

A large, stylized world map composed of a grid of small white dots on a dark blue background, spanning the width of the top half of the page.

The Bias Against Israel on Wikipedia

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Produced for the World Jewish Congress

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Executive Summary

Wikipedia was launched in 2001 as a free, online encyclopedia written and maintained by a community of volunteers. Since then, it has consistently been one of the most-visited websites on the internet, with over 60 million articles across all 329 language editions and well over 1 billion edits. Wikipedia changed the concept of knowledge, enabling easy access to, and the ability to participate in, the production of knowledge. Governed by the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization established in 2003, Wikipedia's core editorial policy is to maintain a "neutral point of view." This report was written out of an understanding of the importance of Wikipedia and the central place it occupies as a provider of information to millions of people around the world. Moreover, the information on Wikipedia is referenced in many other sources of information, such as such as online forums and discussions, educational materials, and other websites and blogs. It is also used to feed large language models and Generative AI enabling the widespread distribution of its content as knowledge to the general public.

The ability to maintain neutrality in Wikipedia becomes difficult when dealing with topics related to politics and other sensitive matters. Following the attack perpetrated by Hamas on October 7, 2023, in Israel, contributors, editors, and users of Wikipedia noticed increased bias in the entries related to the assault and the ensuing war against Hamas in Gaza. This report aims to examine that bias in English-language Wikipedia pages and provide insights as to how this can be avoided, and the neutrality of the platform reestablished.

The report is based on research, content analysis, and interviews with Israeli Wikipedians (Wikipedia volunteer editors). It begins by presenting a brief overview of Wikipedia and its importance, including aspects of social empowerment, and presents challenges to its ideals of democratic knowledge.

The report presents several examples of bias against Israel in Wikipedia entries and explains the ways in which the principle of neutrality is not upheld in those cases. Attempts to erase articles and problematic terminology are also examined. Based on interviews and conversations with site editors, the report presents allegations of unfair treatment by administrators, bureaucrats, and senior editors, which include being treated in a hostile and disrespectful manner. Finally, recommendations are presented for the changes necessary to promote the values of neutrality and equality on which Wikipedia was founded. These recommendations include institutionalization of bias research in Wikipedia; actions with stewards, admins, and bureaucrats of Wikipedia; policy changes; and neutrality enforcement mechanisms.

In a broader context, this is also a call to action for legislators, regulators, and users to notice bias and the subsequent ill effects created through a wide range of internet platforms beyond social media.

Understanding Wikipedia: Its Definition and Significance

Wikipedia is a multilingual, online encyclopedia launched on January 15, 2001, as a crowdsourcing venture by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger. Behind the website stands the Wikimedia Foundation, a non-profit organization based in the United States that provides the shell services for the operation of the site, such as server maintenance.

Wikipedia is based on free content and is managed entirely by a community of volunteers, known as “Wikipedians,” who contribute at an average rate of 5.7 edits per second (Moás, PM, & Lopes, 2023; Wikimedia, 2022).

As an online encyclopedia, Wikipedia changed the concept of knowledge that existed in the past, both in terms of its availability, as it is accessible from anywhere with an internet connection and at any time, and the ability of the public to participate in the documentation of the information through adding articles on Wikipedia.

Wikipedia fosters public involvement in knowledge creation by allowing users to add, update, and interlink information within the platform, while also enabling them to connect it with external sources, thus enhancing the collective reservoir of knowledge. Many Wikipedian communities have their own rules. However, in most Wikipedias, anyone can edit existing entries and add new ones, while in some languages, such as English, registration is required in order to add a new entry. In the registration process, it is possible to use a real or fake name to facilitate interaction with other Wikipedians on the site. Pseudonymity is accepted and is widespread among long-time users who edit regularly, as this is how individuals develop a reputation and personal credibility in the editing community.

From a technical point of view, editing Wikipedia does not require great skill, and its basics can be learned relatively easily in an hour-long or longer online course or with the help of tutorials available online. However, in terms of content, reliable sources must be used and writing based on personal opinion must be avoided. Every new edit on Wikipedia is available for viewing and appears on the automatically updated page, which enables supervision and quality control of what is written.

