Code of Conduct on Disinformation – Report of Newtral for the period January 2026 – June 2026

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Executive summary

Newtral is a media and technology company founded in January 2018. Our work is divided into three main business areas:

● Fact-checking and data verification. On our website, you can find debunked hoaxes, fact-checks on political statements, as well as explainers, visualizations, and articles from our contributors.

● Audiovisual production for television programs and streaming platforms. Our productions include *El Objetivo* de Ana Pastor, *Dónde Estabas Entonces*, and *Generación Top*, aired on laSexta; *Nevenka* for Netflix; *Sueño Real* for HBO; and *Los Borbones: una familia real* and *Asesinas* on LaSexta.

● Innovation and research based on Artificial Intelligence protocols. We have made significant advancements in various AI-driven fact-checking solutions through automation on a language-agnostic platform powered by Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning.

At Newtral, we are journalists, engineers, researchers, programmers, producers, directors, editors, graphic designers, and documentalists.

Newtral's fact-checking team is formed by independent journalists who have no relationship with any political party, private interest, or advocacy organization. This team fact-checks the statements of politicians from different parties and public administrations daily, as well as debunks viral misinformation, as well as other related products, such as prebunking, research on disinformation, and narratives. Our fact-checks aim for replicability (so that anyone can follow the process we have followed), and to this end, we include a list of sources we have used, including their links. We also invite readers to contact our team if they detect an error, have any comments about data related to our work, or have any doubts about anything whatsoever.

Newtral has partnerships with Meta and TikTok for debunking content proactively on those platforms. We also have a fact-checking tipline through WhatsApp, where anyone can ask us to verify any content they suspect is false. Besides journalists and fact-checkers, Newtral's team includes engineers and data scientists working on the automation of the fact-checking workflow. We have expertise in deep learning techniques and NLP data analysis. Additionally, we are members of both the EFCSN and the IFCN, reinforcing Newtral's commitment to upholding fact-checking standards, fostering transparency, and promoting the integrity of information.

Newtral's activities also cover other types of journalism and reporting, always highlighting the importance of data analysis and the interrelations between computer science and journalism.

As of 2019, Newtral also has an educational area under the name Newtral Educación, devoted to media literacy, data journalism, and promoting critical thinking in educational centers, universities, and others. Since 2025, Newtral has been part of the UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Alliance.

Newtral joined the Code of Practice on Disinformation in 2022, reinforcing our commitment to transparency and the fight against misinformation. As part of this initiative, we actively participated in the transition of the Code into a Code of Conduct under the Digital Services Act (DSA). This process marked a crucial step in strengthening the European Union's efforts to create a safer and more reliable information ecosystem.

VII. Empowering the fact-checking community

Commitment 33

Relevant Signatories (i.e. fact-checking organisations) commit to operate on the basis of strict ethical and transparency rules, and to protect their independence

Measure 33.1 Relevant Signatories will comply with the requirements of instruments such as being verified signatories of the International Fact-checking Network (IFCN) Code of Principles or the future Code of Professional Integrity for Independent European fact-checking organisations.	Newtral has been a verified signatory of the International Fact-checking Network (IFCN) Code of Principles since 2018, which ensures compliance with strict rules of ethics and transparency and the protection of our independence. Newtral has been a member of the European Fact-Checking Standards Network since 2023.
QRE 33.1.1. Relevant Signatories will report on the status of their membership to instruments such as those mentioned in Measure 33.1 and the actions taken as a result of that to ensure strict ethical and transparency rules, and to protect their independence.	Newtral renewed its status as a signatory of the European fact-checking network EFCSN on 2025, and in September 2026 has submitted its application to the IFCN renew its membership.
SLI 33.1.1 Relevant Signatories will report on the number of European fact-checkers that are IFCN-certified or are members of the future Code of Professional Integrity.	As of 2026, the European Fact-Checking Standards Network comprises 63 verified members from roughly 38 countries and territories across Europe and beyond. As of 2026, the IFCN describes its verified signatories to the Code of Principles as more than 140 organizations from 65 countries covering over 80 languages.

