

Email Interview with Wikimedia Foundation, August-September 2022

Interviewer: Shira Klein. Interviewee: Helen Plat, helen@minassianmedia.com

Q (Friday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 4:28 AM):

1. Is this the first time the foundation is hearing of a problem of distortion in Wikipedia's coverage of Holocaust history? If not, can you provide any detail about what you've heard?
2. We have found – and lay out 65-pages worth of – evidence that the safeguards in place for fixing distortion have failed in this case. One reason is that the distorting editors have such social capital on Wikipedia that arbitrators, administrators, and general editors give them a free hand. What do you think is the solution for such a problem?
3. The WMF recently intervened in the Croatian Wikipedia. What would it take for the foundation to intervene in the English Wikipedia?
4. How much money does the WMF spend each year on fighting misinformation, generally speaking? Is there a misinformation department or thoughts of dedicating resources to such a department?

A (Tuesday, September 1, 2022 6:14 AM):

We are open to receiving and surfacing to the local Wikimedia project's functionaries the essay on "*The widespread distortion of information taking place on the English Wikipedia with regards to Holocaust history in particular Polish Holocaust history*" by Shira Klein PhD and Dr. Jan Grabowski when published. This will enable the Foundation and the community to understand the challenges documented in the essay with regards to the safeguards currently in place to address distortion.

It is important to note that the Foundation rarely intervenes in the self governance process of the communities either with regards to content decisions or community behavior. We primarily step in when a matter has been escalated to us by the volunteers themselves for support or when a particular community does not have sufficient oversight procedures to address a matter. When we step in it is to solve serious cases that cannot be resolved through community processes.

In the vast majority of disinformation cases witnessed in the projects, the community has sufficient oversight procedures to deal with the issues presented. So we always recommend that issues be raised with local community oversight bodies as they are the best placed to deal with both content-related and conduct-related issues. Through our Trust and Safety Disinformation team we remain at hand to assist the community on escalated cases that they believe requires our involvement and intervention.