Wikipedia is based on the wisdom of the masses, and the involvement of many editors, as opposed to solitary writing. Individuals can re-edit a text written by another user, add additional relevant details, and discuss the entry on the conversation page that appears in the tab next to each entry. This is sometimes expressed in arguments called “editing wars”. Wikipedia stewards, administrators and bureaucrats have a special status that includes the ability to block articles from changes, suspend users who have violated the site's rules, and make pages available for deletion if necessary.

Though Wikipedia existed only in English when it first started, it today includes over 300 editions in 326 languages. The English Wikipedia still remains the largest edition. As of April 2023, the English Wikipedia included over 6.6 million entries (Moás, PM, & Lopes, 2023). It encompasses

some sixty million pages, with the number of edits close to two billion, and the number of contributors over 46 million, of whom 118,000 are active editors.¹

The immense importance of Wikipedia lies in its widespread popularity and its role as a primary source of knowledge and reference for vast numbers of people. In fact, Wikipedia is the largest and most well-known online encyclopedia, and it has maintained its growth rate for years. Wikipedia's readership base has also grown steadily, reaching nearly 280 billion page views across 2 billion unique devices. In 2023, the number of views on English Wikipedia alone was about 92 billion (Wikimedia Foundation, 2023).

Search engines also contribute to Wikipedia's immense popularity. According to various studies, most search engines, including Google, Bing, and DuckDuckGo, not only include Wikipedia pages in their results, but also retrieve results from Wikipedia on their first page for 80% of common queries and 70% of queries related to current events and news (Vincent and Hecht, 2021). In fact, in December 2023, Wikipedia was ranked sixth among the most-visited websites, right after Twitter (SimilarWeb, 2023). This means that Wikipedia is a leading source of knowledge, with hundreds of thousands of daily visits to popular entries. For example, the entry "Israel– Hamas War" accumulated 25,401 visits in one day on January 20, 2024. The entry "Hamas" received 31,310 views on January 2, 2024. The average number of views for the entry "Israel" is 22,052 per month (Wikipedia Traffic Statistics, 2023).

Moreover, information from Wikipedia makes its way into various sources including research papers, other websites, and even print material, where it will remain in perpetuity without editing. It is now also used to feed Generative AI and large language models, without clearly indicating the source of information.

It is precisely this immense popularity and the fact that Wikipedia is perceived as a reliable and objective source of knowledge—as opposed to knowledge marked as based on personal opinion—that raises the question of whether Wikipedia maintains neutrality and eliminates bias. In the Israeli and Jewish context, this question is of great importance, especially in light of centuries of antisemitism and manifestations of hatred and bias against Jews and Israel since the Hamas terrorist attacks of October 7, 2023.

¹ https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/List_of_Wikipedias.

Wikipedia's Empowering Ethos

In the early days of the internet, there was great hope that the digital age would promote democracy, give voice to socially disadvantaged groups, and allow the wisdom of the crowd to come to the fore and make human knowledge available and interactive for all people, regardless of religion, race, or gender (Papacharissi, 2002; Bargh and McKenna, 2004).

This hope seemingly came to fruition in the Wikipedia project—a free, online, non-profit encyclopedia that has expanded the availability of knowledge making it accessible in a variety of languages through the ongoing activities of a diverse group of volunteers from around the world. From the early days of the online encyclopedia, when it was launched on www.wikipedia.com in English, the ethos of empowerment has been associated with it in three aspects: first, in making knowledge accessible; second, in enabling the public to participate in the production of knowledge; and third, in ensuring neutral knowledge.

The first principles are already reflected in the project's motto: “Wikipedia—The Free Encyclopedia,” where “free” means free to view without any restrictions, free to edit, and free to copy and distribute.

