On July 21, 2017, Google announced the launch of its Redirect Method Pilot Program, which is intended to target individuals searching for ISIS-related content on YouTube and direct them to counter-narrative videos. To gauge the efficacy of the program, between April 3 and April 4, 2018, the Counter Extremism Project (CEP) reviewed a total of 710 YouTube videos for extremist and counter-narrative content. The 710 videos were found by conducting YouTube searches for a total of six terms related to Islamic extremism, four of which were explicitly mentioned by Google’s Redirect Method Pilot Program as words targeted for “suggesting positive sentiment towards ISIS.”

Extremist Content on YouTube

These numbers suggest that although YouTube may have improved its takedown practices, especially for ISIS videos, the platform has not made the same efforts to target non-ISIS extremist content.

- Of the 710 videos sampled by CEP, **53 videos** (more than 7.4%) were determined to include extremist propaganda, glorification of extremism, or violent extremism.
- Of the 53 videos found to have included extremist content, **25 videos** (47.2% of the 53 extremist videos, 3.5% of the 710 videos checked) were explicitly violent in nature and/or showed gore.
- Official ISIS propaganda was relatively limited. Only 4 videos (8% of the 53 extremist videos) found were what CEP characterized as official ISIS propaganda releases. However, 18 (34%)—more than three times as many—were official propaganda releases from non-ISIS extremist groups. The remaining 31 (58%) were various unofficial propaganda videos, combat footage, or photo montages.

Counter-Narrative Content on YouTube

A user searching for extremist material on YouTube was more than 3x as likely to encounter extremist material than counter-narratives.

- Google’s efforts to promote counter-narrative content appear to be inconsistent and insufficient. CEP found only **15 videos** (2.1% of the 710 videos checked) that may include counter-narrative messaging.
- 14 out of the 15 counter-narrative videos were found in the search results for two terms that Google’s Redirect Method specified were targeted for counter-narrative messaging. However, no counter-narrative material at all was found in the search results for the other two terms specified by the Redirect Method as targeted for counter-narrative messaging.
- 14 out of the 15 counter-narrative videos (93%) were targeted at ISIS. Only one counter-narrative video found was targeted at a non-ISIS extremist group, despite the fact that only 4 videos found were official ISIS propaganda releases.