

## **Subject information sheet (Tutkimustiedote)**

### **Research Project: Interviews with young adults about production and consumption of videos on TikTok**

#### ***Welcome to participate in a research interview!***

This information sheet gives you information on the research project TikTokCracy. In this research we explore how young adults (aged 18-29) produce and consume TikTok videos and how they understand audiovisual, short video communication as part of their everyday lives as well as cultural and political expression. Your opinions and viewpoints are very valuable to us!

The researchers of the project are Dr. Heta Mulari and Dr. Nadezhda Vasileva, both based at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University, Finland.

#### ***Research topic and purposes***

This research project investigates the relationship between TikTok and democracy in today's Finland. In our current digital society, it is crucial to understand TikTok's growing importance and role in people's everyday lives, understandings about democracy, as well as cultural and political expressions.

The research contributes, on the one hand, sustainability of democracy in Finland through examining the role of TikTok in democratic process and learning about young people's and young adults' needs, struggles and wishes that they articulate using TikTok videos. On the other hand, the research tackles the short audio-visual form as a specific language used for public communication.

#### ***Methods for collecting research data***

The research includes qualitative, semi-structured interviews (individual, pair and focus group interviews) together with young adults (aged 18-29). Each interview will last for approximately 1-2 hours, depending on the number of participants. The themes tackled in the interviews include consuming and producing content on TikTok and other short video platforms and [meanings of feminisms and femininities on TikTok/narratives and experiences of immigrants, living in Finland]. The interviews will be recorded on a tape recorder and transcribed as text documents. During and after the interviews, the researchers will write a researcher's diary about their observations. Participants, interview locations or situations cannot be traced from the diary.

#### ***Risks and benefits***

The research does not include any health-related or economic risks. Risks related to social risks (such as in the form of becoming recognized in the research publications and receiving unwanted attention) or processing of personal data will be minimized by careful

pseudonymization in the research publications so that the participants cannot be traced. The research does not include any benefits.

### ***Confidentiality, data procession and data storage***

The project follows EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as well as the Finnish Data Protection Act at all stages of the research. All research data (interview tapes and transcripts) will be safely stored on a password-protected external drive and protected by the Cryptomator programme following Tampere University data protection regulations. The interview tapes will be destroyed after the interviews have been transcribed and pseudonymized. The interviews will be transcribed by Tutkimustie, with which Tampere University has a data processing agreement (DPA).

Only the researchers working on the project will have access to the data and it will not be given to anyone outside the research project. However, other researchers or graduate/postgraduate students may be included in the project and analyze the data under the supervision of the research team. Further information on processing personal data can be found in the Privacy Notice for Research (see the project's website).

The data will be used only for the purposes described on this information sheet.

### ***Voluntary participation***

Participating in the research is fully voluntary. If you wish, you may interrupt or cancel your participation during the interview by letting the researcher know. However, the research data collected in focus group interviews until the moment of interrupting or cancellation may still be used in the data set, since it is afterwards impossible to recognize a single person among many speakers from the audio tape. If you have participated in an individual interview and wish to cancel your participation afterwards, the data collected may still be used in research since it is impossible to remove data if, for example, extracts of interviews have already been used in publications. However, your data can be withdrawn from future analysis and publications. The lawful basis for processing personal data is public interest and scientific research.

### ***Dissemination and privacy of personal data***

The results of the research will be published in scientific journals and article collections as well as popular articles, including blog posts. The researchers will also give presentations for diverse audiences, including academic and professional contexts.

All research data will be pseudonymized. Names of persons, places or organizations will never be used in any dissemination. However, especially widely known persons might still be recognizable from the context in the research outputs. This is why complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed.

### ***Funding***

The research is funded by the Kone Foundation.

### ***Further use and archiving of the research data***

The research data (anonymized interview transcripts) are offered for permanent archiving without personal data at the Finnish Social Science Data Archive after the project has ended and the final outputs have been published by 31 December 2029. The Archive may hand over the data for reuse to registered clients for research only (including Master's, doctoral and Polytechnic/University of Applied Sciences Master's theses). Permission to archive the data will be asked separately from each participant.

### ***Ethical principles***

At all stages of research (collecting, processing, and analyzing research data and disseminating the results) the researchers will respect the participants' human rights, self-determination, and constitutional rights (including the right to life and personal liberty and security, freedom of movement, freedom of religion, freedom of expression and the right to privacy). The research subjects will not be predisposed to any major harm or risks. The researchers acknowledge the complex ethical issues related to doing research on social media platforms such as TikTok. Throughout the research, the researchers are mindful about possible additional visibility to the research subject that academic analysis may cause. This is why considerations and reflections on ethical issues and careful pseudonymization are present at all stages of research. Further information on ethical guidelines can be found on the webpage of The Finnish National Board for Research Integrity (TENK)

<https://tenk.fi/en/advice-and-materials>

In case of any further questions or concerns about the research, please contact us.