The neutrality aspect was based on the premise that Wikipedia's goal is to provide the public with accurate and neutral information on a wide range of topics. This as the concept of Neutral Point of View (NPOV) which was defined by the English Wikipedia policy as presenting all significant perspectives on a topic in a fair, balanced, and unbiased manner, drawing from credible sources to the fullest extent possible, is one of the founding principles of the platform. This aspect correlates with the policy of No Original Research (NOR) – which refers to claims, and concepts, that lacks support from credible, published sources. This encompasses any endeavor to analyze, evaluate, interpret, or synthesize material based on one's personal opinion or experience.

Moreover, Wikipedia is perceived by the public as reliable. In a *Time Magazine* article, for example, Wikipedia was highlighted positively compared to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and other social media sites, where users often present fiction as fact and uncertainty as certainty (Fitzpatrick, 2021). Katherine Maher, CEO of the Wikimedia Foundation, the parent organization of Wikipedia, was also quoted in that article regarding warning tags such as “This event is happening in real time, and some information may be changing rapidly,” which allows readers to understand that not all the facts are known, as well as tags indicating that “this content is disputed,” or “this article may not be neutral.” According to Maher, in this way, “the reader himself will have the opportunity to say, 'Now that I have checked this information, what is the decision I want to make?'" In the *Time* article, it was also stated that “Wikipedia's product roadmap is built around truth.”

However, this view ignores several key problems that undermine Wikipedia's empowering ethos and its ability to be a democratic source of knowledge based on the wisdom of the crowd. That is, it relies on a variety of voices and perspectives from different locations (Surowiecki, 2004).

This report focuses on the issue of bias against Israel, but first, it is important to note some related general issues and to indicate the structural problems in the way Wikipedia operates.

Challenges to Wikipedia's Democratic Ideals

The Gender Gap

The gender gap in Wikipedia is manifested in the small percentage of women editors in different countries, which, according to studies and surveys, is about 13% on average (Reagle and Rhue, 2011; Glott et al., 2010). Despite global protest regarding and various attempts to reduce it, the gap remains (Hargittai and Shaw, 2014). This is also reflected in the fact that women editors tend to leave Wikipedia and not continue editing on the site. Since the principle of the wisdom of crowds is based on diversity, the minority of women on the site has great significance with respect to the reliability of the data and issues related to who is worthy of value. For example, only 19% of 1.5 million biographies in the English Wikipedia are about women (Tripodi, 2023).

Bullying Behavior and Editorial Wars

Wikipedia is characterized by a relatively high level of conflict in the editing and co-writing process. These conflicts are expressed in different ways, such as “editor alerts,” which are attempts by editors to cancel entries and content written by other editors, as well as sometimes bitter and stormy debates about points of view and the level of accuracy of the information presented. Expressions of anger and blatant conflicts between editors create an unpleasant general atmosphere in Wikipedia, which makes cooperation difficult and even discourages users, especially new ones, and reduces the number of active editors (Collier and Bear, 2012; Aharoni Lir, 2021).

The Power of the Admins and Beurocrats

While Wikipedia claims to uphold neutrality and inclusivity, its structural design can undermine these principles (Aharoni Lir, 2016). The technological architecture of the platform carries social implications, particularly regarding hidden hierarchies. Criticism has been directed at Wikipedia for its lack of transparency and the concealment of decision-makers' actions, alongside the significant authority wielded by anonymous administrators who can delete entries and block participants without accountability (Lessig, 2006; Aharoni Lir, 2021). These internal dynamics are noteworthy as administrators can display favoritism towards acquaintances and like-minded individuals while penalizing unfamiliar editors and ideological adversaries (Auerbach, 2014).

The Issue of Anonymity

The principle of anonymity allows contributors to use pseudonyms or operate on the site without any identification. Some researchers claim that the ability to be active on the site anonymously contributes to bullying due to the lack of personal responsibility for disrespectful comments and behaviors. This manifests in a manner that can be categorized as toxic disinhibition, that include harsh criticisms, rude language, and displays of anger and hatred that are less common in face-to-face interactions (Suler, 2004). In addition, the principle of anonymity contributes to the creation of an atmosphere of alienation, which is perceived as unsafe and which women report discourages them from being active on the website (Aharoni Lir, 2021). Anonymity does not allow for the information on the site to be linked to the place it was created and thereby can contribute

to a misrepresentation of knowledge (Lanier, 2006). While the lack of contextuality is valid in exact science, in certain fields, such as social science, knowledge often emerges from specific contexts. When the sources of an article remain anonymous, it becomes challenging to contextualize the knowledge presented.

