

Democracy Between Social Media, Political Polarisation, and Disinformation | TRT World Research Centre

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This document briefly revisits the nature of the relationship between social media, political polarisation, and disinformation, in the context of this nexus for public policy and democracy. The literature on the topic is vast, but the paper will still attempt to introduce this relationship and explore the aforementioned themes. The paper comes off the back of a recent Twitter takedown of social media bots (automated accounts that engage in social media propaganda tools, derived from the word 'robot'), in Turkey; an event that was criticised as ineffective and selectively anti-AK Party in design. The aforementioned development is juxtaposed with other recent developments that have commanded attention as of late, so as to probe further the relationship between social media, political polarisation, and disinformation. There is bound to be some level of disagreement in the realm of competitive politics, but polarisation is taken to be the stalwart division of a society such that points of commonality, or policies for the common good, become ever more difficult to find. All of these elements go on to affect public debate, policy, and, ultimately democracy. The author takes as a given that all forms of disinformation and polarising politics (across all political colours and stripes) should be assuaged, with a view to counteract polarisation and to ultimately improve the civility of contemporary political debate. Finally, though the fact that social media bots are used does not necessarily nullify the content of the message advanced, the use of bots to advance otherwise cogent or legitimate points of view may still tarnish the content at hand (source credibility effects).

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Source: [TRT World Research Centre - Democracy Between Social Media, Political Polarisation, and Disinformation](#)