling and drug cartels in Mexico

Mexican migration rights activist

Option 4

Former US border enforcement official

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