Violation of the Principle of Neutrality

On December 12, 2023, [Arabic](#) Wikipedia blacked out the site for one day as a sign of solidarity with the Palestinians in the Israel–Hamas war. From that time until the present, the logo of the Arabic Wikipedia has been partially painted black and wrapped in the flag of Palestine. In addition, a banner was added to the main page reading:

In solidarity with the rights of the Palestinian people. No to genocide in Gaza. No to the killing of civilians. No to the targeting of hospitals and schools. There is no fraud or double standards. Stop the war and spread a just and inclusive peace.

All this was written without contextual reference to the massacre on October 7 that precipitated the war.

In response to this display, which violates the principle of neutrality, was widely condemned in Israel. Itzik Edri, the chairman of the Wikimedia Israel Association, expressed his dissatisfaction in an interview, stating:

“Unfortunately, not only Arabic Wikipedia was blacked out, but the entire movement. This is a sad day in the history of a movement that is supposed to be neutral and respect its readers, volunteers, and donors around the world. It was a day when one of our most important projects was taken hostage by politics. This is not the vision of our movement; this is not what hundreds of thousands of volunteers have worked so hard to build” (Halperin, 2023).

Despite the protest, the Wikimedia Foundation decided not to intervene in the matter .

Bias in Articles Related to the Holocaust

While the current report deals with biases against Israel with reference to the war following the October 7 attack, it is important to understand the politicization of Wikipedia and the bias against Israel as an ongoing phenomenon, as well as to draw attention to articles of concern related to the Holocaust.

For example, a study published in *The Journal of Holocaust Research* found that a group of Wikipedia editors systematically promoted a “biased version of history” in articles related to the Holocaust. The researchers, who investigated 25 articles and approximately 300 back pages, uncovered the digital processes through which ideological fervor, prejudice, and bias can supersede rationality and historical accuracy in Wikipedia. They demonstrated how over the past ten years, a small group of editors have been influencing the portrayal of Holocaust history on Wikipedia, shifting it away from well-founded, evidence-based research and towards a biased interpretation. Wikipedia's entries on Jewish subjects, particularly those related to Polish–Jewish

history surrounding World War II, perpetuate and reinforce damaging stereotypes and misconceptions (Grabowski and Klein, 2023).

In February 2023, The Wikimedia Foundation noted that it was reviewing the study and discussing possible violations of Wikipedia's neutrality and trustworthiness policies (Aderet, 2023). Later, in December 2023, Wikimedia released the following statement:

The Wikimedia Foundation welcomes research on Wikipedia and Wikimedia projects that aims to better understand our projects, including where improvements can be made in its content. Wikipedia volunteer editors are actively discussing the findings of the study and any potential violations of Wikipedia's policies, including those around neutrality, reliability, and verifiability. The Wikimedia Foundation is, in addition, actively reviewing the study to evaluate if and how we may be able to support volunteer-led moderation processes on Wikipedia. Whenever a claim of biased content is brought to our attention, our first step is to share those concerns directly with volunteer editors, who create and enforce Wikipedia's content policies. (Eichner, 2023).

At the same time, however, the foundation emphasized that it has no editorial control over Wikipedia's articles: "The Wikimedia Foundation is the non-profit that supports Wikipedia and its community of volunteers, though we do not control editorial content" (Eichner, 2023).

The study also caught the attention of Wikipedia's Arbitration Committee (ArbCom), which resolves editing disputes. ArbCom recognized the seriousness of the allegations that a distorted view of Holocaust history was being propagated to millions of people. However, the accused editors rejected the claims, stating they had not engaged in distortion. Since ArbCom is not supposed to decide on factual accuracy, a situation in which only editors could resolve the dispute proved to be challenging. And while there are calls for the creation of an external expert body for politically charged topics, this has not happened yet (Elia-Shalev, 2023).