VIII. Transparency Centre

Commitment 34

To ensure transparency and accountability around the implementation of this Code, Relevant Signatories commit to set up and maintain a publicly available common Transparency Centre website.

Measure 34.3 Relevant Signatories will contribute to the Transparency Centre's information to the extent that the Code is applicable to their services.	Newtral contributes to the Transparency Centre's information to the extent that the Code is applicable to its services. As a signatory focusing on fact-checking and AI-driven disinformation analysis, our contributions center on documenting our adherence to commitments related to fact-checking, political advertising transparency, and crisis response.
Measure 34.4 Signatories will agree on the functioning and financing of the Transparency Centre within the Task-force, to be recorded and reviewed within the Task-Force on an annual basis.	As a signatory, we remain committed to the Task Force's annual review process to ensure continued compliance with this measure.

Commitment 35

Signatories commit to ensure that the Transparency Centre contains all the relevant information related to the implementation of the Code's Commitments and Measures and that this information is presented in an easy-to-understand manner, per service, and is easily searchable.

Measure 35.3 Signatories ensure that the Transparency Centre contains a repository of their reports assessing the implementation of the Code's commitments.	Newtral ensures that the Transparency Centre contains a repository of its reports assessing the implementation of the Code's commitments.
Commitment 36 Signatories commit to updating the relevant information contained in the Transparency Centre in a timely and complete manner.	
Measure 36.1 Signatories provide updates about relevant changes in policies and implementation actions in a timely manner, and in any event no later than 30 days after changes are announced or implemented.	As a signatory of the Code of Practice on Disinformation and a contributor to the Transparency Centre, Newtral provides updates on relevant changes in its policies and implementation actions in a timely manner, ensuring they are reported no later than 30 days after any changes are announced or implemented.

IX. Permanent Task Force	
Commitment 37 Signatories commit to participate in the permanent Task-force. The Task-force includes the Signatories of the Code and representatives from EDMO and ERGA. It is chaired by the European Commission, and includes representatives of the European External Action Service (EEAS). The Task-force can also invite relevant experts as observers to support its work. Decisions of the Task-force are made by consensus.	
Measure 37.1 Signatories will participate in the Task-force and contribute to its work. Signatories, in particular smaller or emerging services will contribute to the work of the Task-force proportionate to their resources, size and risk profile. Smaller or emerging services can also agree to pool their resources together and represent each other in the Task-force. The Task-force will meet in plenary sessions as necessary and at least every 6 months, and, where relevant, in subgroups dedicated to specific issues or workstreams.	Newtral participates in the Permanent Task-force and contributes to its work, as a smaller service, proportionate to our resources, size, and risk profile. We are committed to attending the plenary sessions as necessary, and engaging in relevant subgroups dedicated to specific issues or workstreams.
Measure 37.2 Signatories agree to work in the Task-force in particular – but not limited to – on the following tasks: - Establishing a risk assessment methodology and a rapid response system to be used in special situations like elections or crises. - Cooperate and coordinate their work in special situations like elections or crisis - Agree on the harmonised reporting templates for the implementation of the Code's Commitments and Measures, the refined methodology of the reporting, and the relevant data disclosure for monitoring purposes.	Newtral participates in the Task Force on an ad hoc basis through various assigned tasks such as cooperation, reporting, etc. On 31 August 2026, a Newtral representative attended the Taskforce meeting convened to discuss the events in Ceuta. Newtral is also participating in the online meetings organised by the Taskforce to monitor and address this issue. Newtral has replied promptly to the Taskforce's requests, providing information and guidance and contributing to discussions with insights on the disinformation dynamics observed in Ceuta, drawn from its own fieldwork monitoring and analysing messages circulating on social media platforms, as well as up-to-date evidence gathered through this monitoring work.

