



By: *Tomorrow's Affairs Staff*

Influential people leaving X—commitment to freedom of speech or merely a moral panic?



The great digital migration is indeed underway, but it still leaves several crucial questions unanswered. How big it really is, for example, then whether it is permanent and definitive or just temporary, and perhaps the most difficult to interpret—what are its real motives?

Of course, we are discussing a significant number of users who have abandoned X, formerly Twitter, for other social media, primarily Bluesky.

Migration already has far too many influential promoters to be ignored. The Guardian, arguably the most prominent media name, which has decided to abandon X, leaving its army of nearly 30 million followers to decide whether to follow suit.

"X is a toxic media platform, and its owner, Elon Musk, has been able to use its influence to shape political discourse," wrote The Guardian on 13 November.

However, other major global media outlets do not seem to be joining the wave of migration in protest against X's policies, including its owner Elon Musk's political involvement in Donald Trump's campaign.

The American National Public Radio is still mentioned as one of the protest migrants from X, but it did so more than a year ago as a sign of protest after the platform marked its account with the label "state-affiliated media." Although it has not published its content on X since then, the NPR account still exists and has about 8 million followers.

Reasons for leaving

Following the US presidential elections, Transparency International EU, one of the larger civil organisations, also left X after 14 years of use.

"It is well documented that X has drastically changed since Elon Musk purchased it two years ago," stated this anti-corruption organisation, while reminding that its long-

standing presence on Twitter/X "greatly helped amplify their policy recommendations and advocacy messages to a much wider audience."

One of the reasons for leaving X is its reduced control of harmful content

One of the reasons for leaving X is its reduced control of harmful content, which has led to the rise of xenophobia, racism, hate speech, and conspiracy theories.

Since buying Twitter two years ago and renaming it X, Elon Musk has reduced its capacity to moderate content. Last July, the European Commission formally charged X with violating its Social Media Law.

An additional reason for the anger of many former X users was the company's decision to change the terms of use by harvesting users' content, without their consent, to feed its AI chatbot Grok.

US elections—a call to move

However, the wave of migration from X to other platforms has reached its peak with Trump's election victory on 5 November.

The main beneficiary of this migration, BlueSky, has been talking about a million new users per day in the first days after Trump's victory. The departure of many celebrities from X emphasises the political aspect of their discontent, not the long suffering from Musk's tricks with the network, which have enabled a tide of racism, misinformation, and conspiracy theories.

Is there a genuine opposition to the suppression of civilised social debate, or is it merely a political response from those who oppose Trump's new mandate?

Is there a genuine opposition to the suppression of civilised social debate, or is it merely a political response from those who oppose Trump's new mandate?

Several celebrities, including Jamie Lee Curtis, Ben Stiller, and Barbra Streisand, who have garnered significant attention for their departure from X, are **leaving** due to the loss of Kamala Harris in the presidential election, whose campaign they publicly supported.

Furthermore, their departure stems from their inability to tolerate Elon Musk's current status as not only the unloved owner of their preferred social media platform but also being part of the future presidential administration they have actively fought against in public.

Moral panic

Professor Bart Cammaerts, from LSE's Department of Media and Communications, **said** last August, "It is time for users of X to delete their accounts."

"The question users of X should ask themselves is: haven't enough red lines been crossed to delete accounts en masse and thereby reduce the impact and influence of X and Musk (further)? I think we have reached that moment," Prof. Cammaerts wrote at the time.



The real wave emerged following the US presidential elections, when it became evident that the White House will have a returnee - Donald Trump

political, providing sufficient grounds to describe X as a "safe haven for trolls and extreme right fascist rhetoric."

However, they failed to initiate a migration wave from X during that period. The real wave emerged following the US presidential elections, when it became evident that the White House will have a returnee, the same individual Elon Musk had reinstated when he became its owner two years ago.

His arguments were communicative and