The Bias Against Israel on English-Language Wikipedia

While all entries on Wikipedia are expected to be neutral, in many examples dealing with conflict, articles have been found to be distinctly biased. One of the most common ways to bypass the base principle for writing neutrality is through framing. In many cases, it was found that Wikipedia entries dealing with the Israeli–Palestinian conflict emphasize certain aspects of reality, and thus they cannot be characterized as neutral writing. These articles are defining Israel negatively while applying interpretative measures and providing a biased and one-sided moral assessment. Many articles can be defined as propaganda against Israel that deny its right to exist; they do so through the sophisticated use of language, links, and examples. The bias against Israel takes the forms of:

- **Content Bias:** This refers to the presentation of the war and the use of terminology and references regarding Hamas and Israel that may demonstrate bias.

- **Deletion Attacks and Tendentious Deletion Attempts:** This involves surprise deletion attacks or efforts to remove articles related to Israel.
- **Editing Restrictions:** Certain procedures, such as limiting editing access for users with less than 500 edits and less of 30 days seniority, may hinder the democratic nature of the site, particularly concerning war-related entries; .
- **Selective Enforcement:** System administrators may exhibit biased behavior by inconsistently applying rules, especially in cases involving Israelis or those not supporting a “so-called” pro-Palestinian stance; .
- **Anti-Israeli Editors:** Users have reported instances of aggressive behavior from editors with anti-Israeli views, leading to attempts to block Israeli contributors; and .
- **Biased Sources:** Wikipedia may frequently rely on sources such as media outlets, journalists, or researchers with clear anti-Zionist perspectives, potentially leading to biased content.

Content Bias

Although criticism of Israel in the context of the encyclopedia is reasonable as long as it is based on valid facts and research, a consistently negative description with no positive points may indicate bias. From a systematic examination of a large number of articles related to the conflict, it can be concluded that the bias of the content against Israel is evident in problematic articles that present Israel as a colonialist apartheid state without balancing those characterizations with additional perspectives or providing adequate context. This, along with articles that use one-sided and propagandistic terms, violates the principle of neutrality and the ability to present a truthful picture of what is being described. In this way, these entries make Wikipedia a propaganda tool.

The biased articles examined were characterized by the following aspects:

- **Terminology:** Language that promotes the demonization or delegitimization of Israel, both in the names of articles and their content.
- **Framing and Lack of Context:** Articles that do not mention terrorism or the threats faced by Israel present a one-sided approach.
- **The Omission of Significant Details:** Showcasing details about the restrictions facing Palestinians without explaining why the restrictions exist or discussing the complex security challenges facing Israel provide a one-sided view, which may demonstrate bias. This leads to one-Dimensional Perspective.
- **One-Sided Sources:** A lack of representation of Israeli voices, researchers, and facts that support Israel's rationale for its policies.
- **Emphasis on Negative Examples:** Placing emphasis on anti-Israel examples and interpretations and negatively referencing Israel in terminology and content compared to neutral terminology in relation to the Palestinians.
- **Biased Links:** Strengthening aspects of demonization in links suggested for further reading, such as “genocide” and “victimization,” which reinforce the one-sided perception of Israel.

Example Article Analysis

Below are several points from a content analysis of the bias in a [Palestinian genocide accusation](#) page:

Title

The title uses the phrase “Palestinian Genocide Accusation” instead of a more neutral term like “Allegations of Palestinian Genocide,” leading the entry to focus primarily on the accusation without adequately exploring the merits of the allegations, thus creating a bias in the title itself.

Focus on Accusations Against Israel

The entry focuses predominantly on accusations against Israel, while giving little space to Israel's perspective or to arguments against the genocide claims. This creates the impression that the accusations are credible or unassailable, despite the existence of numerous sources that challenge them. This, as there is substantial evidence indicating that Israel's actions do not meet the legal definition for “genocide” as the key factor of intent is missing.