### ***Contact information of the Principal Investigator***

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## 6. Privacy Notice – Scientific Research

This privacy notice describes how we process your personal data in compliance with data protection legislation. In data protection legislation, the term “data subject” refers to the person whose personal data are processed. In this privacy notice, we refer to data subject as “you” and controller as “we”.

This privacy notice may be updated or edited if necessary. You will be notified of any significant changes as mandated by data protection legislation.

This privacy notice came into force on 26.5.2025.

### 1. Controller

The controller of the research project is:

[c] an individual researcher. The research project will be conducted by the researcher identified below.

Heta Mulari, post-doctoral researcher, project leader, Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University.

Nadezhda Vasileva, post-doctoral researcher, Faculty of Social Sciences, Tampere University

The research project is funded by the Kone Foundation, and the researchers are grant researchers.

The contact person for questions about data processing is Dr. Heta Mulari, post-doctoral researcher and project leader, who can be reached at [heta.mulari@tuni.fi](mailto:heta.mulari@tuni.fi), 050-3058410. To call Tampere University’s switchboard, dial +358 (0) 294 52 11.

If you have general questions about data protection at Tampere University, please email our Data Protection Officer at [dpo@tuni.fi](mailto:dpo@tuni.fi).

### 2. Scope and purpose of data processing

Name of the research project: *Interviews with young adults about production and consumption of videos on TikTok*

Part of the research project *TikTok (Anti)Democracies: Self-making, Skepticism, and Political Expression among Young People (TIKTOKCRACY)* (1/2025-9/2028)

This is a one-time research project that will last until 31.12.2029.

We will process your personal data as part of a research project. The purpose of processing your personal data is to conduct the research project specified above.

The research data collected in this project includes 1) interviews (audio tapes and transcripts), 2) researchers' notes (diaries) from the interviews, and 3) videos provided by the content creators, used in the focus group interviews and possibly in dissemination. In addition, the researchers will process 4) verbal informed consent (audio tapes) and 5) scanned documents about the agreement to use short videos in focus group interviews and dissemination.

The research project explores how young adults produce and consume TikTok videos and how they understand audiovisual, short video communication as part of their everyday lives as well as cultural and political expressions. The research includes qualitative, semi-structured interviews (individual, pair and focus group interviews) together with young adults (aged 18-29). During the research project, all personal data will be processed safely and carefully. The project follows EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) as well as the Finnish Data Protection Act at all stages of the research. The interviews will be recorded on audio recorders used only for research. From the recorders the interview tapes (.mp3) will be safely transferred to a password-protected external drive and protected by the Cryptomator programme following Tampere University data protection regulations. The external drive is used only by the researchers working in this project. The interview tapes will be destroyed after the interviews have been transcribed, checked, and pseudonymized. The interview transcripts will be stored safely on the password-protected external drive. The audio tapes (.mp3) including the informed verbal consent will be stored separately from research data (interview tapes and interview transcripts). The anonymized interview transcripts will be stored to the Finnish Social Science Data archive after the project has ended, and the final outputs have been published in 2029. In the research diaries (.docx), the researchers will pseudonymize all personal data and only process personal data that is absolutely necessary for the analysis. The short videos (.mp4) provided by the content creators will be stored on the external drive separately from other research data. The videos will not be archived for further use. They will be destroyed after the project has ended in 2029. The scanned agreements about the use of videos will be stored separately from other research data and will be destroyed after the project has ended in 2029.

The principal investigator (lead researcher) is responsible for overseeing the research project. The research group may also be assigned to serve as the principal investigator, with its members participating in conducting the research project.

The research findings, reported in aggregate form so that individual research participants cannot be identified, are intended to be published in relevant scientific journals.

### **3. Lawful basis for processing personal data**

The lawful basis for processing your personal data is:

- ☒ a task carried out in the public interest or the exercise of official authority

X scientific or historical research or compilation of statistics

In case special categories of personal data (such as health data or criminal offence data) will be processed, the lawful basis for processing is:

☒ scientific or historical research in the public interest or conduct of statistics

#### **4. Sources and types of personal data**

Depending on the circumstances, we may collect personal data either directly from you or from other sources. We will collect data from:

☒ you as the data subject

We will process the following types of personal data:

x General personal data: \_voice (interview tapes), voice, face, usernames (videos)\_\_\_

☒ Special category data (sensitive personal data):

☒ racial or ethnic origin (will be carefully considered case-by-case and not used in the analysis if not absolutely necessary)

☒ political opinions or religious/philosophical beliefs (will be carefully considered case-by-case and not used in the analysis if not absolutely necessary)

☒ sexual behaviour or orientation (will be carefully considered case-by-case and not used in the analysis if not absolutely necessary)

We will process data on the following categories of data subjects:

☐ employees ☐ students ☒ research participants ☐ research staff ☐ others, please specify: \_\_\_\_

#### **5. Transfer and disclosure of personal data**

☒ Your personal data will not be transferred outside the EU/EEA.