- Review the quality and effectiveness of the harmonised reporting templates, as well as the formats and methods of data disclosure for monitoring purposes, throughout future monitoring cycles and adapt them, as needed. - Contribute to the assessment of the quality and effectiveness of Service Level and Structural Indicators and the data points provided to measure these indicators, as well as their relevant adaptation. - Refine, test and adjust Structural Indicators and design mechanisms to measure them at Member State level. - Agree, publish and update a list of TTPs employed by malicious actors, and set down baseline elements, objectives and benchmarks for Measures to counter them, in line with the Chapter IV of this Code. - Seek out and discuss research, expert input and up-to-date evidence relevant to the Code's commitments, such as, inter alia, emerging best practices in safe design, retroactive flagging, repository of fact-checks, provenance tools. - Discuss and provide guidance on the adequate quantitative information to be provided by signatories to fulfil their reporting obligations regarding agreements with fact-checking organisations across different services. - Regularly discuss whether the Code's Commitments and Measures need updating in view of technological, societal, market and legislative developments, as well as in view of accommodating new signatories and, where the Task-force agrees to be necessary, carry out such updates. - Review the appropriateness and consistency of adapted Measures for smaller or emerging services. - Promote the Code among relevant peers and integrate new Signatories to the Code.	
Measure 37.3 The Task-force will agree on and define its operating rules, including on the involvement of third-party experts, which will be laid down in a Vademecum drafted by the European Commission in collaboration with the Signatories and agreed on by consensus between the members of the Task-force	
Measure 37.4 Signatories agree to set up subgroups dedicated to the specific issues related to the implementation and revision of the Code with the participation of the relevant Signatories.	Newtral is actively participating in the subgroup dedicated to Ceuta's immigration crisis.
Measure 37.5	Newtral actively participates in the meetings that the Task-force organizes with relevant stakeholder groups and experts to

When needed, and in any event at least once per year the Task-force organises meetings with relevant stakeholder groups and experts to inform them about the operation of the Code and gather their views related to important developments in the field of Disinformation.	monitor the Code and discuss new developments in the field of disinformation.
Measure 37.6 Signatories agree to notify the rest of the Task-force when a Commitment or Measure would benefit from changes over time as their practices and approaches evolve, in view of technological, societal, market, and legislative developments. Having discussed the changes required, the Relevant Signatories will update their subscription document accordingly and report on the changes in their next report. **QRE 37.6.1:** Signatories will describe how they engage in the work of the Task-force in the reporting period, including the sub-groups they engaged with.	Newtral maintains a proactive commitment to notifying the Task Force of any necessary updates to our commitments as our practices evolve. Newtral has been actively monitoring, detecting, and verifying disinformation, particularly content related to the crisis in Ceuta, and providing feedback to the Task Force through the agreed channels..

X. Monitoring of Code

Commitment 38

The Signatories commit to dedicate adequate financial and human resources and put in place appropriate internal processes to ensure the implementation of their commitments under the Code.

QRE 38.1 Relevant Signatories will outline the teams and internal processes they have in place, per service, to comply with the Code in order to achieve full coverage across the Member States and the languages of the EU.	Newtral has appointed two dedicated representatives to actively engage in the Permanent Task Force and its associated Subgroups. These representatives are responsible for overseeing the coordination and alignment of Newtral's internal initiatives with the commitments outlined in the Code, facilitating cross-departmental efforts, monitoring progress, and ensuring that our policies, tools, and outputs reflect both the spirit and the requirements of the Code. Furthermore, Newtral has allocated sufficient resources and established appropriate internal processes, including forming a team of two people, to ensure the effective implementation and comprehensive coverage across all aspects of our commitment under the Code. In addition to pursuing full and transparent compliance, Newtral is committed to playing a proactive role within the broader community of stakeholders. Our representatives contribute regularly by sharing best practices, technical know-how, and practical insights drawn from our experience in fact-checking, AI-driven analysis, and media monitoring.

