

Poll: Majority of Americans say misinformation fuels hate crimes, extremism

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The vast majority of Americans, from both sides of the political aisle have expressed their frustration about misinformation and said it causes both hate crimes and extreme political views, according to a poll conducted by the [Pearson Institute/AP-NORC](#) poll.

The poll, which was released on Thursday, shows that 74% of Americans feel that misinformation is a major problem, whereas 16% believe that it is still only a minor issue. 8% of those polled said that misinformation was not a problem at all.

Large majorities of the two main parties, 80% of Democrats and 70% of Republicans, said that misinformation has led to extreme political views, according to the survey.

On a similar note, 85% of Democrats and 72% of Republicans say misinformation increases hate crimes, which include violence motivated by race, religion or gender.

Overall, 77% of those polled believe that misinformation increases hate crimes, while 73% say it leads to an increase in extremism within politics.

Brett Reffeitt, a Republican from Indiana, took part in the poll and discussed how bad misinformation had gotten.

“We’re at a point now where the misinformation is so bad you can trust very little of what you read in the media or social media,” Reffeitt said. “It’s all about getting clicks, not the truth, and it’s the extremes that get the attention.”

Rob Redding, who is an independent from New York, said that unless misinformation is brought under control, it will continue to cause hate crimes and division.

“This is not a sustainable course. “People are in such denial about how dangerous and divisive this situation is,” Redding said.

Sheila Kohanteb, who is forum executive director at the Pearson Institute for Study and Resolution of Global Conflict, largely agreed with the views expressed by Reffeitt and Redding.

“The public continues to see misinformation as a significant problem that is impacting them personally. Many are also worried about the impact on democracy including the ways misinformation fuel hate crimes and extreme political beliefs.”

The poll was carried out between September 9th and September 12th. 1003 people were polled, and the margin of error is 4 percentage points.