



Twitter Transparency Report

Report 17 (Jan - Jun 2020)

Information Requests

About this report

Insights into legal demands to produce account information from governments, law enforcement, and third parties around the world.

Government

Published on January 11, 2021

01. Latest Data

02. Overview

03. Analysis

04. Preservation Requests

01. Latest Data: Government

Map

Bars

Table



Worldwide (68 countries) ▾

0 1 - 16 17 - 347 348 - 3429



Information requests - January - June 2020

Information requests

12.7K

Compliance rate

36.7%

Accounts specified

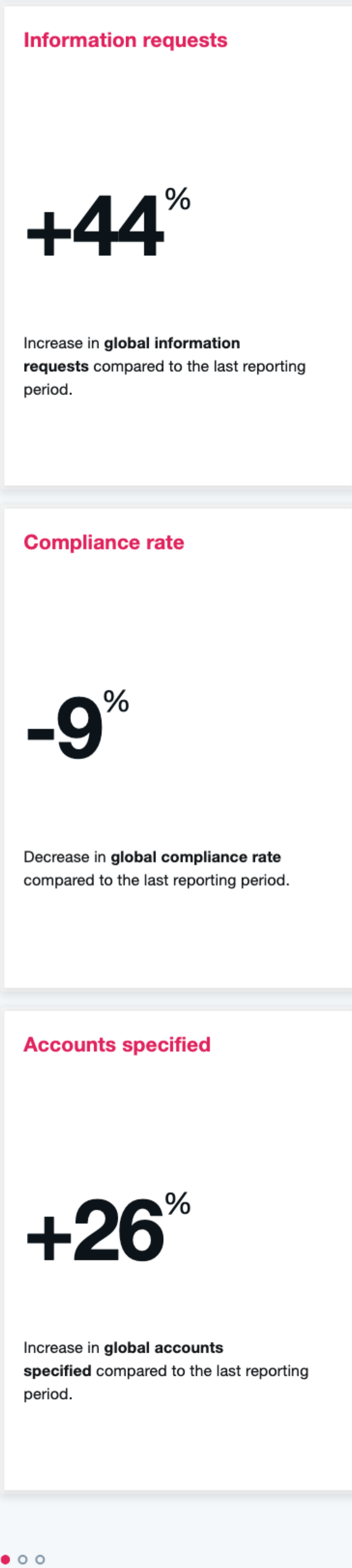
25.6K

02. Overview

This section covers the latest data about government information requests for Twitter and Periscope account information from around the world. These requests include a combination of routine requests and emergency requests. There are also trends and details about the global volume of requests, accounts specified, and the corresponding compliance rates, as well as insights into our related policies and global preservation requests.

Twitter’s operations were affected due to the unprecedented [COVID-19](#) pandemic.

Some notable changes since the last report⁽¹⁾:



03. Analysis

Big picture
Global governments and law enforcement agencies submitted approximately 44% more information requests (combined emergency and routine requests) compared to the [previous reporting period](#). Notably, the aggregate number of accounts specified in these requests increased by nearly 26%. The total volume of requests and specified accounts are respectively the largest we’ve seen to date. Twitter produced some or all of the

are respectively the largest we've seen to date. Twitter produced some or all of the requested information in response to 37% of these information requests.

Further analysis into these areas follow below. Additional information is available in [Twitter's legal request FAQs](#).

Country insights

Twitter has now received government information requests from 93 different countries since 2012, including [Tunisia](#), which appeared in this report for the first time.

Top requesters

The [United States](#)[®] has been the top overall requesting country since the first Twitter Transparency Report, where it accounted for 80% of all global requests in 2012.

Today, the United States remains the single largest source of government requests, but now only accounts for 27% of the global volume, and 39% of global accounts specified. The second highest volume of requests originate from [India](#), comprising 21% of global information requests, and nearly 25% of global accounts specified. Notably, [Japan](#) had previously been the second largest requester since [Transparency Report 9](#).

In comparison, requests from the next six top countries – [France](#) (16%), [Japan](#) (12%), [South Korea](#) (5%), [Germany](#) (4%) the [United Kingdom](#) (4%) and [Turkey](#) (3%) – together account for 44% of all global information requests, and 30% of all global accounts specified.

Worldwide

Top requesting countries (routine requests)

- 1. United States
- 2. India
- 3. France

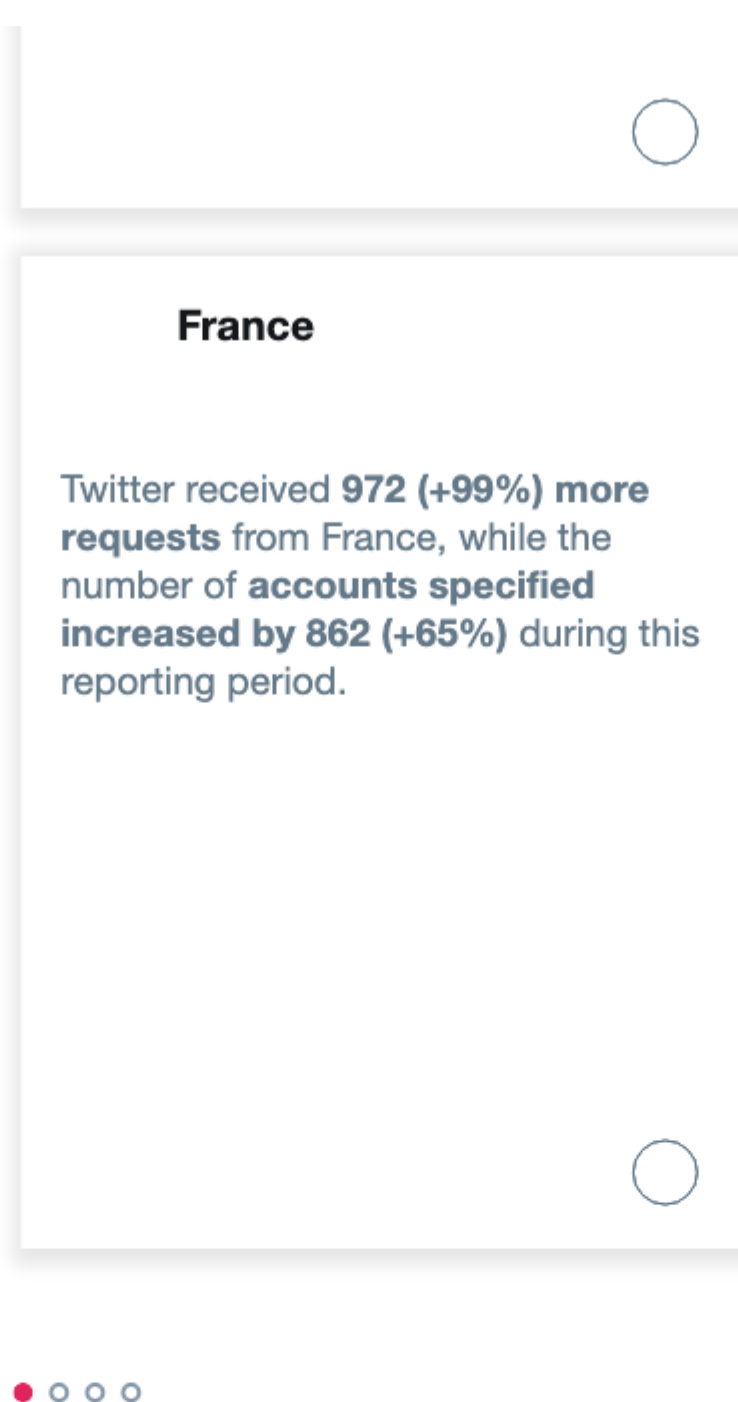
United States

Twitter received **785 (+44%) more requests** from the United States, while the number of **accounts specified increased by 602 (+7%)** during this reporting period.



India

Twitter received **1,705 (+258%) more requests** from India, while the number of **accounts specified increased by 3,223 (+120%)** during this reporting period. This stark increase was related to riots in Delhi and COVID-19 related requests.



Emergency requests

Twitter may disclose account information to law enforcement officials in response to a valid emergency request as described in our [Guidelines for Law Enforcement](#).^[9]

Emergency requests accounted for roughly one out of every five global information requests submitted to Twitter. Emergency requests increased by 20% during this reporting period, while the aggregate number of accounts specified in these requests increased by 24%.

[The United States](#) submitted the highest volume of global EDRs (39%), followed by [South Korea](#) (13%), and [Japan](#) (13%).

International cooperation

The CLOUD Act

As previously noted, the [Clarifying Lawful Overseas Use of Data Act](#) (“CLOUD Act”; enacted in March 2018) established a framework for the U.S. Government to enter into bilateral agreements with certain qualifying foreign governments. Once such a bilateral agreement goes into effect, U.S. providers, such as Twitter, may receive compulsory legal demands directly from foreign government entities to disclose account information and content of communications, as well as real-time surveillance orders for account information, which are akin to pen register/trap and trace and wiretap orders as described in our [U.S. report](#).

Twitter continues to closely monitor developments related to cross-border legal requests for user data. We will update our policies as necessitated by changes in the legal landscape, in keeping with [our commitment](#) to defending and respecting the user’s voice and transparency.

Periscope

The majority of government requests seek Twitter account information, but we occasionally receive requests for information about accounts on Twitter’s [Periscope](#) live streaming service.

We received 38 information requests that specified 55 Periscope accounts during this reporting period. Of these information requests, 25 were Periscope-only requests specifying 33 accounts. Twitter disclosed some information in response to 20% of these Periscope-related information requests.^[10]

Request considerations

Narrowing requests

Where appropriate, Twitter will push back on requests for account information which are incomplete or improper, such as requests that are facially invalid or overbroad in scope. Depending on the circumstances, we may produce some data after working to narrow a request, or we may not disclose any data. We also may not have any responsive records to produce.^[11]

Twitter narrowed or did not disclose information in response to 63% of global

government information requests, an increase of 3% during this reporting period.

User notice

We notify specified account holders of requests for their account information unless we are prohibited or the request falls into one of the exceptions to our user notice policy.^[6]

We were able to notify account holders in response to 250 global information requests, an increase of 28% during this reporting period.

04. Preservation Requests

Twitter accepts government requests to preserve account information as outlined in our [Guidelines for Law Enforcement](#).

Government entities issue preservation requests that direct service providers like Twitter to temporarily save information pertaining to an investigation. These requests give law enforcement, prosecutors, etc. the time needed to get the valid legal process, such as a search warrant, required to lawfully obtain that saved information. Upon receipt of a valid preservation request, we will temporarily preserve, but not disclose, a snapshot of the relevant account information for 90 days pending issuance and service of valid legal process.^[7]

Global government preservation requests increased by 75%, while accounts specified increased by 180% during this reporting period. The [United States](#) (58%) and [India](#) (18%) together accounted for 76% of all global preservation requests.

Non-Government

Published on January 11, 2021

- 01. Latest Data
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01. Latest Data: Non-Government

