

## **BIO:**

Kinga H. Skorupska currently works at Polish-Japanese Academy of Information Technology and conducts research at the XR Lab. Kinga's interests include UX Design and Science Communication. She does research in the area of ICT solutions for the Ageing Society and Social Good, working with interfaces such as VR, AR, VA and dabbling in crowdsourcing and education to mindfulness and well-being.

## **Why is Wikipedia still written mostly by young white guys and how can we expand the demographic of writers? / Birth of the Author - who writes on Wikipedia?**

The Wikipedia project launched in 2001, when access to the Internet was still a premium service for the select few, usually young tech-savvy males from the West. Since then it has grown into the largest repository of knowledge, with over 6.4 million articles in the English language. It's popular because of its simplicity, comprehensiveness and a really broad scope. It became a popular source of information, not only for individuals, but also for multiple media outlets and even governments. And even though its reputation wasn't the best at first, it eventually transformed into a platform that is widely trusted and used in various fields as a quick reference guide.

Since it is commonly used by people around the world, it also provides an outlook on an extensive variety of cultures. It has the power to set the tone of a debate on current news items, and to inform about controversial issues. But those who visit it for information are predominantly passive users, who do not contribute to its content, and therefore are not familiar with how it is created, edited and moderated. While Wikipedia has grown incredibly in the last twenty years, its content creator demographic is still very similar to what it was in the beginning, despite the fact that nowadays there's a much broader range of potential contributors with access to the Internet.

There are multiple barriers to contributing to Wikipedia, for example lack of awareness that anyone can edit, lack of technical know-how, as well

as strict policies that authors need to be familiar with. What has been observed over the recent years is a lack of significant increase in the articles being edited in the last 10 years, despite massive increase in readership. The people who read the content mostly don't contribute to it.

This is a problem because Wikipedia contributors are mostly males aged twenty to forty. Articles of Wikipedia are then translated into other languages, and some of these translations may be translated with added bias, leading to articles varying greatly in many ways depending on the language you choose. While there are some topics on which it is easy to remain objective, other topics are prone to biases; for example topics related to a writer's culture or political inclinations. This is why encouraging more people from different backgrounds is so important. It will allow Wikipedia to fill gaps, and extend the scope of knowledge available for everyone.

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<https://wyborcza.pl/alehistoria/7,121681,25732654,wrzuc-brednie-na-wikipedie-polscy-nacjonalisci-wciskaja-kit.html?disableRedirects=true>

Political bias

<https://wyborcza.pl/alehistoria/7,162654,25773184,mamy-taka-wikipedie-na-jaka-zasluzylismy-eksperci-nie-chca.html>

What wikipedia promised at the beginning and how it worked/works now - how early assumptions did not take into account that some groups may dominate the discourse