	Newtral also maintains a continuous social media monitoring system in Spain, tracking disinformation narratives across major platforms as well as messaging apps such as Telegram and a tipline on WhatsApp. Our team publishes key findings and regularly shares insights and conclusions with the wider international fact-checking community, contributing to greater awareness, coordination, and preparedness in addressing evolving disinformation trends. Through this engagement, we aim not only to meet obligations but to help shape the collective response to disinformation across Europe—strengthening coordination, encouraging innovation, and reinforcing the credibility and effectiveness of the Code itself.

~~X. Monitoring of Code~~
~~Commitment 39~~ ~~Signatories commit to provide to the European Commission, within 1 month after the end of the implementation period (6 months after this Code's signature) the baseline reports as set out in the Preamble.~~
~~This marks Newtral's sixth report submission under our commitment to the Code. Our previous reports are published and can be found in the Transparency Center, ensuring continuous monitoring and accountability. With this new report, we cover all relevant activities and developments since our last submission, reaffirming our dedication to transparency and the fight against disinformation.~~

X. Monitoring of Code	
Commitment 40 Signatories commit to provide regular reporting on Service Level Indicators (SLIs) and Qualitative Reporting Elements (QREs). The reports and data provided should allow for a thorough assessment of the extent of the implementation of the Code's Commitments and Measures by each Signatory, service and at Member State level.	
Measure 40.6 Signatories will cooperate with the European Commission, respond to its reasonable requests and provide the European Commission with reasonable information, data and further input necessary to assess the implementation of the Code, allowing for the Code's efficient and thorough monitoring, including at Member State Level.	Newtral is fully committed to cooperating with the European Commission, ensuring prompt responses to their requests for information and data. This cooperation is aimed at facilitating an efficient and thorough monitoring process for the conversion of the Code.

X. Monitoring of Code
Commitment 42 Relevant Signatories commit to provide, in special situations like elections or crisis, upon request of the European Commission, proportionate and appropriate information and data, including ad-hoc specific reports and specific chapters within the regular monitoring, in accordance with the rapid response system established by the Taskforce.

From January to June 2026, Newtral maintained its commitment to providing proportionate and appropriate information to support the European Commission's rapid response system. In this reporting period, Newtral's main contribution under this Commitment related to the crisis of immigration in Ceuta, for which Newtral engaged in extensive, real-time public verification and reporting actions, and became part of a dedicated Taskforce subgroup set up to address the crisis.

To coordinate this work and provide direct feedback on crisis response, Newtral's Head of Fact-Checking attended three meetings on this issue, including one in-person roundtable held in Brussels. This session brought together a small group of around 20 participants, including representatives from the European Commission, the EEAS, the European Parliament, online platforms and Spanish fact-checking members directly involved in the Ceuta response, and provided a constructive and open forum for discussion.

- Participation in discussions: contributed directly to Taskforce and roundtable discussions on the nature of the Ceuta situation, including whether it constituted a DSA-defined crisis, whether the Code of Conduct is the appropriate instrument to address it, and how to handle harmful content falling outside third-party fact-checking programmes.
- Reporting on field insights and experience: shared first-hand observations from its verification work on the ground, including its assessment that no clear evidence of coordinated inauthentic behaviour (CIB) was identified during the Ceuta events.
- Providing situational context: supplied platforms and institutional participants with up-to-date context on the disinformation dynamics observed around Ceuta, helping inform discussions on the operational demands of crisis-mode monitoring and reporting.
- Contributing to existing crisis-mitigation mechanisms: stressed the demonstrated impact of platforms' fact-checking programmes and highlighted the value of mechanisms already in place to mitigate crisis situations, while also underlining the need to safeguard fact-checkers' independence, noting that some parts of the fact-checking community view closer cooperation mechanisms with a degree of caution.

Beyond this coordination work, Newtral's daily workflow during the reporting period was also directly shaped by the crisis, with a marked increase in disinformation content requiring verification — both specifically related to the Ceuta situation and, more broadly, concerning immigration as a topic. This increase reinforced Newtral's core objectives under the Code: sustaining rapid, evidence-based debunking capacity at a moment of heightened public interest and vulnerability to manipulation, and ensuring that verified information reached both the public and platform partners promptly enough to be operationally useful. Notably, Newtral remains one of the few fact-checking organisations in Spain that consistently monitors and fact-checks political discourse, a capacity that proved particularly relevant during this period, as much of the disinformation and misleading framing around the Ceuta crisis originated in or was amplified by political statements and debate.