Unbalanced Sources

- The entry cites sources, quotes, and arguments from groups critical of Israel, but does not balance them with voices from Israel and from research communities that hold different views and defend Israel's policies or actions.
- The writing, which is not anchored in a variety of sources, undermines the credibility of the coverage.

Marginalization of Violence Against Israelis

- Details of violence against Israelis, the threats Israel faces, and the rationale behind Israeli military actions are minimized or omitted from the entry.
- As a result, Israel is presented as the sole aggressor in the region, when it can be argued that the opposite is true.

Lack of Facts Supporting Israel

- The entry does not include facts that support Israel's position or challenge the accusations that it committed genocide.
- As a result, the article reads more like an indictment than a neutral and unbiased examination of the issue.

Negative Tone

The tone and language used to describe Israeli actions are consistently negative, while the language about the Palestinians is more neutral or positive.

Linking to the “Genocide” Category

The entry is linked to the “Genocide” category, along with a skull image, which reinforces the bias against Israel, rather than presenting allegations that can be refuted and that have not been proven by any reliable source to be acts of genocide based on intent.

One-Sided List of Links

- The list of links at the end of the entry is one-sided and creates a false impression that this is a proven genocide, rather than allegations (that have not been legally confirmed) of genocide:
- [Atrocity crime](#)
- [Demographics of the State of Palestine](#)
- [Demographic history of Palestine \(region\)](#)
- [Genocides in history \(21st century\) #Israel/Palestine](#)
- [Israel and apartheid](#)
- [Allegations of genocide of Ukrainians in the Russian invasion of Ukraine](#)
- [Ten stages of genocide](#)

In conclusion, it is evident that the article presented is unbalanced, lacking the Israeli perspective, and characterized by a selective portrayal of events that consistently casts Israel in a negative light. This bias extends to the tone and language used, as well as the mixing of historical cases where genocide was confirmed to have occurred with accusations and arguments that are not substantiated.

Additional Examples of Biased Articles

Palestinian Enclaves

The entry is biased and one-sided in the following aspects:

- It uses loaded and highly negative terms, such as "Bantustans," "open-air prisons," and "ghetto state" to describe the Palestinian enclaves.
- It emphasizes criticism of the Israeli policies that created the enclaves, with less representation of Israel's counterarguments and justifications.
- It draws an analogy between Israeli policies and the South African apartheid regime.
- It quotes a wide range of sources criticizing the impact of the enclaves on Palestinians, but very few or no sources supporting or justifying the Israeli approach, with an overall focus on the negative consequences for Palestinians and less attention paid to Israel's security considerations.

Nakba Denial

- While the entry includes the viewpoints of Israeli historians and organizations that criticize Nakba denial, it focuses primarily on critiques of Israeli policies and actions during the 1948 Independence War and thereafter.
- A more balanced approach would involve the presentation of a wider range of perspectives, including those that contest the characterization of Nakba denial or provide alternative interpretations of historical events.
- More egregiously, the entry equates Nakba denial with Holocaust denial.
- Terms like “exoneration” and “perpetuation of the conflict” are judgmental and non-neutral, as is the reference to the relationship in terms of “victim– perpetrator.”
- The entry makes selective use of sources, relying heavily on Palestinian historians, activists, and NGOs, and does not include from the perspectives of Israeli scholars, policymakers, or organizations.

Zionism as Settler Colonialism

- The theory of Zionism as settler colonialism is used by opponents of Zionism. However, the title of the entry does not indicate that this is a theory, and the description of the entry does not indicate that this is a relatively marginal view, which most researchers do not accept. Instead, it is stated that the term is gaining momentum.
- The entry presents a one-sided and biased view of the historical development of Israel., For instance, it overlooks the presence of Jewish communities in Israel for centuries before the establishment of the state. Furthermore, it fails to acknowledge Palestinian hostilities against Jews and massacres prior to the state establishment.
- The overall narrative presents the Palestinian perspective and distorts the perception of reality.
- The responses of scholars who oppose the terminology are not sufficiently detailed, and thus an overall framework for understanding the problematic nature of the concept is not established.