Map

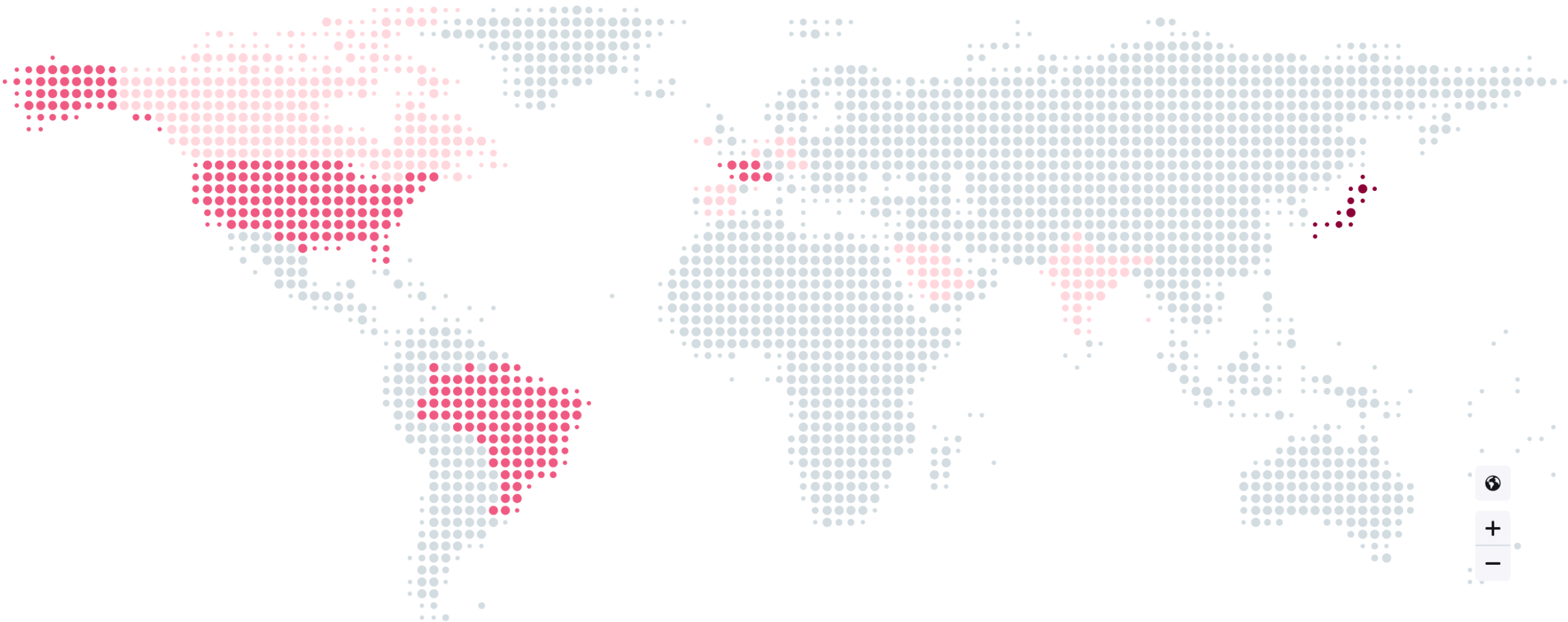
Bars

Table



Worldwide (14 countries) ▾

0 1 - 6 7 - 73 74 - 134



Information requests - January - June 2020

Information requests

308

Compliance rate

38.3%

Accounts specified

789

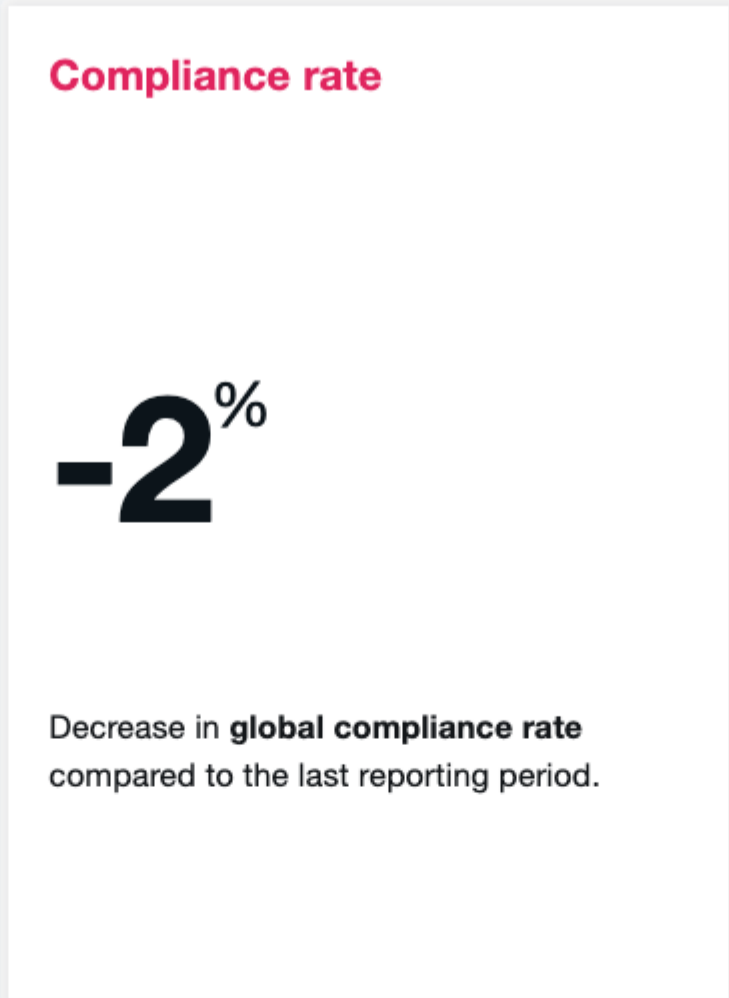
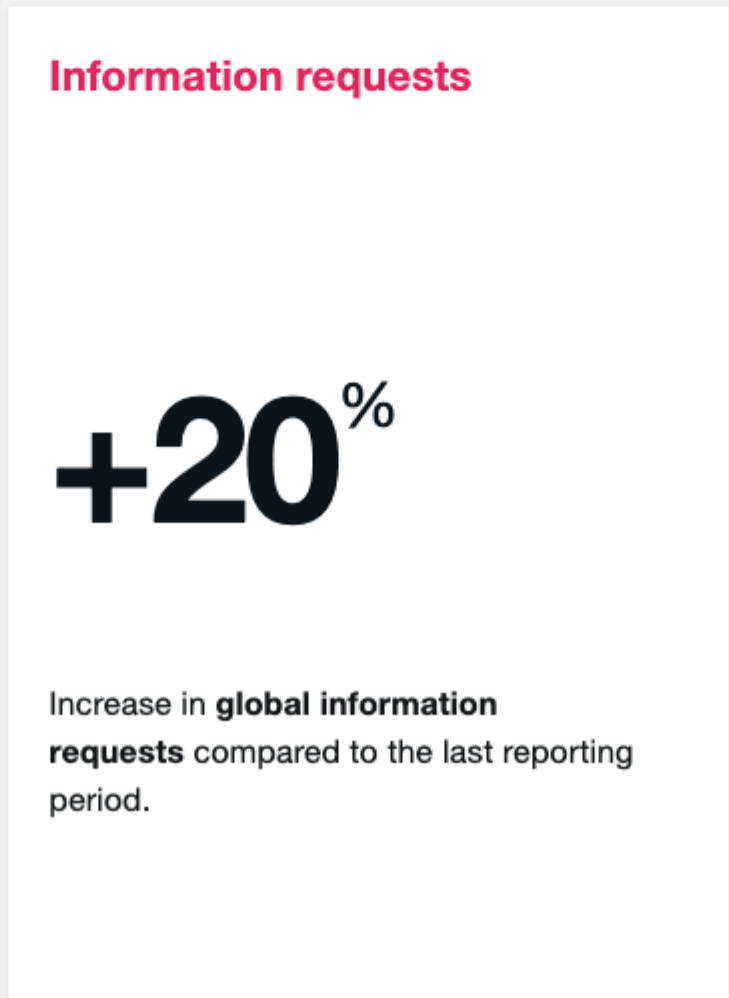
User notice

47.7%

02. Overview

Twitter receives requests for account information from non-governmental parties around the world. These typically include civil actions, such as a divorce proceeding, as well as requests made by criminal defendants, where they are typically seeking account information in support of their legal defense.[®]

More information about non-government information requests can be found in our Help Center pages, including [Accessing Your Twitter Data](#) and [Legal Request FAQ](#).



User notice

+9%

Increase in **global user notice** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Twitter received 20% more non-government information requests during this reporting period. Notably, the number of accounts specified in these requests increased by 8%, while the compliance rate decreased to 38%.^[9]

Defending free expression

Anonymous and pseudonymous speech is important to Twitter and is central to our commitment to [defend and protect the voices of our users](#). Twitter often receives non-government information requests to disclose account information of anonymous or pseudonymous Twitter users (i.e., requests to “unmask” the identity of the user). Twitter frequently objects to such requests, particularly in the U.S.

Twitter objected to 14 U.S. civil requests for account information that sought to unmask the identities of anonymous speakers on first amendment grounds during this reporting period. We ended up litigating three of those requests. Twitter prevailed in one case, and two are still pending. No information was produced in response to the other 11 requests.

Footnotes

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

Government

1. Percentages rounded to the nearest whole number.

2. U.S. numbers in the table above include requests received from [U.S. Legal Attachés](#) stationed in various [international locations](#), who may have submitted requests under U.S. law in part to assist their local counterparts. This type of cross-border cooperation is most likely to happen in emergency circumstances (such as those following terror attacks).

3. We evaluate such requests on a case-by-case basis to determine if there is information to support a good faith belief that there is an imminent threat involving danger of death or serious physical injury to a person. In these situations, if we have information relevant to averting or mitigating the threat, we may disclose that information to law enforcement.

However, we may not disclose data in response to emergency disclosure requests for a variety of reasons. For example:

- We may not disclose data if the request fails to identify a valid Twitter and/or Periscope account, or content on those platforms.
- We may push back to narrow requests that are overbroad, and only disclose the information relevant to averting or mitigating the specified threat.

4. Requests for Periscope account information are also reflected in the figures regarding aggregate requests.

5. We may not comply with requests for a variety of reasons. For example:

- We may not comply with requests that fail to identify a Twitter and/or Periscope account or other content on those platforms.
- We may seek to narrow requests that are overly broad.
- Account holders may have challenged the requests after we’ve notified them.
- We may have sought additional context from the requester and did not receive a response.
- In some cases, Twitter may challenge the request formally through litigation or informally through discussion directly with government entities.

6. Details about Twitter’s user notice policy are available in our [Guidelines for Law Enforcement](#) and our [Legal Request FAQ](#), which provides account holders with more information about what happens when we receive a request for their account information or removal of their content.

Exceptions to user notice may include exigent or counterproductive circumstances, such as emergencies regarding imminent threat to life, child sexual exploitation, or terrorism.

7. We also regularly receive preservation extension requests (not reflected in the data above) from law enforcement or government requesters. If the requester submits a lawful and timely extension request, we will make reasonable attempts to continue to preserve the same snapshot of account information for an additional 90 days pending issuance and service of valid legal process.

We may process multiple extension requests if requesters represent that they are engaged in a process for international cooperation (i.e. MLAT or letters rogatory), given these processes can take several months.

Non-Government

8. This data does not include an account holder’s [request for their own account information](#).

9. We may not comply with non-government requests for a variety of reasons. For example:

- We may not comply with requests that fail to identify a Twitter and/or Periscope account or other content on those platforms.

on those platforms.

- We may reject requests that are directed to incorrect corporate entities.
- We may seek to narrow requests that are overly broad.
- Users may have challenged the requests after we've notified them.
- In other cases, Twitter may challenge the request formally through litigation or informally through discussion directly with non-government parties (e.g., directing non-government parties to get the information they seek directly from the other parties through discovery).

Removal Requests

About this report

Insights into legal demands to remove content from Twitter and Periscope, and other requests to remove content based on local law(s) from around the world.

Legal Demands

Published on January 11, 2021

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02. Overview
03. Analysis
04. Withheld Content

05. Un-withheld Content
06. TOS Violations
07. No Action

01. Latest Data: Legal Demands

Map

Bars

Table



Worldwide (53 countries) ▾

0 1 - 18 19 - 2772 2773 - 19924



Legal demands - January - June 2020

Legal demands

42.2K

Compliance rate

31.2%

Accounts specified

85.4K

Accounts withheld

82

Tweets withheld

3.1K

Accounts TOS

25.5K

02. Overview

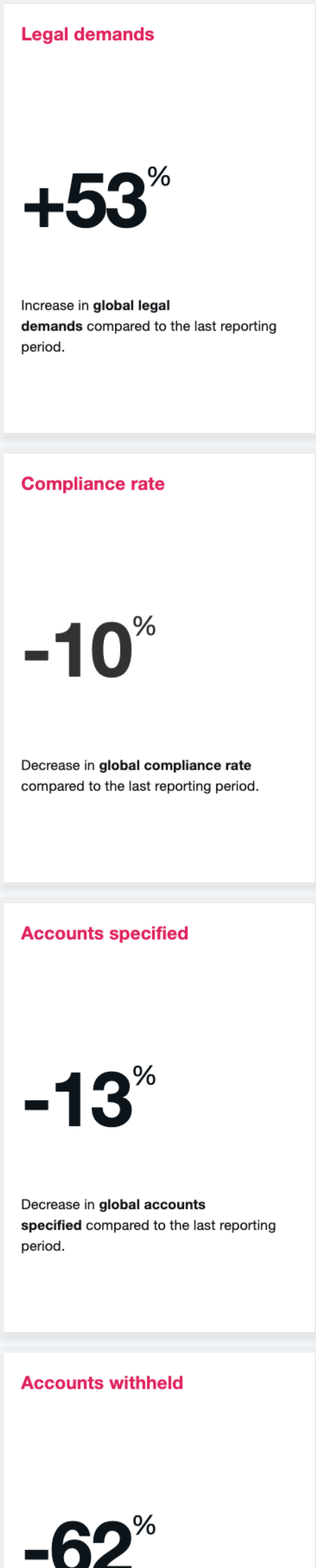
This section covers the latest data about third-party legal demands that compel Twitter

to remove content under our [Country Withheld Content](#) (“CWC”) policy.”

There are also details about the latest trends in global volumes of requests, [accounts specified](#), and the total [compliance rate](#). The total compliance rate is a simplified metric that combines all of Twitter’s removal actions—[accounts withheld](#), [Tweets withheld](#), and [accounts TOS](#).

Twitter’s operations were affected due to the unprecedented [COVID-19](#) pandemic.

Some notable changes since the last report:



Decrease in **global accounts withheld** compared to the last reporting period.

Tweets withheld

-13%

Decrease in **global Tweets withheld** compared to the last reporting period.

Accounts TOS

+1%

Increase in **global accounts TOS** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Big picture

Twitter received 42,220 legal demands to remove content specifying 85,375 accounts. This is the largest number of requests that we've received since releasing our first transparency report in 2012. We withheld or otherwise removed some or all of the reported content in response to 31% of these global legal demands.

Country insights

This record number of legal demands originated from 53 different countries, including [Hungary](#), [Jamaica](#), and [Taiwan](#), which appear in this report for the first time.

Top requesters

96% of the total global volume of legal demands originated from only five countries (in decreasing order): [Japan](#), [Russia](#), [South Korea](#), [Turkey](#), and [India](#).

Legal demands from [Japan](#) increased by 59% this reporting period, accounting for 47% of global requests received. The 19,924 requests from Japan were primarily related to laws regarding narcotics and psychotropics, obscenity, or money lending. The next highest volume of legal demands came from [Russia](#), comprising 21% of global legal demands. 54% of those requests pertained to Russian laws prohibiting the promotion of suicide. [South Korea](#) accounted for 11% of global legal demands, its largest volume of requests to date. [Turkey](#), which has historically been the highest requester until the previous reporting period, ranked fourth this period (10% of global legal demands) and

dropped out of the top 3 requesters for the first time. [India](#) submitted the fifth largest number of requests (7% of global legal demands) to remove content. Notably, the number of accounts specified by requests from India increased by 69% this reporting period.

Japan

The volume of **legal demands from Japan increased by 59%** this period, while the number of **accounts specified increased by 55%**. These requests account for **47% of all legal demands** received worldwide.



Russia

Russian **legal demands increased by 47%** this reporting period, while the number of **accounts specified increased by 48%**.



South Korea

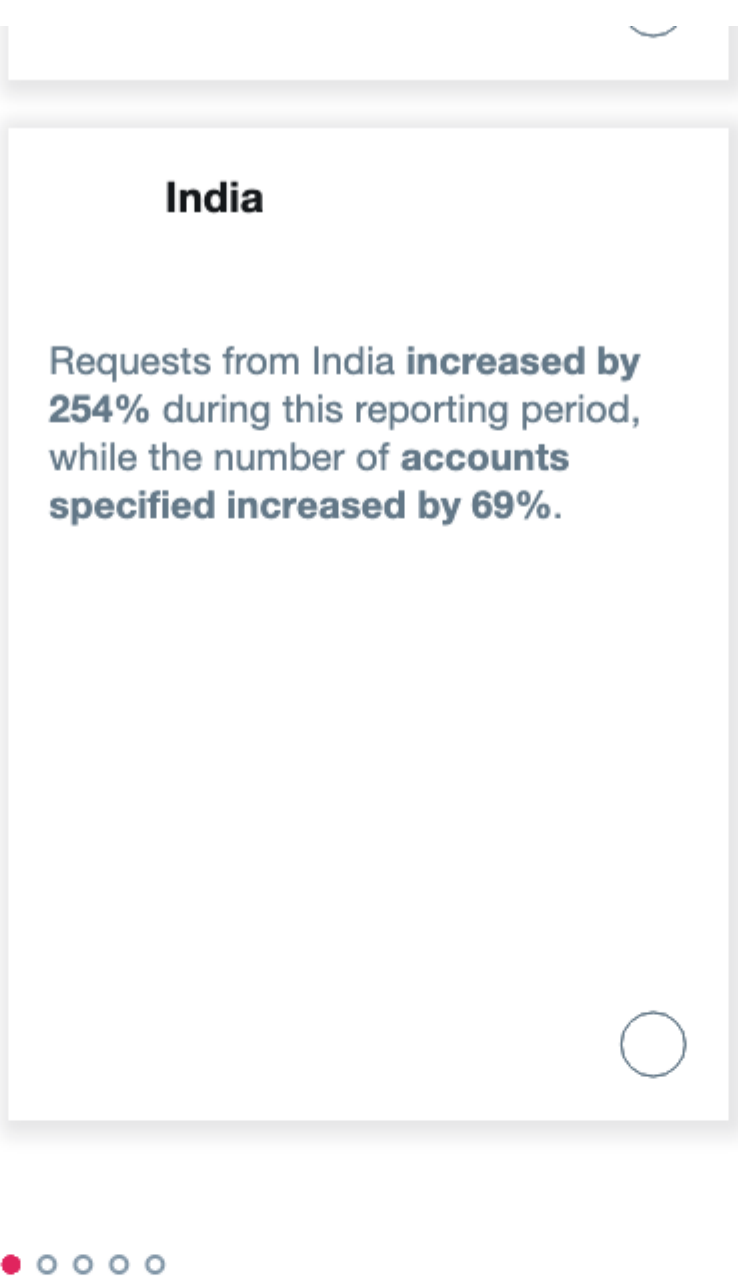
Requests from South Korea **increased by 226%** during this reporting period, while the number of **accounts specified increased by 111%**.