Our educational outreach through workshops and training programs across Spanish institutions served as an additional component of our preparedness strategy, building societal resilience against the types of disinformation tactics observed in other European contexts during this monitoring period.

X. Monitoring of Code

Commitment 43

Signatories commit to produce reports and provide data following the harmonised reporting templates and refined methodology for reporting and data disclosure, as agreed in the Task-force.

Newtral is committed to generating reports and providing data in accordance with the harmonized reporting templates and refined methodology for reporting and data disclosure, collectively agreed upon within the Taskforce.

Reporting on the service's response during a period of crisis

Reporting on the service's response during a crisis

Crisis of immigration in Ceuta (August 2026)

Threats observed or anticipated at time of reporting: [suggested character limit 2000 characters].

Since the onset of the migration-related crisis in Ceuta in August 2026, Newtral has observed a marked escalation in coordinated disinformation activity targeting the situation. To date, Newtral has identified and reported through the Code's Rapid Response System (RRS) more than 70 pieces of false or misleading content related to the Ceuta crisis, using new and also established communication channels through which Newtral continuously reports to the EFCSN.

Primary threats identified include:

- Decontextualized and falsely attributed violent content: systematic circulation of violent videos and images, often unrelated to the current events or originating from other locations and time periods, deliberately presented as depicting the situation in Ceuta in order to amplify fear and social tension.
- False or misleading claims about official entities: a recurring pattern of fabricated statements, decisions, or positions falsely attributed to official bodies, including the United Nations and the governments of Morocco, Ceuta and Spain, aimed at undermining trust in institutional responses and fuelling confusion around the management of the crisis.

This event has generated a significant spike in Newtral's verification workload, given both the volume and the speed at which manipulated content has spread across platforms. Notably, in addition to Spanish-language content, Newtral has also identified and reported disinformation circulating in Arabic — a language outside its usual working scope — when such content was detected, in order to contribute to broader awareness and cross-lingual monitoring of the crisis within the network.

Newtral considers the risk of continued disinformation around Ceuta to remain elevated in the near term, given the sensitivity of the topic, its cross-border dimension, and the demonstrated willingness of malicious actors to exploit the crisis for political and social polarisation purposes.

Mitigations in place at time of reporting: [suggested character limit: 2000 characters].

Newtral implemented comprehensive countermeasures to address the Ceuta disinformation crisis through systematic debunking of the false and misleading narratives identified. Our response combined immediate fact-checking of viral, decontextualized content with continuous reporting to platforms via the EFCSN's Rapid Response System (RRS).

- Geolocation analysis: Newtral geolocated viral videos to establish their true origin. This method disproved, for example, footage of car burnings and violent unrest falsely attributed to Ceuta and Melilla, which was in fact recorded during unrelated disturbances in Nador, Morocco, on the other side of the border.
- Temporal verification and reverse image/video search: Newtral traced the original publication dates of recirculated footage, identifying content falsely presented as current — including images from Libya dating back to 2023 that were misrepresented as a "mass wave of migrants" or an "invasion of Europe."
- Source verification with official bodies: Newtral contacted relevant authorities directly to confirm or deny disputed claims, including Interior Ministry sources and the Government Delegation in Ceuta (to confirm a fabricated official communiqué on migrant transfers was not authentic), the Guardia Civil, and humanitarian NGOs operating on the ground.
- Fact-checking of institutional misattribution: Newtral debunked false claims attributed to international and foreign institutions, such as unfounded assertions that the UN classifies Ceuta and Melilla as "colonies" pending transfer to Morocco, and unverified statements attributed to Moroccan security officials regarding a purported invasion threat.
- Multichannel detection and response: In addition to open-source social media monitoring, Newtral used its WhatsApp verification channel to identify and respond to disinformation queries submitted directly by the public.

