

Is politics on YouTube to be censored?

Published: July 22, 2026, 6:02 am

The UK government has [published a Green Paper](#) that could fundamentally change how political content is discovered on YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and other social media platforms.

The proposal suggests that platforms should give greater prominence to "trusted" news providers. At first glance, that might sound sensible. We all want accurate information.

But who decides who is "trusted"? And what happens to independent journalists, commentators and creators who challenge mainstream opinion? Are they going to be silenced by social media, as a result of government demands?

In this video, I examine what the proposals actually say, why they matter and why many independent creators are deeply concerned.

If implemented, these changes could affect search results, recommendations and audience growth across social media. That would have profound implications for political debate, freedom of expression and media diversity.

This is not simply an issue for people on the political left. Any future government could use the same framework against voices it dislikes.

The consultation is now open, and everyone can respond before the deadline.

Whether you agree with my conclusions or not, I hope this video encourages you to read the proposals for yourself and decide whether they strengthen democracy or risk narrowing public debate.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3Ed7VjDcEc?si=RWD9-ptdnc837_6U

This is the audio version:

https://www.podbean.com/player-v2/?i=5utms-1b190a3-pb&from=pb6admin&share=1&download=1&rtl=0&fonts=Arial&skin=f6f6f6&font-color=auto&logo_link=episode_page&btn-skin=c73a3a

The Debate Ammunition for this video is available here.

This is the transcript:

The UK government has published a new Green Paper. Green Papers are the things that the government puts out when they want to float an idea that they think might become policy, and this Green Paper is on the media.

Now, the media is a very broad topic. It includes television, newspapers, and these days it includes social media. And the impact could be dramatic on social media, especially for channels like this one.

That's because in this Green Paper, the government is proposing that social media organisations like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and others, like Facebook, should only promote trusted news providers and that everybody else in the news media area should be downgraded when it comes to their presentation on social media channels. This could affect all YouTube search and recommendation functions and who those channels are allowed to promote.

The claim is that this will tackle misinformation in the media as the government, however, defines it. But who decides what counts as trusted? Who decides what is misinformation, and is this censorship in all but name? Those are the questions that I want to ask.

Ministers say that reliable journalism supports democracy, and I can't argue with that. That is true. As a consequence, they claim they want quality news to be easier to find, so they say that reliable media must be promoted to people. But they define that as the mainstream broadcasters. You know who they are. That's the BBC, ITV, Channel Four, Channel Five, and other large media organisations. We would expect the mainstream newspapers to be included in this; all of them with their obvious right-wing bias, The Guardian included.

Meanwhile, independent creators and commentators, like me and many others you may watch, could be left outside this system of promotion. We will not be promoted. We will be downgraded. You'll have to work hard to find us. This is seriously difficult for left-of-centre channels on YouTube.

Most independent political channels are not, of course, the mainstream media. By definition, we are challenging that mainstream media in most cases, and we rely on YouTube search and recommendations for people to find us, to generate our traffic, and also to generate our income. We've built our audiences without institutional backing. There are over 380,000 people who subscribe to this channel, for example. But reduced visibility could reduce our reach dramatically. And let's be honest. We are worried about this, and so are a lot of other people we know.

The proposals may unintentionally favour existing media power. And the question is: why is that existing media power being promoted? That's because, as we all know, they do not challenge the mainstream orthodoxy, whereas those of us outside the mainstream do. This is the real issue that we're talking about here.

There is a lot of definitional problems with this Green Paper. The Green Paper talks about trusted publishers, but there is no suitable definition of who is to be trusted. Who decides who is trustworthy, for example? Is that the government? Is it a regulator? Or is it existing media organisations, who will inevitably favour themselves? And how will they do this and why? What will the criteria be? Is dissent sufficient to be not trusted in these terms? That is the worry because the risk of suppressing dissenting voices is high. And yet democracy depends on more than established broadcasters and more than compliant voices.

Independent journalism, like ours, challenges conventional thinking, and that challenge is essential. You cannot get change without ideas being challenged, discussed, debated, and then developed. And new voices often expose issues ignored elsewhere. A healthy media actually encourages disagreement, but the whole approach of this Green Paper would appear to be to suppress it.