Turkey

Requests from Turkey **decreased by 17%** during this reporting period, while the number of **accounts specified decreased by 28%**.





Verified journalists and news outlets

158 accounts of verified journalists and news outlets from around the world were subject to 333 legal demands, a 22% decrease in the number of accounts since the previous reporting period. The majority of these legal demands originated from [India](#) (149) and [Turkey](#) (142).

In total, two Tweets withheld in [India](#) under Section 69A of the Information Technology Act, 2000, and one Tweet was withheld in [Brazil](#) under paragraph X of Article 5 of the 1988 Federal Constitution. We took no action on the remainder of the reported verified journalists and news outlets accounts due to them falling under our [protected speech](#) policies.

Twitter filed legal objections for court orders from [Turkey](#) that involved verified journalists or news outlets, arguing that those decisions are contrary to Turkish protections of freedom of the press. None of those objections were successful during this reporting period.

Periscope

We received three requests to remove content from [Periscope](#), referencing three accounts in total. Two of these requests originated from the United States, while the other was from Turkey. One account was suspended under Twitter’s policy [prohibiting child sexual exploitation](#), another was taken down under the [illegal or certain regulated goods or services policy](#), and the third account was removed under our policy against posting [violent threats](#).

04. Withheld Content

This data includes all legal demands where we employed our [Country Withheld Content](#) ("CWC") tool during this period, resulting in either Tweets or accounts being withheld. Where permitted, Twitter provided notice to identified account holders and published copies of the underlying legal demands that resulted in withheld content to [Lumen](#) for public review.^(a)

We have now used CWC in 18 countries in response to legal demands: [Argentina](#), [Australia](#), [Brazil](#), [Canada](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), [India](#), [Ireland](#), [Israel](#), [Japan](#), [Netherlands](#), [New Zealand](#), [Russia](#), [Singapore](#), [South Korea](#), [Spain](#), [Turkey](#), and the [United Kingdom](#). During this reporting period, we withheld content at the account or Tweet level in nine of those 18 countries.

Examples (Lumen links to corresponding legal demands available below^(b)):



Argentinian federal civil court reporting 202 Tweets for defamation related to a case that has been ongoing since 2018. **135 Tweets were withheld** in Argentina in response to this court order.



Brazil

We received an interim preliminary injunction to remove the content, which according to the plaintiff, would disclose a fake and offensive video about him. **Twitter withheld two Tweets** in response to the court order.



India

We received an interim injunction for the removal of 62 allegedly defamatory Tweets. **All 62 Tweets were withheld** in India in response to this court order.



Japan

We received a court order seeking the removal of content where the claimant asserted that her name, photo, and other private information were being used without her consent. Twitter **withheld a total of 76 Tweets** in response to the court order.



Russia

We received a a court order from Roskomnadzor reporting a Tweet that included a Nazi symbol, which is prohibited for distribution within the Russia. **Twitter withheld the Tweet** in Russia based on this court order.



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05. Un-withheld Content

Content is typically un-withheld (i.e., restored to Twitter) after a successful appeal of an original court order or because a legal procedure expired. Un-withheld content may pertain to accounts or Tweets that were withheld prior to this current reporting period.

We un-withheld content in India during this reporting period.

Examples (Lumen links to corresponding legal demands available below⁽ⁿ⁾):

India

Twitter received eight legal demands from the Election Commission of India (ECI) related to elections held in February 2020. Twitter withheld a total of eight Tweets in India in response to those requests: two tweets were withheld indefinitely for potential incitement of violence, and six Tweets were withheld temporarily during the legally mandated silent period. The latter six Tweets were later un-withheld after the election period ended.

●

06. TOS Violations

This section includes instances where, in response to legal demands identifying the specified accounts or Tweets, content was removed from Twitter after determining it violated Twitter’s TOS.⁽ⁿ⁾ We review all reported content for violations of Twitter’s TOS before assessing it further independent of any underlying claims.

We take an objective approach to reviewing legal demands for possible violations of Twitter’s TOS. The fact that the reporters in these cases may be involved in litigation, or may be government / law enforcement officials, had no bearing on whether any action was taken under Twitter’s TOS. This approach is consistent with our commitment to [free expression](#).

Examples:


Jamaica

Twitter received its first legal demand from Jamaican law enforcement. **The account at issue was actioned** under Twitter’s sensitive media policy.

Majority no action


This section includes instances where, in response to a legal demand, no action was taken on the majority of the reported content, as most accounts / Tweets were determined not to violate Twitter's TOS or to merit withholding under CWC. Generally, we do not take action on newsworthy content or political speech protected under [UN-recognized principles](#) of free expression consistent with [Twitter values](#).


Examples:



Indonesia


Twitter received a legal demand for 6,633 accounts from Indonesia’s Ministry of Communication and Information Technology for alleged violations of their Electronic Information and Transaction law, Number 11 Year 2008. **More than 90% of the reported content was determined not to violate Twitter’s TOS.**






Thailand


Twitter received two court orders from Thailand’s Ministry of Digital Economy and Society seeking the removal of 59 Tweets due to alleged violation of Thailand’s Computer-Related Crimes Act (CCA). **No action was taken on the reported Tweets** either because they contained political speech or because the users had already deleted them.





South Korea

Twitter received 327 legal demands from multiple South Korean election agencies seeking the removal of content for violating various sections of South Korea’s Elections Act and Public Elections Act. **No action was taken on most of the reported content** due to their newsworthiness or political nature. Few actions were taken on reported content that violated our civic integrity, safety and platform manipulation policies.



Local Law(s)

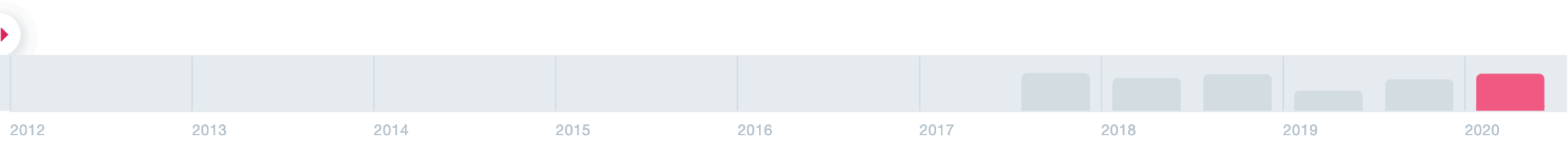
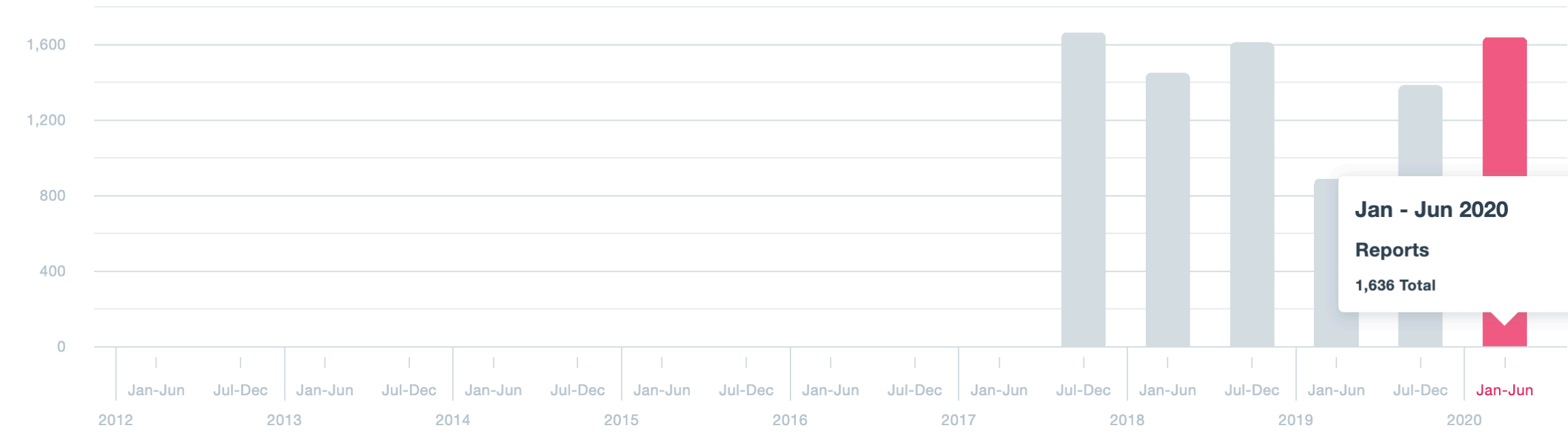
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04. German Network Enforcement Act

01. Latest Data: Local Law(s)

BarsTable



Reports - January - June 2020

Reports

1.6K

Compliance rate

19.2%

Accounts specified

1.1K

Accounts withheld

Tweets withheld

31

Accounts TOS

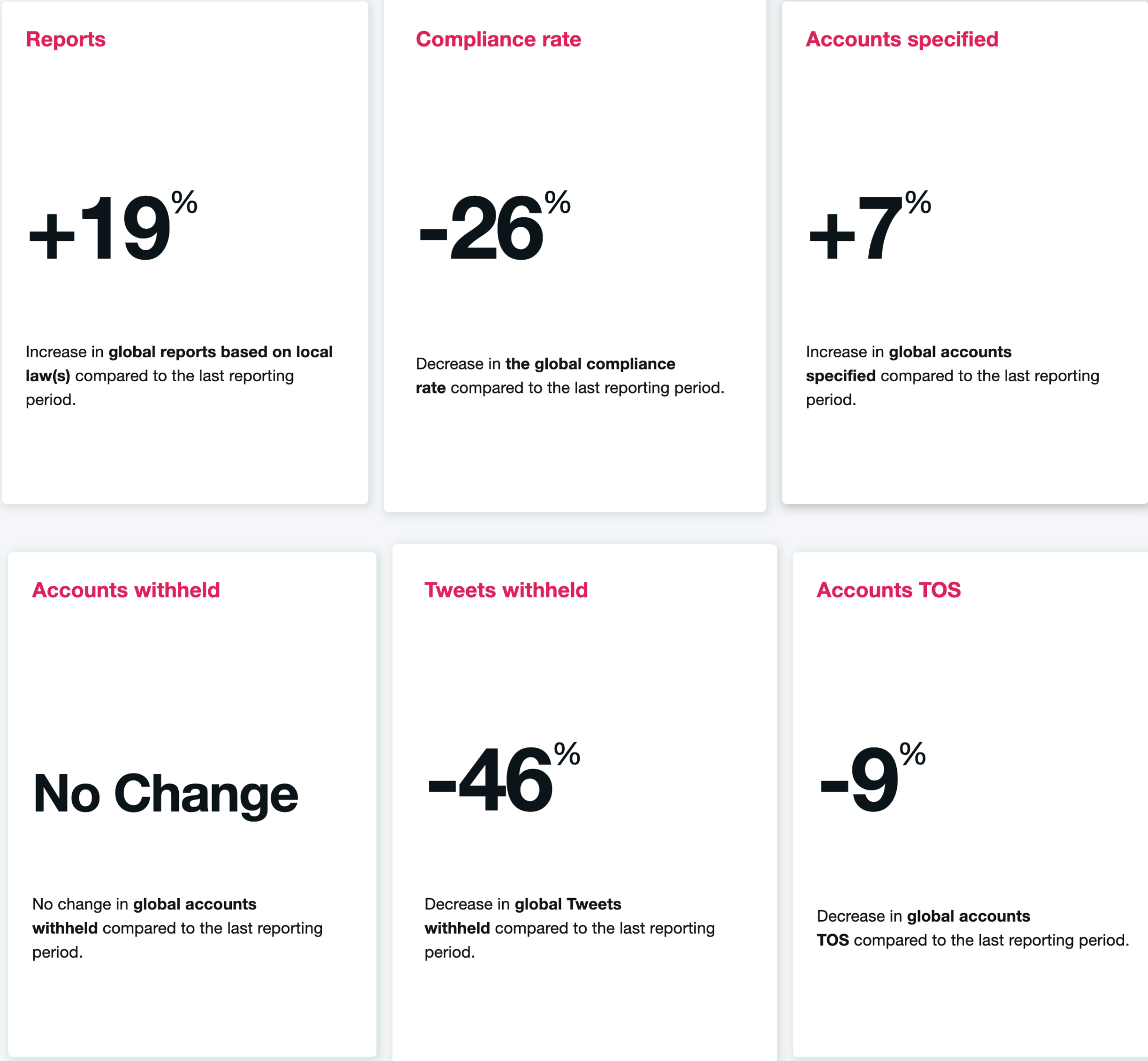
289

02. Overview

This section includes reports based on local law(s) from trusted reporters and non-governmental organizations (“NGOs”) identified by the European Commission.

There are also details about the latest trends in global volumes of requests, accounts specified, total compliance rate, accounts withheld, Tweets withheld, and accounts TOS.

Some notable changes since the last report:



03. Analysis



All reported content is first reviewed for potential violations of [Twitter's TOS](#). Any content that is found to be violating is removed from the platform. Content that does not violate Twitter's TOS is then reviewed for potential withholding based on the local law(s) of the reporting jurisdiction.

Trusted reporters and NGO's

Broadly speaking, the organizations that submitted reports to us work on protecting and furthering human rights, and preventing issues such as racism, xenophobia, or homophobia. Twitter has formed partnerships with trusted reporters from [Belgium](#), [France](#), [Germany](#), and the [Netherlands](#) to date. In addition, the European Commission designated a number of other European NGOs to assist in evaluating industry implementation of the [Code of Conduct on countering illegal online hate speech](#).

Twitter received 19% more reports based on local law(s) from trusted reporters and NGOs, impacting approximately 7% more accounts during this reporting period.

Examples (Lumen links to corresponding legal demands available below²³):

<div> France</div> <p>Twitter received a request from a French trusted reporter regarding content allegedly containing an insult of a racial nature (Article 33 section 3 L.1881) and defamation of a racial nature (Article 32 section 2 L.1881). The reported Tweet was found to contain insults against a protected category, blaming the entire protected category for the spread of the COVID-19. The reported content was withheld in France in accordance with local laws around hate speech and discrimination.</p> <div>→</div>	<div> Germany</div> <p>Twitter received a report from a German trusted reporter concerning a Tweet containing Nazi symbols used in a political cartoon. The content was reported under s.86a of the Network Enforcement Act, which prohibits the use and dissemination of symbols from unconstitutional organizations. The Tweet was subsequently withheld in Germany for breach of that section.</p> <div>→</div>
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04. German Network Enforcement Act

The Network Enforcement Act (Netzwerkdurchsetzungsgesetz, aka NEA) is a German law that came into effect on January 1, 2018. We're including information about it in this section of the transparency report as any content withheld under this law uses the same [local law messaging](#) as available in other countries.

Twitter is required to publish a biannual report in German regarding our handling of complaints submitted from users or complaints bodies pursuant to the law. The most recent [report](#) was published in July 2020, covering the reporting period of January 1 to June 30, 2020, and is available to download from the [Germany country report](#).