Comparisons Between Israel and Nazi Germany

- The entry normalizes the unacceptable comparison between Israel and Nazi Germany by stating that such a comparison is accepted and common in certain contexts.
- The emphasis is on examples comparing Israel to Nazi Germany using the terminology of “occupation” and “military actions” without the overall context of the threat to Israel.
- At the end of the entry, reinforcing the connection, there is a list of links such as Criticism of the Israeli government, Double genocide, Fascism, Politics of Genocide Recognition, History of Nazi Germany, and Victimology.

Deletion Attacks

One recurring and changing aspect of bias against Israel on Wikipedia is the almost immediate call of removal of articles dealing with October 7th massacre, which can be interpreted as an attempt to downplay the very serious events that occurred against Israel. As part of this, many articles have been nominated for deletion and survived a vote. The lack of coincidence is also reflected in what can be called "deletion attacks" - the simultaneous nomination for deletion of a number of articles on a specific topic or issue, such as was seen with the following articles:

- https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Netiv_HaAsara_massacre
- [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Nir_Yitzhak_massacre_\(2nd_nomination\)](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Nir_Yitzhak_massacre_(2nd_nomination))
- https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Holit_massacre
- https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Articles_for_deletion/Inbal_Rabin-Lieberman

Deleted or Merged Entries

Unlike the entries that managed to withstand deletion votes, some were deleted or merged with an existing entry, making them difficult to find:

- [Yakhini massacre](#)—7 people were murdered in this massacre, but the event was swallowed up in the larger story about the war.
- [Hamas beheading incidents](#)—this morbid phenomenon demonstrates the horrors of the surprise attack, but the entire entry was deleted and not merged.
- [Nazism in Palestinian society](#)—It can be argued that this deleted entry, which describes a documented sociological and historical phenomenon (Schroeter, 2018) deserves attention and exploration.

Problematic Terminology and the Effort to Change the Names of Terms


The term "framing" describes the way in which it is possible to influence public opinion through the ways in which the mass media portray issues, and in this way influence the public's understanding and evaluation of these issues.

After the articles that were nominated for deletion in the deletion attack survived the deletion process, there are also several examples of requests to change the names of articles from "massacre" to "attack," as in the case of the article about the Holit massacre. Of course, the difference in terminology creates a completely different perception of what occurred, as the term "attack" implies a legitimate struggle, while "massacre" denotes mass atrocities. In the case of the Nir Yitzhak massacre, the request was approved.


Holit massacre

Article Talk

 Language

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A request that this article title be changed to *Holit attack* is under discussion. Please do not move this article until the discussion is closed.

[Learn more](#)

Nir Yitzhak attack

Article Talk

 Language

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 View source

On 7 October 2023, the [Hamas](#) Nuseirat Battalion^[*citation needed*] attacked [Nir Yitzhak](#), a kibbutz close to the [border fence](#) with the [Gaza Strip](#), as part of a [surprise attack](#) on Israel.

Israelis' Difficulties in Editing the English Wikipedia

For the purpose of this report, conversations were held with a number of Israeli Wikipedians, including some who also operate on the English site, from which the following observations emerged:

- The articles biased against Israel are mostly closed to editing, and it is impossible for an individual to change them without having made 500 edits, which leaves many Israelis unable to edit articles about which they have great knowledge.
- The sense that one is required to engage in a space that is very pro-Palestinian was repeatedly described by the Wikipedians.
- A feeling of fear was described among some of the editors in editing the English Wikipedia, and the feeling that they are subject to excessive criticism. Reluctance to edit in pro-Palestinian articles was also described.
- A recurring feeling of difficulty integrating into the English Wikipedia was described, with reports of hostile and disrespectful treatment by admins and stewards. This was unlike the treatment of other Wikipedians.
- Several editors noted that there are a number of activists who are responsible for the anti-Israel tone and that none of them disclose their full name or operate in a way that allows them to be identified.

