

How Deep Does Israeli Influence Run Within LinkedIn?



The professional networking platform LinkedIn has returned to the spotlight following the publication of a new investigative report accusing the company of facilitating user surveillance and transferring data to third parties, specifically in the United States and Israel.

The investigation gains added significance in light of the platform's record on moderating Palestinian content and its perceived bias toward Israel. What exactly has this latest development revealed, and how extensive is Tel Aviv's influence within the company?

What Did the New Investigation Reveal?

An investigation titled “BrowserGate,” published by the German association Fairlinked, revealed that LinkedIn had been deploying a small piece of code within users’ browsers to check whether specific extensions were installed.

According to the report, the practice went beyond merely identifying these extensions. It also involved collecting technical data about users’ devices, with indications that part of this process is linked to the U.S.-based company HUMAN Security, which previously merged with the Israeli firm PerimeterX.

LinkedIn is accused of bias towards Israel at the expense of Palestinian rights.

As explained by independent tech outlets, the mechanism itself was technically straightforward: the code attempts to access a small, known file within each browser extension. If successful, the platform can confirm that the extension is installed on the user’s device.

In simpler terms, LinkedIn was verifying the presence of extensions allowing it to determine whether users were employing tools that might compete with its services or extract data from its platform.

Tests conducted by BleepingComputer found that LinkedIn was scanning more than 6,236 extensions using this method. These included widely known tools such as Apollo, Lusha, and ZoomInfo, as well as others not directly tied to LinkedIn’s sales ecosystem, including grammar-checking tools and job-search extensions.

The investigation further showed that the code was not limited to scanning extensions. It also gathered general technical information about devices, including language settings, time zone, screen resolution, available memory, CPU core count, battery status, and certain audio and storage characteristics. While this data does not directly reveal a user’s identity, it can be used to construct a unique “device fingerprint” that distinguishes and profiles the device.

Notably, this scanning did not begin recently but expanded gradually over several years. According to The Next Web, LinkedIn initially scanned just 38 extensions in 2017. This number rose to 461 in 2024 and reached 6,167 extensions by February 2026.

Subsequent tests by BleepingComputer in early April confirmed that the number had climbed to 6,236. This indicates that the issue is not an isolated or temporary technical measure, but rather part of a steadily expanding trajectory.

LinkedIn responded by stating that it scans certain extensions as part of efforts to protect the platform from tools that scrape data in violation of its policies and to ensure site stability.

The company also emphasized that it does not use this data to infer sensitive

information about its members. However, it did not provide detailed explanations regarding how the data is stored, how long it is retained, or the precise limits of its use leaving the controversy unresolved.

A Record of Digital Bias Against Palestinians

1. Suppression of Palestinian Content

Years before this investigation emerged, LinkedIn had already faced accusations of bias in its moderation of Palestinian content, most notably for removing posts related to Palestine, including the phrase “from the river to the sea.”

On October 27, 2025, 7amleh – The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media published a report based on 15 testimonies from users and employees within Microsoft and LinkedIn. The report documented cases of posts supporting Palestinian rights being removed or restricted, alongside leniency toward content inciting violations against Palestinians.

It further alleged that senior management was making decisions that bypassed standard procedures, resulting in what it described as “dual censorship” restricting Palestinian voices while permitting hate speech.

The report also referenced internal complaints filed since October 2023 regarding these double standards, noting that many users had begun practicing self-censorship out of fear of losing employment opportunities.

2. Classification of Palestinian Cities

On January 5, 2026, 7amleh sent an open letter to LinkedIn’s CEO expressing concern over the platform’s classification of certain Palestinian cities such as Bethlehem and Ramallah under the label “Judea and Samaria, Israel.”

The letter argued that this designation distorts geographic reality and contributes to the digital normalization of annexation. It further asserted that the practice violates international standards, which recognize the West Bank as occupied territory.

The organization stressed that naming conventions are not neutral, and that the use of biblical terminology reinforces a settler narrative while undermining Palestinians’ digital rights. LinkedIn did not respond to the letter.

How Strong Are LinkedIn’s Ties to Israel?

LinkedIn is a U.S.-based company headquartered in California. It was acquired by Microsoft in 2016 in a \$26.2 billion all-cash deal, while retaining its brand and operational independence. Nevertheless, the company maintains a tangible operational presence in Israel.

On February 28, 2022, LinkedIn announced an agreement to acquire the

marketing analytics startup Oribi, confirming that it would open a new office in Tel Aviv as part of the deal.

According to the company's official blog, the office would serve as an innovation hub, with Oribi's team including founder Iris Shoor joining LinkedIn in Tel Aviv.

A TechCrunch report estimated the deal's value at between \$80 million and \$90 million, noting that it marked LinkedIn's first official presence in Israel.

In June 2023, the Israeli newspaper Globes reported that LinkedIn had leased an entire 1,400-square-meter floor in the Alon B Tower in Tel Aviv, employing around 50 staff members in Israel.

Alon Towers in "Tel Aviv", where LinkedIn rented an entire floor

This expansion suggests that the company's operational footprint extends beyond merely integrating the Oribi team, evolving instead into a regional hub for development and marketing.

Meanwhile, HUMAN Security headquartered in the United States with operational centers in Tel Aviv has effectively become a U.S.-Israeli company following its merger with the Israeli firm PerimeterX.

Data from IVC indicates that a research and development center in Israel was established after the merger. The Hebrew-language newspaper Calcalist reported that the integration would retain 110 employees in Tel Aviv and create an additional 50 jobs.

Microsoft's ownership of LinkedIn has further fueled suspicions of alignment with Israel, given Microsoft's deep security partnership with the Israeli military particularly following October 2023.

Leaked documents previously revealed that Microsoft invested millions of dollars in providing Azure services used for intelligence gathering and target identification, at a time when Gaza was under intense bombardment.