Footnotes

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

Each request may identify multiple items to be removed. For example, a single request may ask us to remove individual Tweets, an entire account, or both.

We may not comply with every request or all aspects of a request for a variety of reasons. For example, we do not comply with requests that fail to identify content on Twitter.

Legal Demands

1. This section does **not** include reports submitted by government officials to review content solely under Twitter's TOS. More information about Twitter Rules enforcement is available [here](#).

2. Court orders are often accompanied by a non-disclosure order that prevents Twitter for notifying a specified account holder.

Where permitted, Twitter has published copies of removal requests to [Lumen](#), at times redacted, that have resulted in content being withheld. We try to redact as little information as possible. Redacted information usually consists of personally identifiable information, but may also include defamatory statements or information that we are prohibited from publishing.
3. Withheld Content corresponding legal demands Lumen links:

 - [Argentina](#)
 - [Australia](#)
 - [India](#)
 - [Japan](#)
 - [Singapore](#)
 - [Turkey](#)

4. Un-withheld Content corresponding legal demands Lumen links:

 - [India](#)

5. "Twitter's TOS" is made up of Twitter's [Terms of Service](#) and the [Twitter Rules](#). More information about Twitter Rules enforcement is available [here](#).

Local Law(s)

6. Trusted reporters
- [France](#)
 - [Germany](#)

Copyright Notices

About this report

Insights into Digital Millennium Copyright Act (“DMCA”) takedown notices and counter-notices for content on Twitter and Periscope.

DMCA Takedown Notices

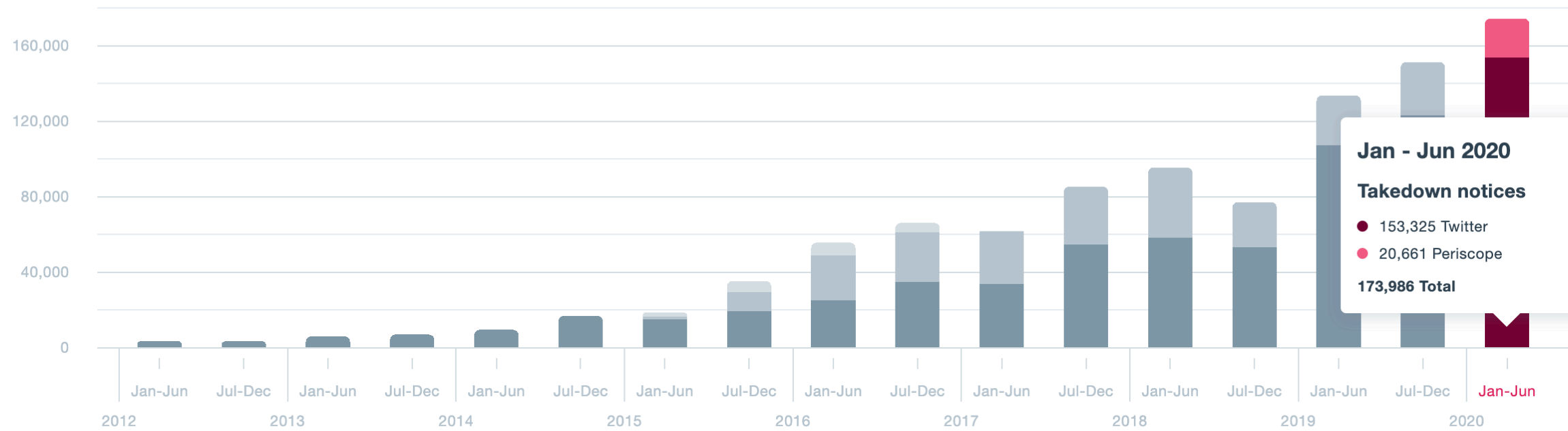
Published on January 11, 2021

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04. Top Copyright Reporters

01. Latest Data: DMCA Takedown Notices

Grouped by Biannual Monthly

BarsTable



Takedown notices - January - June 2020

Takedown notices

174.0K

Compliance rate

57%

Accounts affected

1.2M

Media withheld

1.6M

Tweets withheld

1.1M

02. Overview

This section covers the latest data about Digital Millennium Copyright Act (“DMCA”) takedown notices to remove content on Periscope and Twitter.

Twitter’s operations were affected due to the unprecedented [COVID-19](#) pandemic.

There are also details about the latest trends in global volumes of requests

There are also details about the latest trends in global volumes of requests, corresponding compliance rate, accounts affected, media withheld, and Tweets withheld, as well as insights into our related policies.

Takedown notices

+15%

Increase in **global takedown notices** compared to the last reporting period.

Compliance rate

+4%

Increase in **global compliance rate** compared to the last reporting period.

Accounts affected

+87%

Increase in **global accounts affected** compared to the last reporting period.

Media withheld

+94%

Increase in **global media withheld** compared to the last reporting period.

Tweets withheld

+737%

Increase in **global Tweets withheld** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Big picture

This report includes data on DMCA takedown notices submitted through our [web form](#) or otherwise sent to Twitter, such as via fax or mail. For more information, please see our [Copyright Policy](#).

We received 15% more DMCA takedown notices affecting 87% more accounts during this reporting period. There was a substantial increase in the number of Tweets (vs Tweet media) withheld in this period due to limitations in human review capabilities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We provide affected account holders with a copy of the related DMCA takedown notice when their media or Tweets are withheld. The notification includes instructions on how to file a counter-notice (in case they believed the content was removed in error) and also how to seek a retraction from the original reporter.

No action

We do not withhold content in response to DMCA takedown notices that are incomplete, do not concern copyright issues, or that we determine to be fraudulent. We carefully review each notice, and follow up with the reporter as appropriate. In addition, there may be certain uses of copyrighted material that do not require the copyright owner's permission, such as political speech, content that is potentially newsworthy, or cases of apparent [fair use](#). This type of speech is protected under UN-recognized principles of free expression and may not violate Twitter's [Copyright Policy](#).

The following are examples of copyright takedown notices we determined were invalid due to misrepresentations made by the reporter or because the requests were overreaching.

Recent examples:

Ecuador

We received **1056 DMCA takedown notices** from the Legal office of the Presidency of Ecuador reporting various Ecuadorian Twitter news accounts and individuals for COVID-19 commentary. **No action was taken on 82% of these notices** as the content did not violate Twitter's policies.



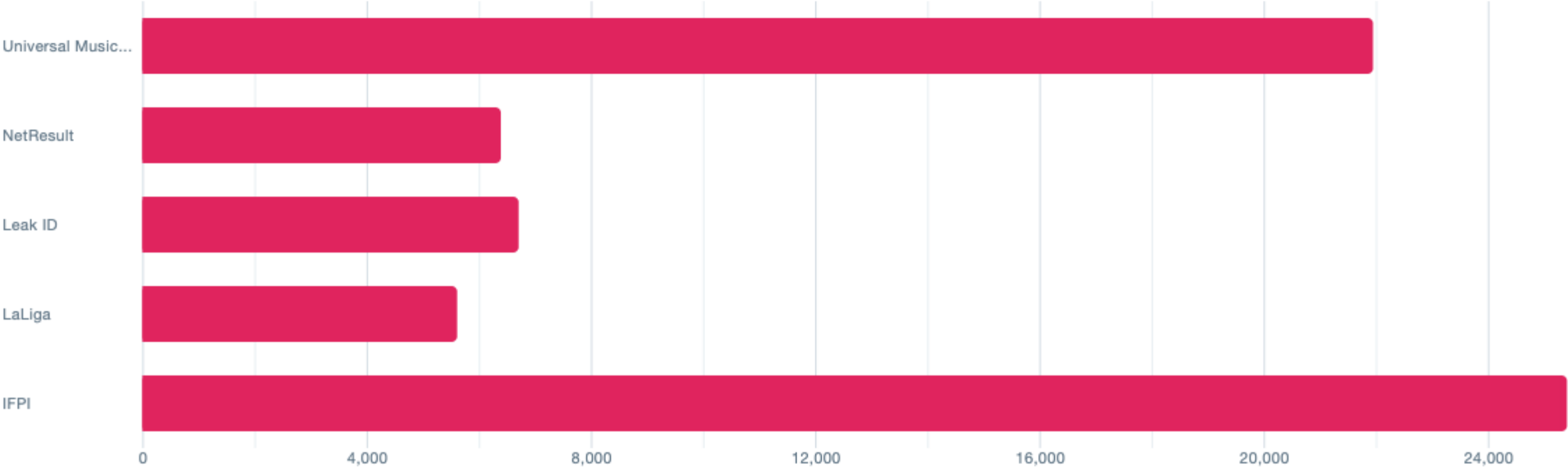
Kuwait

We took no action on 52 DMCA takedown requests filed by a prominent Kuwaiti blogger. The requests targeted accounts using the blogger's images for criticism and commentary. The content did not violate Twitter's policies.



04. Top Copyright Reporters

BarsTable



Takedown notices - January - June 2020

Takedown notices

66.1K

% of all takedown notices

42.8%

Materials withheld

1.4M

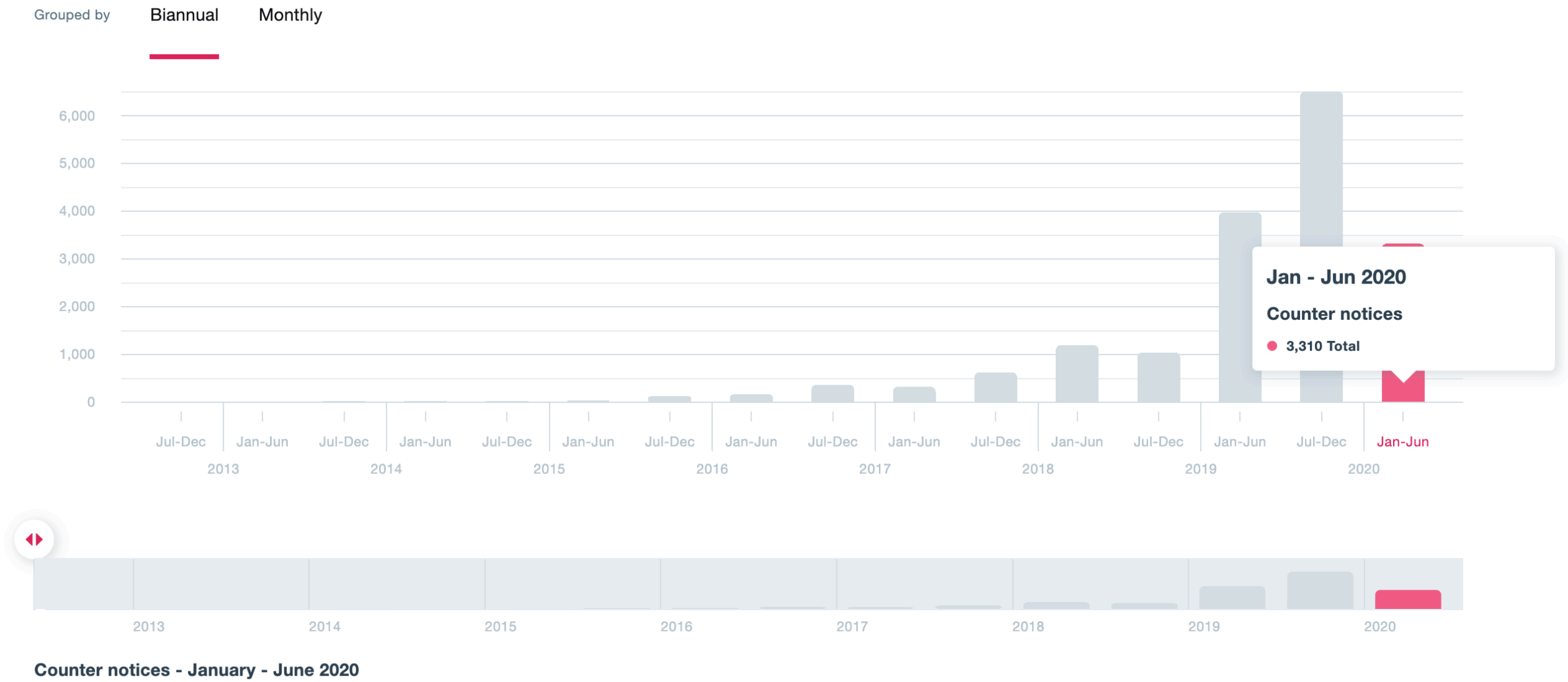
We receive copyright takedown notices from copyright owners or their authorized representatives. For this reporting period, the entities who have submitted the most takedown requests over the past six months include: IFPI, LaLiga, LeakID, NetResult and Universal Music Group. Takedown notices from IFPI and Universal Music Group received the largest number of compliant counter notices, resulting in the content being restored to our services.

You can see these takedown notices, along with all the other actionable copyright notices we process, at [Lumen](#).

DMCA
Counter
Notices

01. Latest Data
02. Overview
03. Analysis

01. Latest Data: DMCA Counter Notices



Counter notices3.3K

Restoration rate100%

Media restored4.4K

Tweets restored747

02. Overview

This section covers the latest data about DMCA counter notices to restore content on Periscope and Twitter.

There are also details about the latest trends in global volumes of requests, restoration rate, media affected, and Tweets affected.

Counter notices

-49%

Decrease in **global counter notices processed** compared to the last reporting period.

Restoration rate

No change

No change in **global restoration rate** compared to the last reporting period.

rate compared to the last reporting period.

Media restored

-19%

Decrease in **global media restored** compared to the last reporting period.

Tweets restored

-34%

Decrease in **global Tweets restored** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Big picture
The DMCA provides statutory instructions on how an affected party can formally appeal a copyright removal by submitting a valid counter notice.

Footnotes

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

Trademark Notices

About this report

Insights into reports and outcomes of alleged trademark policy violations on Twitter and Periscope.