To date, this work has resulted in the verification of more than 70 pieces of Ceuta-related disinformation, each documented and reported through the RRS with detailed evidence of true origin, timeline and, where relevant, institutional confirmation, enabling rapid and evidence-based flagging to platform signatories.

Reporting on the service's response during elections

Three regional elections in Spain (Aragón, Castilla y León and Andalucía, February–May 2026)

Threats observed or anticipated at time of reporting: [suggested character limit 2000 characters].

Across the three Spanish regional elections held between February and May 2026 — Aragón (8 February), Castilla y León (15 March) and Andalucía (17 May) — Newtral identified a consistent pattern of election-related disinformation threats, alongside region-specific narratives tied to local candidates and issues.

Recurring threats identified across all three elections included:

- Voting-procedure disinformation: recurring false claims about what constitutes a null vote (e.g., writing on ballots, using envelopes from other elections, submitting two ballots from different parties), designed to confuse voters or discourage participation.
- Postal and electoral fraud narratives: content questioning the integrity of postal voting and vote-counting systems, including recurring false claims that private companies contracted for data transmission (e.g., Indra) are involved in counting votes, and misleading framing of statistical fluctuations in postal-vote figures as evidence of manipulation.
- AI-generated and deepfake content: growing use of AI to fabricate statements or images attributed to candidates, flagged as an emerging risk requiring dedicated detection guidance for the public.
- Fabricated interference in the campaign or in voting itself: including staged or decontextualized footage falsely presented as evidence of coercion at polling stations or campaign sabotage (e.g., a viral video from a 2023 election falsely recirculated as showing coercion during the 2026 Andalucía campaign).
- In Andalucía specifically, Newtral verified additional false narratives targeting individual candidates and public figures, including a fabricated claim that a musician's public endorsement of a candidate triggered mass concert-ticket refunds, and disinformation around the removal of campaign posters. In Aragón, Newtral also addressed disinformation around postal-vote figures and unfounded claims of irregularities such as "secret voting booth" failures.
- Beyond viral disinformation, Newtral anticipated and addressed a parallel risk: misleading or false statements made directly by candidates during televised debates (RTVE, Canal Sur, regional broadcasters) and campaign events, which required systematic, real-time political fact-checking rather than reactive debunking of user-generated content.

Mitigations in place at time of reporting: [suggested character limit: 2000 characters].

Between February and May 2026, Spain held three separate regional elections: the Cortes of Aragón (8 February 2026), the Cortes of Castilla y León (15 March 2026) and the Parliament of Andalucía (17 May 2026). Newtral deployed a consistent methodology across all three electoral processes, adapted to the specific dynamics and timelines of each campaign, with the following actions carried out:

- Pre-election anti-disinformation guides: ahead of each vote, Newtral published dedicated guides to help citizens identify and avoid falling for common types of election-related disinformation, tailored to the specific candidates, parties and local issues at stake in each region (e.g., the guide published ahead of the Aragón election and the guide published ahead of the Andalucía election).
- Early warning on potential campaign interference: Newtral flagged and reported on possible risks of interference or manipulation targeting the electoral campaigns, drawing attention to patterns observed in previous elections and emerging narratives specific to each region.
- Real-time monitoring during election day: Newtral tracked and verified information circulating during the electoral day itself in each of the three regions, responding promptly to claims and content requiring fact-checking as results were counted and reported.
- Practical training through the "Verificatón" hackathon (Andalucía): Newtral organised a fact-checking hackathon focused on the candidates' televised debate ahead of the Andalucía election, bringing together students from two Spanish universities to verify political discourse in a hands-on exercise alongside Newtral's own newsroom journalists. This initiative was carried out within the framework of IberCHECK, the cross-media fact-checking alliance led by Newtral with support from the European Commission, and reflects Newtral's broader commitment to building fact-checking capacity and training the next generation of verifiers to scrutinise political speech.