In some cases, your personal data may be processed by data processors with whom we have signed appropriate data processing agreements. The interview tapes will be transcribed by Tutkimustie. There is a binding agreement about data protection and safe data procession, and non-disclosure agreement between the transcription company (Tutkimustie) and Tampere University. The interview tapes will be transferred to Tutkimustie by using the

protected platform provided by the company. The interview tapes will be destroyed right after transcription.

## **6. Protecting personal data**

Your personal data will be protected using appropriate technical and organisational measures. We will protect your data through technical measures, including antivirus software, firewalls and regular software updates. Users who can access personal data are required to log in with a username and password or, in some cases, with multi-factor authentication.

We will also protect your data through organisational measures. Our staff are obligated to maintain confidentiality, and access to data is restricted. If necessary, we will implement additional safeguards to protect data, such as separate storage locations.

Any physical documents will be safeguarded by storing them in locked facilities.

Material will be:

- ☒ pseudonymised after collection (interviews, researcher diaries)
- ☒ stored with personally identifiable information, which is necessary for the following reasons: The video data (.mp4) will be analysed without removing directly identifiable data, because it is impossible to remove identifiable data (such as face, voice and username) from the videos. However, the videos (apart from a few carefully selected cases) will be carefully pseudonymized in all analysis and dissemination.

During this research project, your data will also be protected through the following measures: All research data will be stored on a password-protected external drive and secured by using Cryptomator. Only researchers working in the project have access to the data.

## **7. Retention period for personal data**

We will retain your personal data for only as long as necessary, as determined on a case-by-case basis. The retention period also depends on the requirements set out in data protection legislation. We will adhere to our Data Management Plan and all applicable legislation when determining the retention period of personal data.

Your personal data will be retained as follows: Interview tapes will be destroyed right after interview transcripts are finished and checked. Pseudonymized interview transcripts and the audio tapes including verbal informed consent will be stored separately until the end of the project and the publication of final research outputs, 31 December 2029. After that the transcripts will be anonymised and archived in the Finnish Social Science Data Archive.

After the research project has been completed, the research records containing personal data will be:

☒ anonymised and archived without personally identifiable information (interview transcripts)

X destroyed and not archived (researcher diaries, short videos)

## **8. Profiling and automated decision-making**

We will not use your personal data for profiling or automated decision-making.

## **9. Data subjects' rights and how to exercise them**

Data protection legislation affords certain rights to data subjects, depending on the lawful basis for processing their personal data. Under certain circumstances, your rights may be restricted, for example, due to our legal obligations or if personal data are processed for scientific research, statistical or archiving purposes. If your rights have been restricted, we will implement appropriate and necessary technical and organisational measures to protect your privacy. As a data subject, you have the following rights which you can exercise by sending us a request.

### Right of access

You have the right to request confirmation of whether we hold your personal data and to receive a copy of the data we hold.

### Right to rectification

You have the right to request that any incorrect or incomplete personal data we hold about be revised or supplemented. You can also request to have any unnecessary personal data erased from our records.

### Right to erasure

You have the right to request the erasure of your personal data from our records (“right to be forgotten”) under certain circumstances.

### Right to restrict processing

You may have the right to restrict the processing of your personal data in certain cases defined by law. For example, this right may apply if you believe the personal data we hold about you is incorrect or that your data are being processed in violation of data protection legislation, or if you have opposed the processing of your data.

### Right to object

In certain circumstances, you have the right to object to the processing of personal data on grounds relating to your particular situation.

### Right to data portability



Under certain circumstances, you have the right to request that the personal data you have provided be transferred to another system.

#### Right not to be subject to automated decision-making

You have the right not to be subject to decisions based solely on automated processing (such as profiling) that produce legal effects concerning you or otherwise similarly and significantly affect you. However, there are exceptions to this prohibition.

#### Withdrawing consent

If your personal data is being processed based on your consent, you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.

#### Right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority

You have the right to lodge a complaint with a supervisory authority (Data Protection Ombudsman), if you believe that the processing of your personal data violates data protection legislation.

Office of the Data Protection Ombudsman

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Postal address: PO Box 800, FI-00531 Helsinki, Finland

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