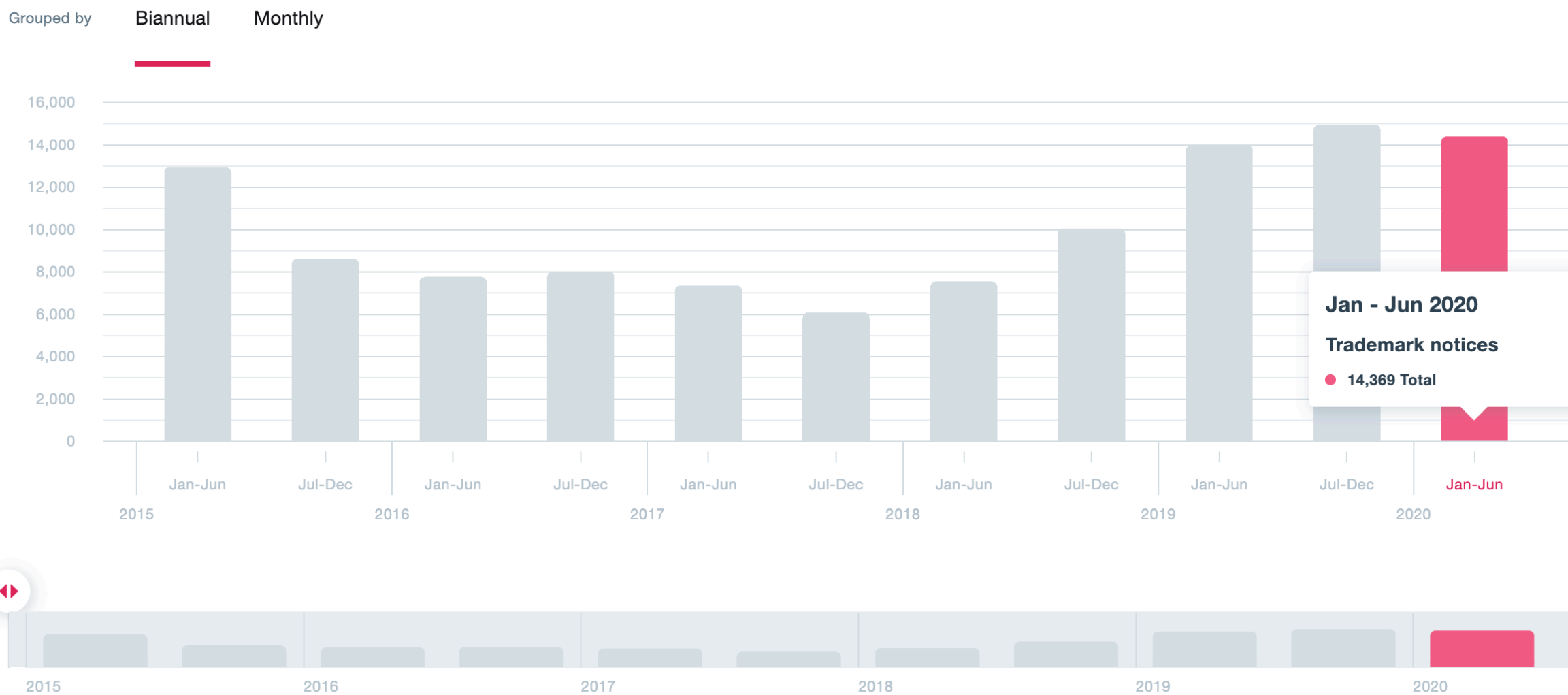
Trademark Notices

Published on January 11, 2021

- 01. Latest Data
- 02. Overview
- 03. Analysis

01. Latest Data: Trademark Notices

BarsTable



Trademark notices - January - June 2020

Trademark notices

14.4K

Notices actioned

556

Compliance rate

3.9%

02. Overview

This section covers the latest volume of trademark notices, accounts affected, and the corresponding compliance rates.

Twitter responds to reports of alleged [trademark policy](#) violations when we receive a complaint from the trademark owner or their authorized representative.

Some notable changes since the last report:

Trademark notices

-4%

Decrease in **global trademark notices** compared to the last reporting period.

Accounts affected

-30%

Decrease in **global accounts affected** compared to the last reporting period.

Compliance rate

-26%

Decrease in **global compliance rate** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Big picture

Twitter received 4% less trademark notices, affecting 30% less accounts since our [last report](#).^[1]

Key factors

We carefully review each report received under our [trademark policy](#), and follow up with the reporter as appropriate, such as in cases of apparent fair use. We may take action on reported content if it is using another's trademark in a manner that may mislead others about its business affiliation.^[2]

Footnotes

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

1. We may not take action on every request for a variety of reasons. For example, we may not take action on:

- Trademark notices filed by representatives who have not been authorized by the trademark owner.
- Trademark notices that fail to provide sufficient information for us to locate accounts or material on Twitter and Periscope.
- Misfiled, non-trademark complaints submitted through our Trademark web form.

2. Where an account is determined to violate Twitter's [trademark policy](#), each account holder is given the opportunity to appeal an account suspension.

Rules Enforcement

About this report

Insights into how and when we enforce our policies, and reports of potential violations.

Accounts Actioned

Published on January 11, 2021

- 01. Latest Data
- 02. Overview
- 03. Analysis

01. Latest Data: Accounts Actioned



Accounts actioned - January - June 2020

Accounts actioned

1.9M

Accounts suspended

925.7K

Content removed

1.9M

02. Overview

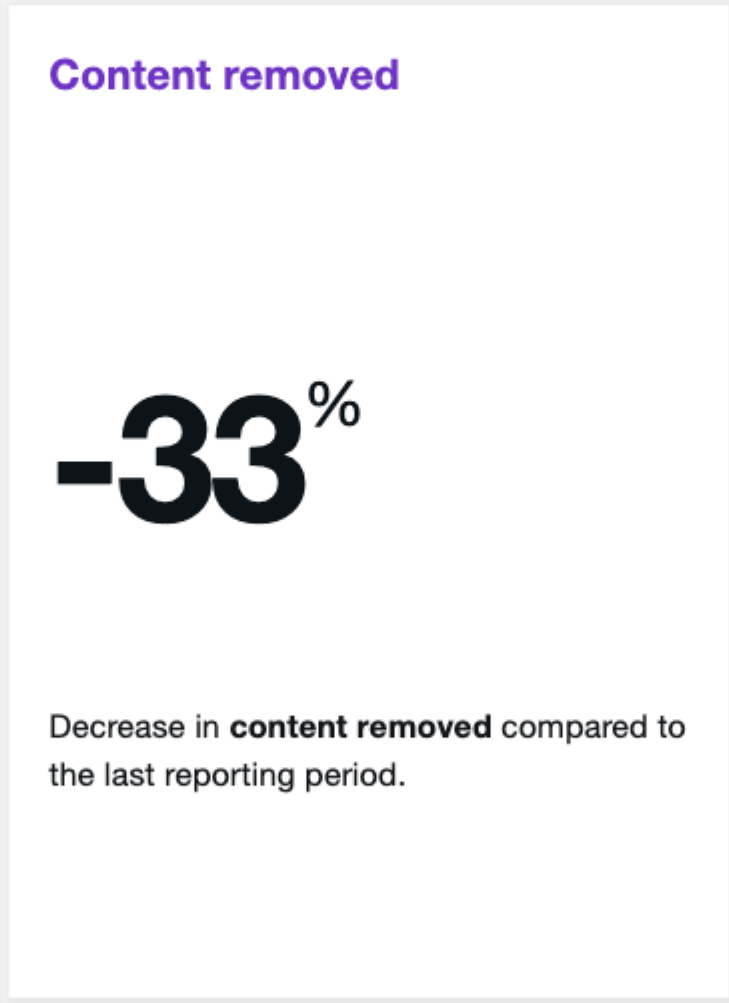
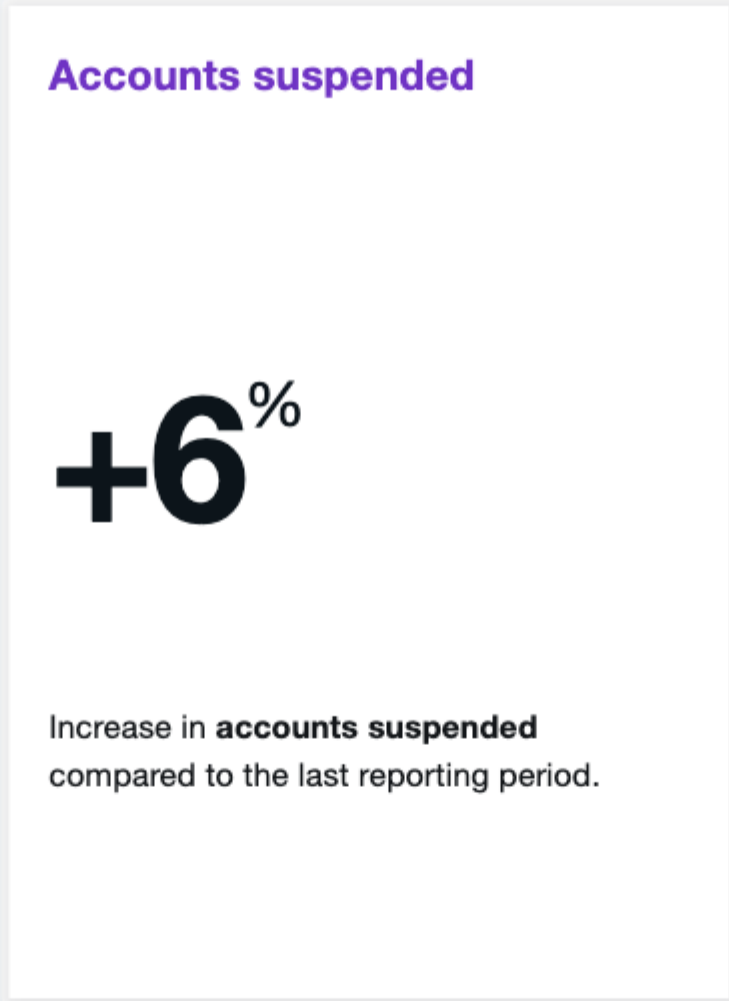
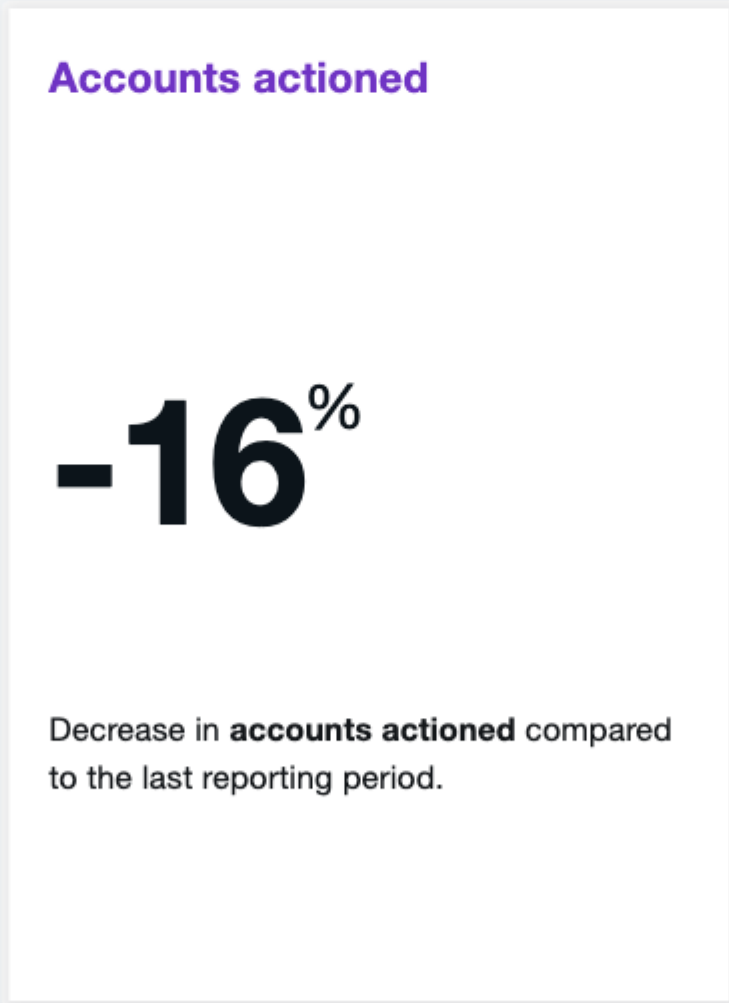
Twitter's purpose is to serve the public conversation. We welcome people to share their unique point of view on Twitter, but there are some behaviors that discourage others from expressing themselves or place people at risk of harm. The Twitter Rules exist to help ensure that all people can participate in the public conversation freely and safely, and include specific policies that explain the types of content and behavior that are prohibited.

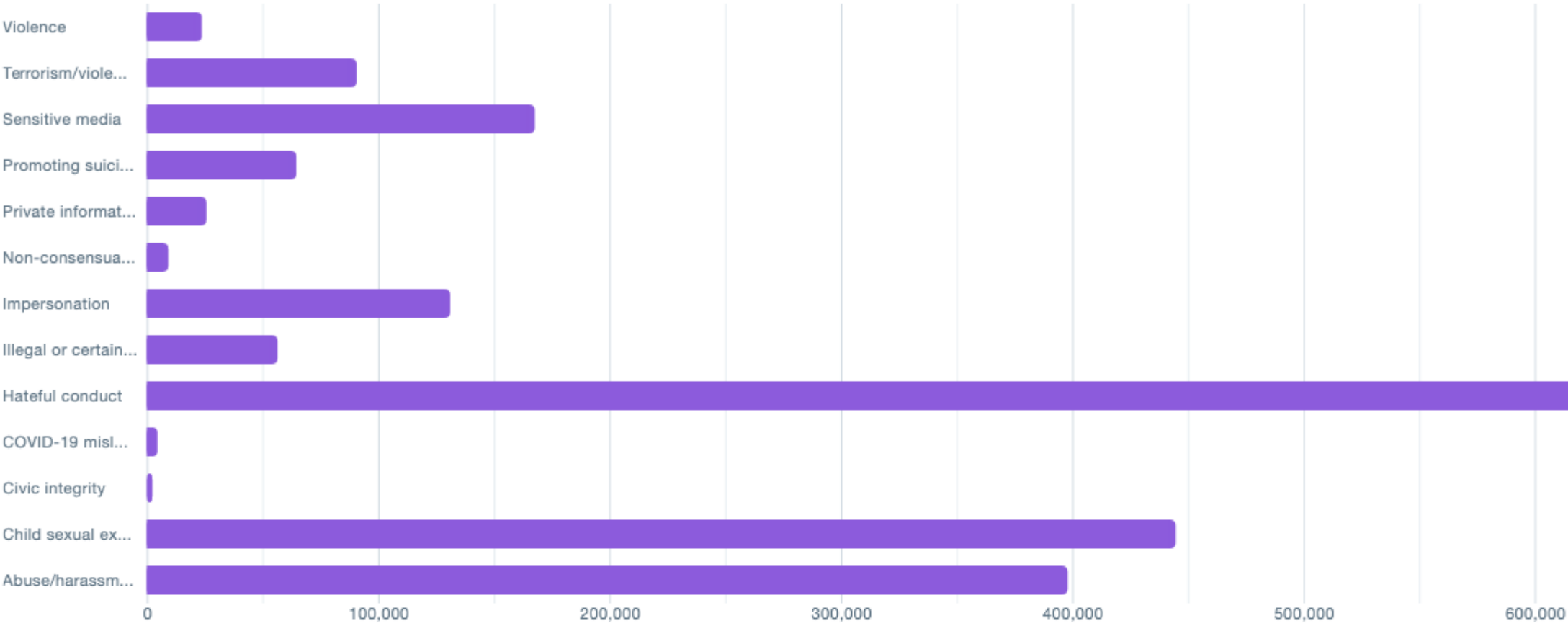
This section covers the latest data about instances where we've taken enforcement actions under the Twitter Rules to either require the removal of specific Tweets or to suspend accounts. These metrics are referred to as: accounts actioned, content removed. and accounts suspended. More details about our range of

enforcement options are available in our [Help Center](#).

Twitter’s operations were affected due to the unprecedented [COVID-19](#) pandemic. Starting in March, the majority of our global operations centers were temporarily closed due to lockdown orders and related health concerns, significantly reducing our human review capacity. We maintained dedicated resources focused on reviewing and taking enforcement action against content most likely to cause severe harm (for example, child sexual exploitation and terrorism) in addition to prioritizing reports where we were able to predict a high likelihood of a Rules violation. As a result of this prioritization, we saw significant slowdowns and backlogs in other areas, and have continued to evolve our approach.

