

## **Data privacy statement for the study**

### **«Misinformation and conspiracy theories in online environments – A Delphi study to assess current challenges, problematic developments, and future recommendations»**

#### **What data will be collected in this study?**

In the survey, we will ask for your assessments of current challenges and problematic developments of conspiracy theories and misinformation in online environments and recommendations to counter them.

To prevent the survey from being falsified by multiple participations by the same person, the survey software sets a cookie on your end device. Cookies are text files with a characteristic character string that is stored by the Internet browser on your end device (smartphone, tablet, or computer). Based on this string, the survey software recognizes whether the survey has already been completed - and where it may have been aborted. Cookies are pseudonymized, i.e., it is not possible to assign the survey data to you. The settings of your Internet browser give you control over the browser cookies stored with you. The browser cookies store the time and duration of the questionnaire call, the browser type, and the referrer URL (the web address from which the questionnaire was called up) for the same reasons as for participation in the survey.

#### **Who collects my data?**

The survey is conducted by the Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ), Division of Science Communication, Andreasstrasse 15, 8050 Zurich, Switzerland. The survey is conducted as part of the SNSF-funded project “[Science-related conspiracy theories online: Mapping their characteristics, prevalence and distribution internationally and developing contextualized counter-strategies](#)” and the project “[What can we learn from COVID-19 fake news about the spread of scientific misinformation in general?](#)” funded by the Swiss Young Academy (SYA).

#### **Who can I contact if I have questions or wish to exercise my rights as a data subject under Swiss data protection laws?**

If you have any questions about data protection or wish to assert your data subject rights (in particular the right of access, rectification, or erasure) (see also section "What (data protection) rights can I assert?"), please contact the project team of this study: [delphi@ikmz.uzh.ch](mailto:delphi@ikmz.uzh.ch).

#### **For what purpose is my data collected?**

The goal of the survey is to assess current challenges and problematic developments of conspiracy theories and misinformation in digital media environments and to develop recommendations to combat them. With your participation you help to explore this scientifically. It is important to us to gather as comprehensive an opinion as possible from all relevant stakeholders. To this end, we want to address you equally individually and invite you to the survey by e-mail. In this way, we can ensure that the group of respondents consists exclusively of relevant people.

### **How is data protection ensured?**

Participation in the survey is voluntary. Your privacy and the protection of your data are of central concern to us. All your information will be treated strictly confidentially and in accordance with the legal provisions on data protection. The e-mail addresses collected will be used exclusively by UZH to carry out the above survey and will not be passed on to third parties under any circumstances. We ensure that only authorized employees have access to the data.

### **What contact data does UZH have and where does it come from, and what is the legal basis for the use of the e-mail addresses?**

The University of Zurich has manually determined your name and your e-mail address for the purpose of contacting you using freely accessible sources.

In this context, the University of Zurich claims a legitimate interest pursuant to Art. 6 (1) lit. f GDPR to collect your contact data in order to get in touch with you.

### **Will my contact details or other personal data be passed on to third parties or third countries?**

A transfer of your personal data of any kind to uninvolved third parties or abroad is excluded. Your contact data will be collected exclusively by UZH, used for sending the questionnaire links and deleted after completion of the survey (see also the following section).

### **When will the contact data be deleted?**

The e-mail addresses will be deleted by UZH after completion of the survey field period (by 1.1.2023 at the latest), unless otherwise agreed. If you are not interested in participating in our survey and inform us of this by clicking on the corresponding button in the online survey or by sending us an email, your contact data will be deleted immediately.

### **What (data protection) rights can I assert?**

**Right of access by the data subject** (Art. 15 GDPR): The data subject shall have the right to obtain from the controller confirmation as to whether or not personal data concerning him or her are being processed, and, where that is the case, access to the personal data.

**Right to rectification** (Art. 16 GDPR): The data subject shall have the right to obtain from the controller without undue delay the rectification of inaccurate personal data concerning him or her. Taking into account the purposes of the processing, the data subject shall have the right to have incomplete personal data completed, including by means of providing a supplementary statement.

**Right to erasure ('right to be forgotten')** (Art. 17 GDPR): The data subject shall have the right to obtain from the controller the erasure of personal data concerning him or her without undue delay and the controller shall have the obligation to erase personal data without undue delay.

**Right to restriction of processing** (Art. 18 GDPR): In accordance with Art. 18 GDPR, the data subject shall have the right to obtain from the controller restriction of processing.

**Right to data portability** (Art. 20 GDPR): The data subject shall have the right to receive the personal data concerning him or her, which he or she has provided to a controller, in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format and have the right to transmit those data to another controller without hindrance from the controller to which the personal data have been provided.

**Right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority** (Art. 77 GDPR): Without prejudice to any other administrative or judicial remedy, every data subject shall have the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority.

For the Department of Communication and Media Research (IKMZ) at the University of Zurich, the competent authority is as follows:

Datenschutzbeauftragter des Kantons Zürich

Beckenhofstrasse 23

CH-8090 Zürich

<http://www.dsb.zh.ch>

### **What data security measures and special guarantees do we take?**

Information on the data protection standards at our provider of the survey software used (the processor) Unipark can be found here:

<https://www.unipark.com/en/data-security/>

The UZH systems are secured against access and data loss by technical and organizational measures. The files are stored encrypted and password protected. Access to the data sets is logged. Only members of the research team have access to the data sets; they are sensitized and obligated with regard to data protection.