Diversity of opinion is the basis of democratic strength, but the government appears to be undermining that because, by emphasising trusted media, it is talking about dissent as being not trusted. There's a real risk as a result of deliberate institutional bias being built into the media as a consequence.

We all know that major broadcasters share similar economic assumptions. Without exception, they are all neoliberal. That is the only economic framework they now talk about. Alternative economic perspectives receive remarkably little coverage in that mainstream media. It's very difficult to break in. So, independent channels like us try to fill that gap.

Giving official prominence to established media may simply reinforce the existing bias that is already embedded in our mainstream media. And that could narrow rather than widen public debate. And that could be harmful to democracy, economic debate, and the real progress we need to face the challenges that are happening.

On YouTube, this will have the practical impact of meaning that people like me, and

Gary Stevenson, Owen Jones, Grace Blakely, a whole load of other people will no longer be appearing in your social media feed. Recommendations may become, in fact, a lot less balanced than they are now. And smaller channels may become harder to discover. And existing subscribers may only find content if they click the bell button when subscribing. And if you haven't, please do that now, because that is the only way you can guarantee you will always get notifications.

Future audience growth could become much more difficult. That challenges our channel viability, and that of many other organisations. People like The Canary are, for example, very worried about this.

And let me be clear, this is not just an issue for the left. Today's rules may affect left-of-centre channels when it comes to economics, and I think they do. But tomorrow they could be used to impact conservatives and then the Greens or libertarians; any independent voice could be disadvantaged by these rules depending on which government is in office. That is what worries me.

There is a principle at stake here, and it's a vital one. The principle is that dissenting is not about creating misinformation; it's about being allowed to disagree. The government should not be stopping dissent. It should not be stopping disagreement. It should not be setting the YouTube algorithm. It should not be setting the Instagram and TikTok algorithm either. Competition on information and on debate should be based on quality and not on official recognition.

Now, I'm convinced that there is a reason to ensure that serious misinformation is tackled, and I would desire that when it comes to things like racism and the promotion of hate and deliberate misinformation, if we can see it happening, which is going to cause people harm. Why not? But we already have laws to do that, and they are not properly policed.

That is what worries me here. I think the government is trying to promote this new law to avoid the fact that it doesn't want to spend on the powers it already has to tackle misinformation. And the consequence is that it is trying to impose a blanket ban on any form of dissent rather than use its discretion to tackle what is deliberate misinformation instead.

That is the problem. What we really need is that identical standards apply to everyone. The mainstream media can also mislead, after all, and it does regularly with regard to economics. So, we should not create officially preferred publishers or rig search results in favour of legacy media. People should be allowed to decide whose journalism they trust. That is a definition of freedom.

And there are questions we should all be asking. Who decides which publishers are trusted? Who can that decision be challenged by, and how? Will independent publishers qualify to be considered to be trusted? And how will algorithms be monitored? And what

safeguards will protect freedom of expression?

You can take part in this debate. We're [going to put up a link down below to this consultation process](#). We're going to put up a link [to the email address](#) you can use to provide responses. You need to do so in particular to questions four, five, and six in the consultation paper. They're the ones that really matter. And you need to do so by the 31st August, 2026. Every single submission that is made that challenges what the government is doing will help. We need a free media in the UK. Plurality matters as much to democracy as does reliability. And this debate affects everyone who values a free and diverse media. I'd really appreciate it if you could make a submission. We will be.

We'll share that in a community post. We'll share this information in a post on here as well. But in the meantime, please let us know what you think. I've made it very clear what I think. I think this is something which is moving toward censorship, and I feel very uncomfortable about that. Let us have your comments. There's a poll down below. Like this video if you do. Please do subscribe, and as I said, please do hit that bell button. It really matters because that's what guarantees you'll continue to receive notifications from us. And because the future of this channel is being threatened, if you'd like to support us with a donation, we'd really appreciate that.

Poll

[poll id="463"]