Some notable changes since our last report:





Accounts actioned - January - June 2020



Big picture

We have a global team that manages enforcement of the Twitter Rules with 24/7 coverage in every supported language on Twitter. Our goal is to apply the Twitter Rules objectively and consistently. Enforcement actions are taken on content that is determined to violate the Twitter Rules.

We support the spirit of the [Santa Clara Principles on Transparency and Accountability in Content Moderation](#), and are committed to sharing more detailed information about how we enforce the Twitter Rules in future reports.

Safety

The "Safety" section of the Twitter Rules covers violence, terrorism/violent extremism, child sexual exploitation, abuse/harassment, hateful conduct, promoting suicide or self-harm, sensitive media (including graphic violence and adult content), and illegal or certain regulated goods or services. More information about each policy can be found in the [Twitter Rules](#).

Some notable changes since the last report:

Violence

There was a **48% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our violence policies during this reporting period.

Terrorism/violent extremism

There was a **5% increase** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our terrorism / violent extremism policy during this reporting period.

Child sexual exploitation

There was a **68% increase** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our child sexual exploitation policy during this reporting period.

Abuse/harassment

There was a **34% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our abuse policy during this reporting period.

Hateful conduct

There was a **35% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our hateful conduct policy during this reporting.

Promoting suicide or self-harm

There was a **49% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our suicide or self-harm policy during this reporting period.

Sensitive media, including graphic violence and adult content

There was a **15% increase** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our sensitive media policy during this reporting period.

Illegal or certain regulated goods or services

There was a **7% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our illegal or certain regulated goods or services policy during this reporting period.



Other select takeaways:

Terrorism/violent extremism

The Twitter Rules prohibit the [promotion of terrorism and violent extremism](#). Action was taken on 90,684 unique accounts under this policy during this reporting period. 94% of those accounts were proactively identified and actioned. Our current methods of surfacing potentially violating content for review include leveraging the shared industry hash database supported by the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT).

Child sexual exploitation

We do not tolerate child sexual exploitation on Twitter. When we are made aware of child sexual exploitation media, including links to images of or content promoting child exploitation, the material will be removed from the site without further notice and reported to The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children ("NCMEC"). People can report content that appears to violate the [Twitter Rules regarding Child Sexual Exploitation](#) via our [web form](#) or through in-app reporting.

438,809 unique accounts were suspended during this reporting period for violating Twitter policies prohibiting child sexual exploitation. 91% of those accounts were proactively identified by employing internal proprietary tools and industry hash sharing initiatives. These tools and initiatives support our efforts to surface potentially violative content for further review and, if appropriate, removal.

Sensitive media, including graphic violence and adult content

These policies saw the largest increase in the number of accounts actioned during this reporting period.

Hateful conduct

Hateful conduct expanded to include a new dehumanization policy on [March 5, 2020](#).

Privacy

The "Privacy" section of the Twitter Rules covers private information and non-consensual nudity. More information about each policy can be found in the [Twitter Rules](#).

Some notable changes since the last report:

Private information

There was a **14% increase** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our private information policy during this reporting period.

Non-consensual nudity

There was a **48% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our non-consensual nudity policy during this reporting period.



Other select takeaways:

Private information

This reporting period saw the largest increase in the number of accounts actioned under this policy. Internal tooling improvements allowed us to increase enforcement of this policy.

Authenticity

The "Authenticity" section of the Twitter Rules covers platform manipulation and spam, civic integrity, impersonation, synthetic and manipulated media, and copyright and trademark. We have standalone report pages for [platform manipulation and spam](#), [copyright](#), and [trademark](#), and cover civic integrity and impersonation enforcement actions in this section.⁽¹⁾ More information about each policy can be found in the [Twitter Rules](#).

Some notable changes since the last report:

Civic integrity

There was a **37% increase** in the number of accounts actioned for

violations of our civic integrity policy during this reporting period.

Impersonation

There was a **28% decrease** in the number of accounts actioned for violations of our impersonation policy during this reporting period.

COVID-19 misleading misinformation

We **suspended or required the removal of content from 4,658 accounts** for violations of our COVID-19 misleading information policy during this reporting period. This number does not include accounts where we applied a label or warning message.



● ○ ○

Other select takeaways:

Civic Integrity

This reporting period saw an increase in the number of accounts actioned under this policy. Enforcements increased in the lead up to the US elections in November 2020.

Accounts Reported

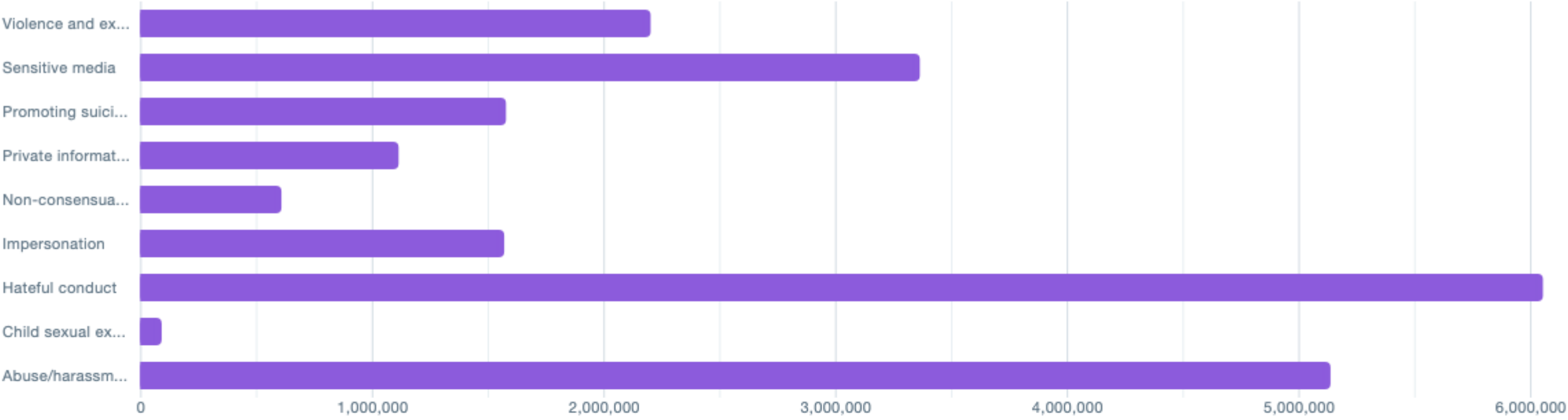
Published on December 18, 2020

01. Latest Data

02. Overview

03. Analysis

01. Latest Data: Accounts Reported



Accounts reported - January - June 2020

Accounts reported

12.4M

02. Overview

Insights into accounts reported for violations of the Twitter Rules.

Accounts reported

+30%

Increase in **accounts reported** compared to the last reporting period.



03. Analysis

Big picture

Reported content is reviewed to determine whether it violates any aspects of the Twitter Rules, *independent* of its initial report category. For example, content reported under our private information policy may be found to violate – and be actioned under – our hateful conduct policies. We may also determine that reported content does not violate the Rules at all.

The policy categories in this section do not map cleanly to the ones in the Accounts Actioned section above. This is because people typically report content for possible Twitter Rules violations through our [Help Center](#) or [in-app reporting](#).

We support the spirit of the [Santa Clara Principles on Transparency and Accountability in Content Moderation](#), and are committed to sharing more detailed information about how we enforce the Twitter Rules in future reports.

Footnotes

Accounts Actioned

To provide meaningful metrics, we de-duplicate accounts which were actioned multiple times for the same policy violation. This means that if we took action on a Tweet or account under multiple policies, the account would be counted separately under each policy. However, if we took action on a Tweet or account multiple times under the same policy (for example, we may have placed an account in read-only mode temporarily and then later also required media or profile edits on the basis of the same violation), the account would be counted once under the relevant policy.

[1.](#) Our synthetic and manipulated media policy launched in February 2020 and, as such, there is no enforcement data to share for this reporting period. We plan to include this information in future reports.

Accounts Reported

To provide meaningful metrics, we de-duplicate accounts which were reported multiple times (whether multiple users reported an account for the same potential violation, or whether multiple users reported the same account for different potential violations). For the purposes of these metrics, we similarly de-duplicate reports of specific Tweets. This means that even if we received reports about multiple Tweets by a single account, we only counted these reports towards the "accounts reported" metric once.

Platform Manipulation

About this report

Insights into the unauthorized use of Twitter to mislead others and/or disrupt their experience by engaging in bulk, aggressive, or deceptive activity.

Platform Manipulation

Published on January 11, 2021

01. Latest Data

02. Overview

03. Analysis

01. Latest Data: Platform Manipulation

Bars

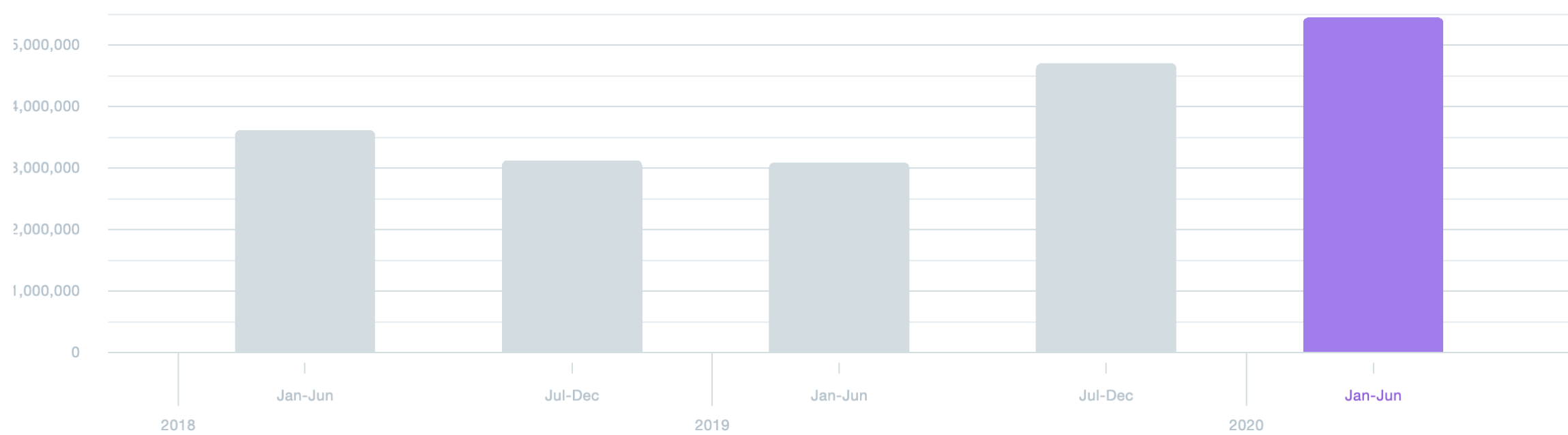
Table



Grouped by

Biannual

Monthly



Spam reports - January - June 2020

Spam reports

5.4M

Anti-spam challenges

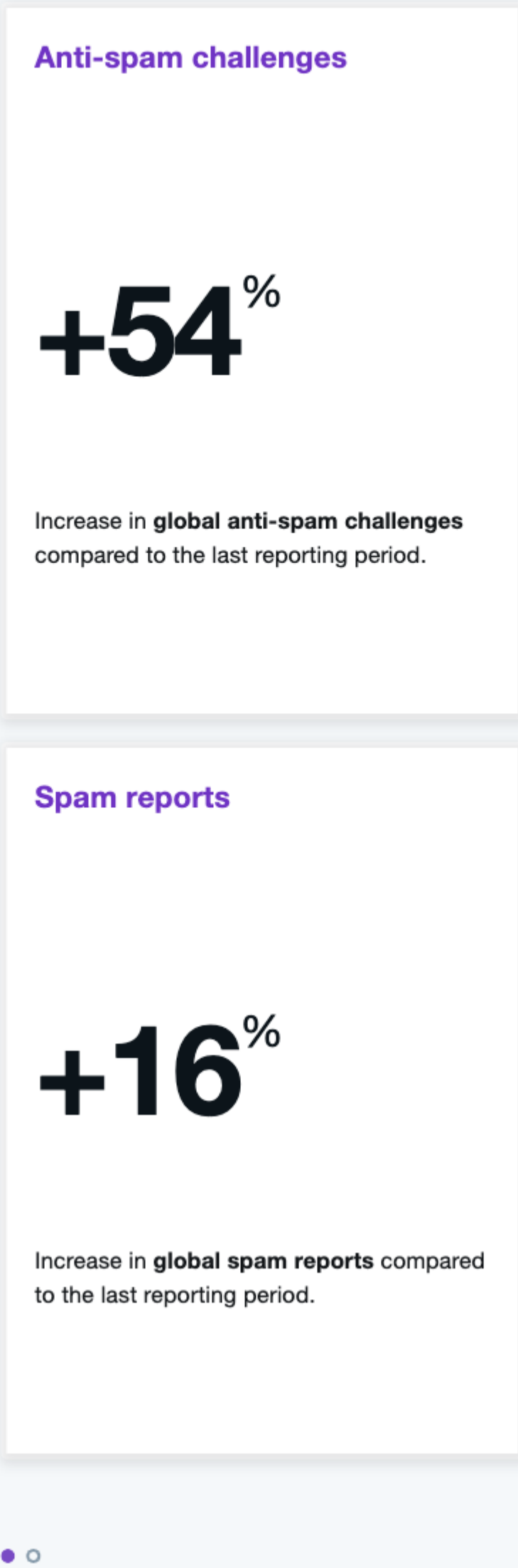
135.7M

02 Overview

Platform manipulation refers to the unauthorized use of Twitter to mislead others and/or disrupt their experience by engaging in bulk, aggressive, or deceptive activity. This prohibited activity includes, but is not limited to, spam, malicious automation, and fake accounts.

This report reflects both the volume of anti-spam challenges issued to Twitter accounts each month, and the number of reports of spam submitted by people on Twitter.

Some notable changes since the last report:



03. Analysis

Big picture

Platform manipulation and spam can include the following behaviors:

- Commercial spam — Persistent, often automated content which puts uninvited information in front of you. The spammer tries to get you to do something you wouldn't otherwise do, such as click a link, buy something, or give up personal information.
- Artificial amplification — Actions to make an account or concept seem more popular or controversial than it actually is, through inauthentic engagements (e.g. followers, mentions, Likes, or Retweets).
- Coordinated activity — Efforts to artificially influence conversations through the use of multiple and/or fake accounts.
- Combination of any of the above — Spammers may attempt to take advantage of a popular topic in order to sell something, or ideologically-motivated actors may use spammy amplification tactics to attempt to reach more people.

For more information about how we define these behaviors, please see our [Platform Manipulation and Spam policy](#).

Anti-spam challenges

One way we fight manipulation and spam at scale is to use anti-spam challenges to confirm whether an authentic account holder is in control of accounts engaged in suspicious activity. For example, we may require the account holder to verify a phone number or email address, or to complete a reCAPTCHA test. These challenges are simple for authentic account owners to solve, but difficult (or costly) for spammers to complete. Accounts which fail to complete a challenge within a specified period of time

may be suspended.