Recommendations

The state of the articles dealing with the conflict is alarming in its lack of neutrality. In order to change the existing situation, intervention is required. Following are recommendations for short-term and long-term action to ensure the neutrality of Wikipedia.

Institutionalization of Bias Research in Wikipedia:

Promoting Transparency and Neutrality

- Research of issues related to bias in the English Wikipedia and in other languages through scholarships and research funds will allow for the monitoring of the changes and developments on the subject and ensure that it is part of the ongoing discourse. Wikimedia may fund these as part of human rights due diligence procedures and enable outside researchers to challenge the neutrality of the platform.
- Develop best practices for neutral content curation.
- Community Engagement: Host forums and discussions within the Wikipedia community to address concerns about neutrality and gather feedback for policy improvements.
- Public Transparency Reports: Regularly publish reports on efforts to maintain neutrality, including challenges faced and progress made.

Action with Stewards, Admins, and Bureaucrats

- Implement the requirement that admins, bureaucrats and stewards operate under their full names. This recommendation was already made in an article that dealt with the gender gap in Wikipedia (Aharoni Lir, 2021). Stewards have an extensive ability to operate on the site and it is important that they bear responsibility for their role and the policy they lead. Network bullying and discriminatory treatment increase when there is no personal responsibility and acting under cover of anonymity is possible.
- Education and Training: An effort should be made to train the stewards, admins, and bureaucrats to recognize and avoid bias, with a particular focus on political and cultural sensitivity.
- Diverse Editor Recruitment: Actively seek to diversify the editor base, as a more diverse group of editors can provide different perspectives and help counteract systemic bias.

Policy Changes

- Stricter Guidelines for Sources: Revise the guidelines for acceptable sources, emphasizing the need for diverse perspectives. This can include the prioritization of academic and peer-reviewed sources over news media, especially on politically charged topics.
- Clearer Definition of Neutrality: Refine the policy on neutrality to include specific examples of bias, especially on politically sensitive subjects. This can help editors understand the subtle ways bias can manifest.

- **Bias Monitoring Group:** Establish a dedicated group to monitor articles for signs of bias, especially on politically sensitive matters. This group should be diverse in terms of political and cultural perspectives to ensure balanced oversight.
- **Tagging and Review System for Sensitive Topics:** Implement a system whereby articles on sensitive topics are flagged for review by a diverse panel of editors before changes go live.

Neutrality Enforcement Mechanisms

- **Automated Monitoring Tools:** Develop or improve AI tools that can detect biased language or unbalanced representations of a particular topic. These tools can flag content for human review.
- **Development of a Set of Criteria for Testing Neutrality:** This can be based on a code-based testing bot as well as a team that has an equal representation of stakeholders. The inspection team should be objective and have the ability to act to draw attention to the lack of neutrality of biased articles.
- **Editor Accountability:** Implement a system in which editors are held accountable for repeated instances of bias. This could include a warning system, temporary bans, or even permanent bans for severe or repeat violations.
- **Transparent Editing History:** Ensure that all changes to articles are transparent and traceable. This helps in identifying editors who may consistently introduce bias into articles.
- **Community Reporting System:** Encourage the Wikipedia community to report suspected bias. This system should be easy to use and should ensure that reports are taken seriously and investigated promptly.
- **Regular Audits:** Conduct regular audits of politically sensitive articles by independent reviewers. These can help identify systemic bias and areas for improvement.

Further Reading

- [Wikipedia Entries Manipulated in Line with Iran's Propaganda](#)
- [Factual encyclopedia or Hamas propaganda? | Wikipedia's shocking anti-Israel bias](#)
- ['Iranian cyber army' blamed as Wikipedia deletes atrocities](#)
- [Wikipedia's 'Supreme Court' tackles alleged conspiracy to distort Holocaust articles](#)
- [Wikipedia biases](#)
- ['Jews Helped the Germans Out of Revenge or Greed': New Research Documents How Wikipedia Distorts the Holocaust](#)
- [The Arabic Wikipedia was blacked out as an identification with the Palestinians](#)

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