Anti-spam challenges issued to suspected spam accounts increased substantially, by just over 54%, compared to the [previous reporting period](#). Actions taken to counter spam tend to fluctuate for a variety of reasons, such as the volume of attempted Twitter signups, as well as the volume of spam campaigns targeting our service at any point in time.

In this particular time period, we saw people increasingly turn to Twitter to engage in conversation about significant world events like the global pandemic, and also saw an increase in spam attempts. As a result, we were more proactive in issuing anti-spam challenges during this time period. We had already been focused on combating spam and manipulation due to rising spam reports (as stated in the previous report); we also significantly stepped up our efforts to proactively detect spam activity targeting the conversation about COVID-19. We believe that these factors, among others, contributed to the increase of anti-spam challenges issued during the first half of 2020.

Spam reports

During the first half of 2020, we also saw a nearly 16% increase in the number of spam reports from the previous reporting period. This is likely due, in part, to some of the platform growth factors discussed in the above section on anti-spam challenges.

It's also important to remember that a report doesn't always correlate with a violation of our rules. We sometimes see people filing spam reports as a way to raise concerns about content they don't like or disagree with, [reporting the accounts as "fake."](#) This isn't to say that people who report spam on Twitter aren't experiencing unwanted interactions; however, those interactions may not necessarily represent violations of the [Platform Manipulation and Spam policy](#). We also sometimes see people calling on others to report an account as spam, believing that a large volume of reports will trigger an enforcement response. This is not the case, but does lead to higher volumes of reports. All reports provide Twitter with valuable information to enhance our understanding of what they're experiencing, which we use to refine our approach to stopping spam, malicious automation, and deceptive activity.

United States

About this report

Insights into information requests and removal requests originating from the United States.

Information Requests

Published on January 11, 2021

- 01. Latest Data
- 02. Overview
- 03. Analysis
- 04. Breakdown by Location
- 05. Types of Legal Process
- 06. User Notice
- 07. National Security Requests

01. Latest Data: Information Requests

Map

Bars

Table



U.S. (51 states/territories) ▾

● 0 ● 1 - 39 ● 40 - 166 ● 167 - 673



Information requests - January - June 2020

Information requests

3.4K

% Compliance

59%

Accounts specified

10.0K

02. Overview

This data includes the number of government information requests, accounts specified, and the corresponding compliance rate for these requests originating from the United States. We also include a high-level breakdown of requests based on the U.S. state or territory they originated from (below). For more information about emergency requests

and non-government requests, visit the [Information Requests report](#).^[1]

Twitter’s operations were affected due to the unprecedented [COVID-19](#) pandemic.



03. Analysis

Government information requests originating from the U.S. continue to make up the highest percentage among requesting countries from around the world. This has been the case since we began reporting on information requests in 2012.^[2]

27% of all global requests for account information originated from the United States during this reporting period. These requests accounted for 39% of all accounts specified from around the world. Twitter complied, in whole or in part, with 59% of these U.S. information requests.

User privacy

Twitter generally requires a search warrant to disclose any contents of communications, since users have the greatest privacy interest in this type of information.

However, Twitter may disclose content in the U.S. without receiving a search warrant in rare circumstances, in accordance with applicable law. For example, if there is an emergency involving an imminent threat of death or serious bodily harm, in response to certain national security requests, or with the account-holder’s lawful consent. Twitter also reports child sexual exploitation content to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) as required by U.S. law and in accordance with our [zero tolerance policy](#).

CalECPA

Twitter also furthers our commitment to user privacy with our [support for](#) and [interpretation](#) of [CalECPA](#), a California state law which went into effect at the beginning of 2016. CalECPA sets a higher bar for California state government entities to obtain certain user data than the floor established by federal statute, [Electronic Communications Privacy Act](#). As a result, California state law enforcement and government entities must obtain a warrant based on probable cause to compel a provider like Twitter to disclose IP addresses, which would also generally be available with a subpoena or court order under federal law.^[9]

During this reporting period, Twitter received 209 subpoenas and court orders issued by state and local government entities outside of California which sought IP addresses, compared to 217 such requests in the prior reporting period. In 47 of the 209 matters during this reporting period, requesters either withdrew their request entirely, withdrew their request for IP addresses, or properly domesticated their request in California as a result of our approach to CalECPA.

04. Breakdown by Location

Twitter receives government information requests from federal, state, and local authorities. The following table outlines the distribution of these requests, which are attributed to a particular state based on the location of the requesting office.

Twitter received the greatest percentage of requests from Washington, D.C., California, and Florida during this reporting period.

Top Requesting Agencies

The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), and the U.S. Secret Service (USSS) submitted the greatest percentage of requests during this reporting period. The FBI, DOJ, and USSS have also consistently submitted the greatest percentage of requests for the six previous reporting periods.

Federal vs state requesters

Table

Search for a state

1-7 of 51

<

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

>

View All

State / Territory	Federal requests	State / Local requests
Total	2,548	881
Alabama	2	5
Alaska	6	-
Arizona	21	26
Arkansas	17	3
California	274	87
Colorado	13	9
Connecticut	11	3

County insights

This section highlights the top requesting counties in the ten states that have submitted the most state government information requests during this reporting period. We

classify the county of the requester based on the address of the requesting office.

We include this level of detail to offer additional insight into the frequency that local authorities seek user data and to help identify any possible related trends over time.

California

Since we have begun reporting at the county level, Los Angeles County has been the top requester, submitting **44% of total California state information requests** during this reporting period.

Florida

Broward County was the top county requester, submitting **31% of total Florida state information requests** in this reporting period.

Illinois

Cook County was the top county requester, submitting **54% of total Illinois state information requests** during this reporting period.

Maryland

Baltimore City was the top requester, submitting **41% of total Maryland state information requests** during this reporting period.

New Jersey

Essex County was the top county requester, submitting **33% of total New Jersey state information requests** during this reporting period.

New York

New York County was again the top requester, submitting **77% of total New York state information requests** during this reporting period.

Pennsylvania

Allegheny County was the top requester, submitting **42% of total Pennsylvania state information requests** during this reporting period.

Texas

Harris County was the top requester, submitting **28% of total Texas state information requests** during this reporting period.

Virginia

Manassas City was the top

[Subpoenas](#). They do not generally require judicial review and usually seek basic subscriber information, such as the email address associated with an account and IP logs. However, as noted above, Twitter may require a search warrant from state law enforcement to disclose IP addresses, in accordance with [CalECPA](#).

Court orders

Unlike subpoenas, court orders do require judicial review, and must be issued by an appropriate judge. The law enforcement or government entity applying for an order must make a greater showing than is required for a subpoena, and may request transactional information (i.e., the non-content portion of communications such as the "from," "to," and "date" fields of DMs) with federal “2703(d) court orders” or state law equivalents. While Twitter mostly receives “2703(d) orders,” more information about other types of court orders received is available below.

Search warrants

As proscribed by the [Fourth Amendment](#), warrants typically require the most judicial scrutiny before they are issued. To obtain a search warrant, the government must demonstrate to an independent judge or magistrate that there is probable cause to believe that certain evidence will be found in the location identified. The government has to meet the greatest burden before the judge will issue this type of legal process, and warrants must be particularized to the specific facts of the case. A valid warrant is required for Twitter to disclose the contents of communications (e.g., Tweet content, DM content, Periscope broadcasts).

Other

Requests from law enforcement that do not fall in any of the above categories. Examples include [emergency disclosure requests](#) and other requests for account information without valid legal process.^[6]

Certain types of court orders

Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty Requests

Mutual legal assistance treaty (MLAT) requests may authorize district courts within the United States to order Twitter to produce account information for use in a proceeding in a foreign or international tribunal, including criminal investigations.^[6]

Twitter may receive U.S. requests for information on behalf of foreign governments based on other forms of cross-jurisdictional assistance. For example, requests may be issued pursuant to letters rogatory, or under mutual legal assistance agreements with countries that have not yet been officially brought into force through an actual treaty. Additionally, MLAT requests may be issued under multilateral treaties which the U.S. has signed and ratified, like the Inter-American Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance of the Organization of American States, the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, or the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

- Jan 1 - Jun 30, 2020: **4%** of court orders received have been explicitly identified as having been issued as a result of MLAT requests, which originated in Argentina, Spain, Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, Monaco and Austria.

Pen Register / Trap & Trace Orders

Pen register/trap and trace (“PRTT”) orders authorize the government to obtain prospective metadata of communications for the account specified for up to 60 days. This means that Twitter would be required to disclose data on an ongoing basis that did not yet exist at the time the order was signed. PRTT orders may require Twitter to disclose IP address records and transactional information (i.e., the non-content portion of communications such as the "from," "to," and "date" fields). Twitter is prohibited from notifying affected users about the existence of PRTT orders until otherwise authorized by the court, pursuant to the [PRTT statute](#).^[6]

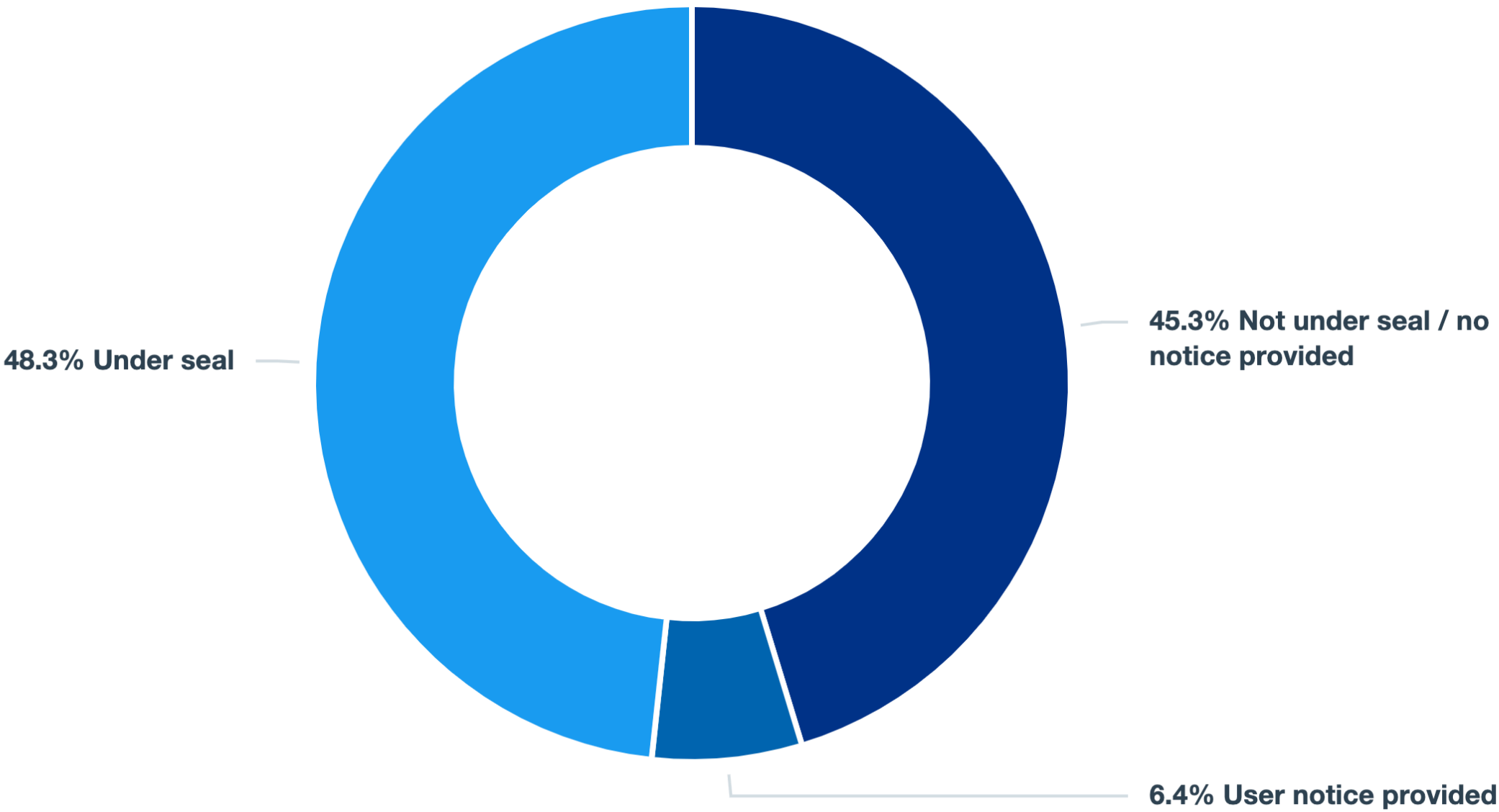
- Jan 1 - Jun 30, 2020: **4%** of court orders received by Twitter were PRTT orders.

Wiretap Orders

Wiretap orders authorize the government to obtain prospective metadata and contents of communications for the specified account for up to 30 days. **To date, Twitter has not received a valid criminal wiretap order.** Twitter has received orders purportedly requiring such real-time surveillance, but these orders were not issued in compliance with the requirements of the Wiretap Act and therefore Twitter did not comply with the wiretap request. These orders nonetheless may meet legal requirements for other types of disclosures and are therefore reflected in our figures accordingly. Like PRTT orders, wiretap orders are issued under seal and Twitter would therefore generally be prohibited from notifying affected users of the existence of such an order until otherwise ordered by the court.

User notice
January - June 2020

● Not under seal / no notice provided ● User notice provided ● Under seal



Twitter has a longstanding policy of notifying affected account holders of requests to disclose their account information unless prohibited or on the basis of an applicable exception as outlined in our [Guidelines for Law Enforcement](#) and [legal request FAQs](#).

Twitter sent notice to affected account holders prior to disclosure where there was no accompanying non-disclosure order, or other reasons not to provide notice.^[7]

However, requests for account information are often accompanied by a binding non-disclosure order, which legally prohibits Twitter from notifying account holders of the underlying legal request.

Some non-disclosure orders do not include an explicit date when the confidentiality obligation expires. Twitter regularly seeks an amended order with specified duration for the non-disclosure requirement (e.g., 90 days) when we receive this type of indefinite order.

Twitter has also filed challenges to non-disclosure orders where there were concerns about compliance with the provisions of 18 U.S.C. § 2705(b) and/or the unlimited duration. In October 2017, the U.S. DOJ issued a guidance memorandum to federal prosecutors seeking non-disclosure orders pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 2705(b). Most notably, the guidance states that prosecutors should generally seek non-disclosure orders limited to one year or less, and applications for such orders should reflect meaningful and individualized (i.e., non-boilerplate) justifications for the non-disclosure order.

07. National Security Requests

U.S. National Security Letters

Table



Search for a year 1-7 of 12 < 1 2 > View All

Year received	Government initiated review	Provider requested review
Total	8	10
2020	0	0
2019	0	0
2018	1	0
2017	0	0
2016	2	0
2015	5	1
2014	0	0

As in past reports, Twitter is only able to publish very limited information about national security requests, due to legal prohibitions that we continue to challenge in court (see below for an update on Twitter v. Barr, our ongoing transparency litigation).

At this time we are able to share information about the number of National Security Letters (“NSLs”) received which are no longer subject to non-disclosure orders (“NDOs”). NDOs on NSLs are lifted in one of two different ways, government initiated review or provider requested review.

No NSL gag orders were lifted during this reporting period. As reflected in the table above, non-disclosure orders for 18 total NSLs have been lifted to date.[¶] We believe it is much more meaningful to publish these actual numbers than reporting in the bands authorized per the [USA Freedom Act](#). (These reporting limits are not applicable for national security process, which are no longer subject to non-disclosure requirements, such as these NSLs.)

Twitter is committed to continuing to use the legal mechanism available to us to request judicial review of these gag orders. More broadly, we are also committed to arguing that indefinite non-disclosure orders are unconstitutional in both the criminal and national security contexts. We view each request for judicial review as an opportunity to strengthen the legal precedent protecting our First Amendment rights.

Twitter v. Barr

As in past reports, Twitter is not reporting on any other national security process we may have received because of limitations imposed on us by the U.S. government. We continue to litigate this issue in our case [Twitter v. Barr](#). On April 17, 2020 the Court granted the government’s motion for summary judgment and dismissed Twitter’s lawsuit. Twitter filed a notice of appeal of that decision on June 15, 2020 and an opening brief on September 24, 2020. Twitter’s appeal was supported by an [amicus brief](#) filed by the American Civil Liberties Union and the [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#). The government’s responsive brief is due on January 7, 2021.

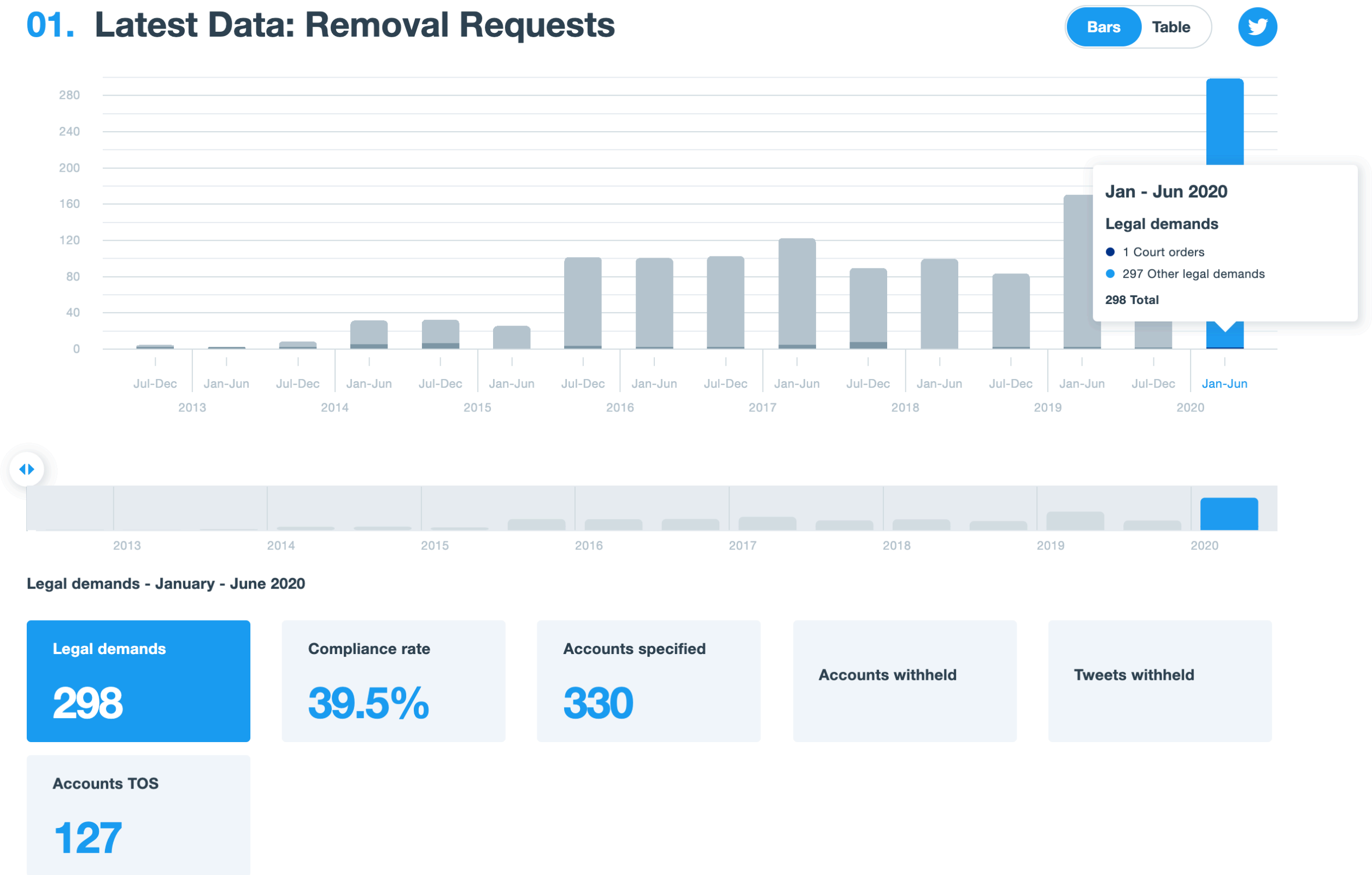
We will continue to fight for meaningful transparency through this and other efforts, and look forward to sharing more updates here as they become available.

Removal Requests

01. Latest Data
02. Overview

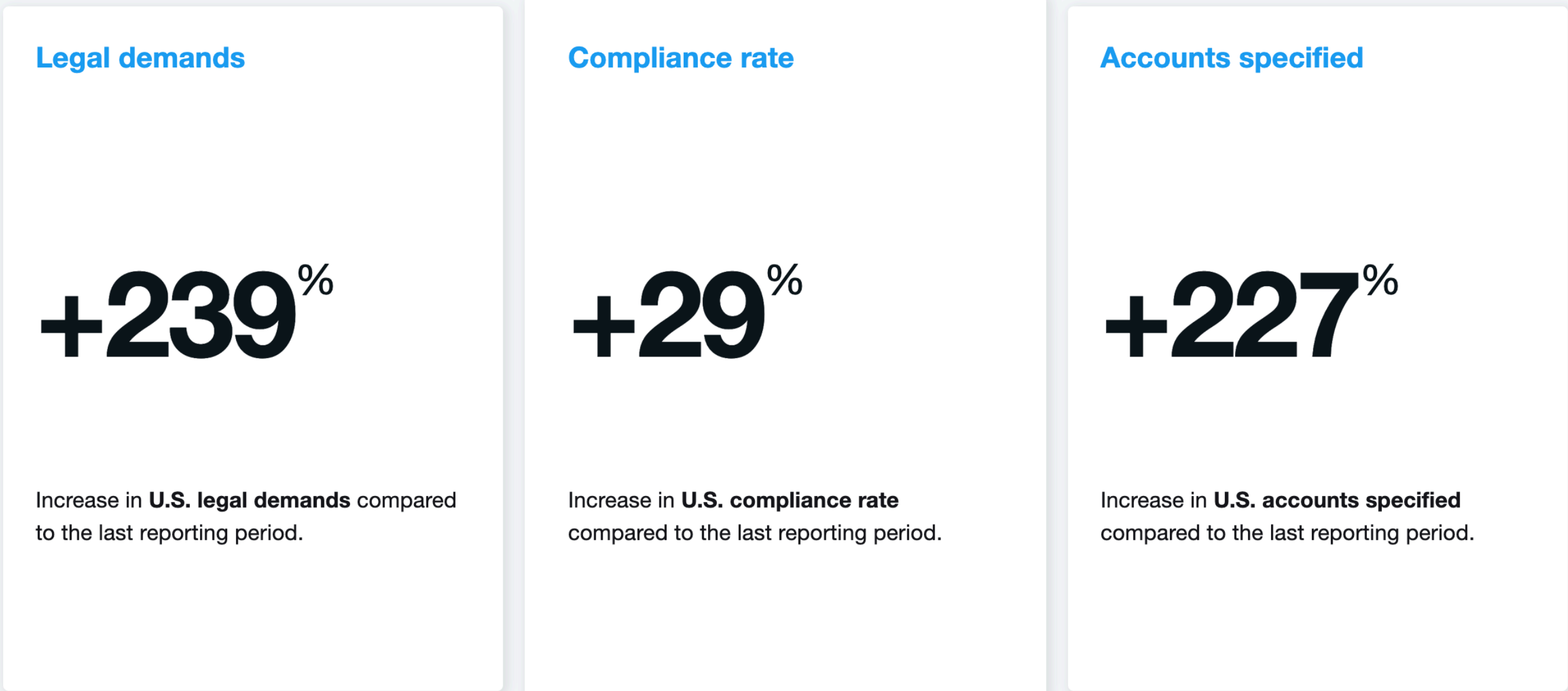
Published on January 11, 2021

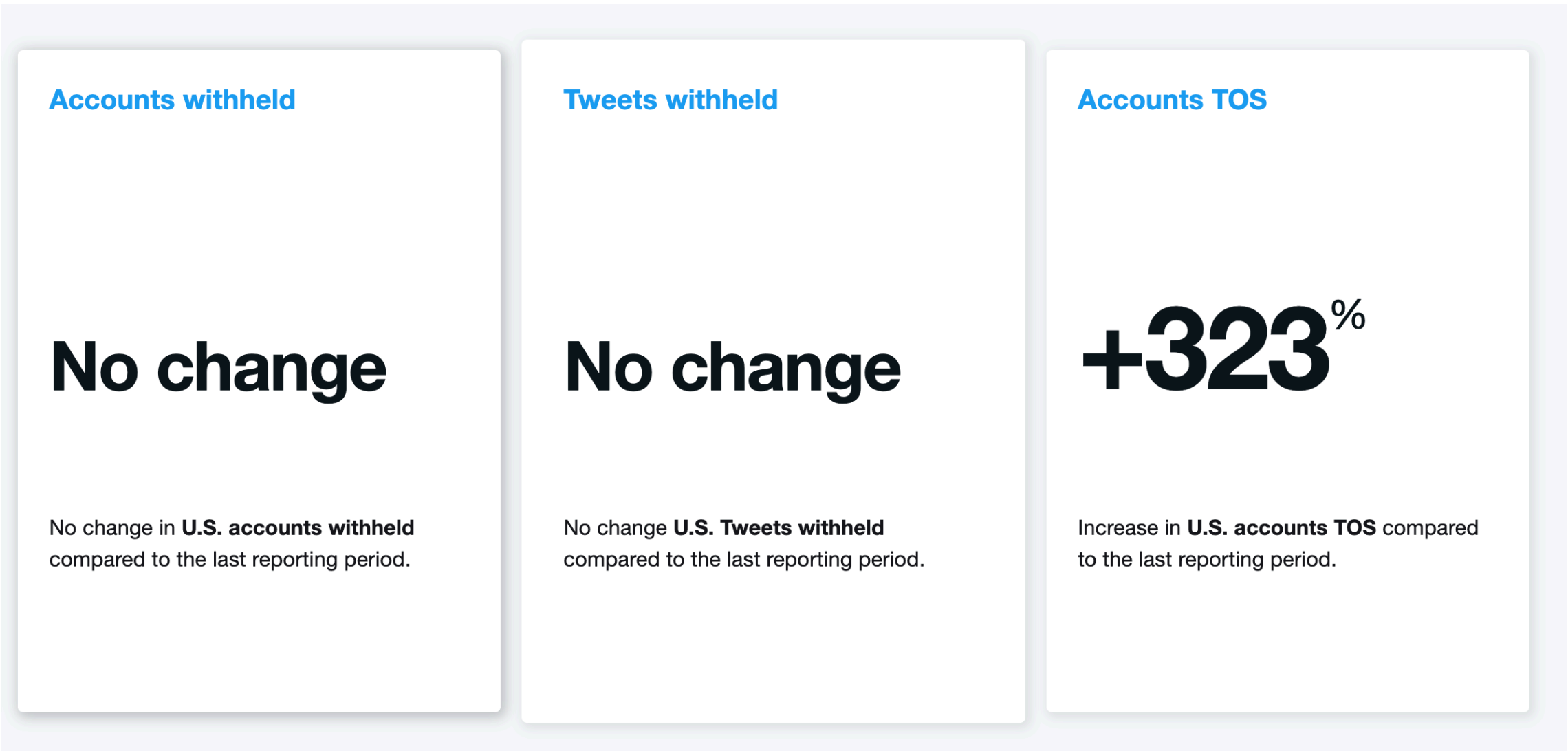
01. Latest Data: Removal Requests



02. Overview

This data includes the number of United States government (and other complaints of illegal content from authorized reporters) legal demands received to remove or withhold content, the number of accounts specified in these requests, and the compliance rate (either withheld or removed for violating the Twitter Rules). For more detailed information, read the [Removal Requests report](#).





Footnotes

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

Information Requests

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

1. Information requests include both federal and state legal process. Requests are attributed to a particular state based on the location of the requesting office.

The data above does not include national security requests. Please refer to the “National security requests” section below for additional information on the national security letters we are now legally permitted to convey, and an update on the Twitter v. Barr (f.k.a. Twitter v. Lynch and Twitter v. Sessions) lawsuit and our commitment to fighting for greater transparency in national security request reporting.

2. Twitter, Inc.’s global headquarters is located in San Francisco, California, USA.

3. As a California-based company, Twitter generally requires state and local government entities outside of California to properly domesticate a request for IP addresses in California state court. As a result, Twitter generally will not disclose IP addresses to state/local government entities outside of California without a subpoena or court order, and a broader set of Twitter users benefit from the protections of CalECPA.

4. All Writs Act Orders - The All Writs Act is a U.S. law from 1789 which authorizes a court to issue an order which is “necessary or appropriate in aid of their respective jurisdictions and agreeable to the usages and principles of law”. The government invoked this apparent authority in the context of litigation with Apple. To date, Twitter has not received an order issued pursuant to this authority.
5. Previously, we included a comprehensive list of the number of requests that were confirmed to have been made via MLAT procedures for all previous reports. We have updated our reporting layout to only include the MLAT data for the current report. To view historical data, please navigate to previous U.S. reports through the dropdown menu at the top of the page.

6. Previously, we included a running list of the percentage of PRTT orders received for all previous reports. We have updated our reporting layout to only include the PRTT order data for the current report. To view historical data, please navigate to previous U.S. reports through the dropdown menu at the top of the page.

7. Twitter generally does not notify users if no data was disclosed in response to the request (i.e. the request was withdrawn by the requester prior to disclosure or the request was defective).

Other exceptions to Twitter’s user notice policy include emergency disclosure requests, requests related to child sexual exploitation or terrorism, or other circumstances where notice would be counterproductive.

8. These numbers would not reflect NSLs for which Twitter requested judicial review but a court determined there is an ongoing non-disclosure obligation at the time of this publication.

Removal Requests

Some cases received during this reporting period may be in progress and may not be closed at the time of reporting.

Each request may identify multiple items to be removed. For example, a single request may ask us to remove individual Tweets, an entire account, or both.

We may not comply with every request or all aspects of a request for a variety of reasons. For example, we do not comply with requests that fail to identify content on Twitter.

‘Tweets withheld’ refers to Tweets that have been withheld at the individual Tweet level, and does not count the total number of individual Tweets from the ‘Accounts withheld’ column.