

Code of Practice on
Disinformation – Report of
European Fact-Checking
Standards Network for the
period July-December 2023

Table of Content

Guidelines for filling out the report.....	4
Commitment 2.....	1
Commitment 3.....	1
Commitment 16.....	1
V. Empowering Users.....	2
Commitment 17.....	2
Commitment 21.....	3
Commitment 25.....	4
VII. Empowering the fact-checking community.....	5
Commitment 30.....	5
Commitment 31.....	8
Commitment 33.....	9
VIII. Transparency Centre.....	10
Commitment 34.....	10
Commitment 35.....	10
Commitment 36.....	10
IX. Permanent Task-Force.....	10
Commitment 37.....	11
X. Monitoring of Code.....	11
Commitment 38.....	11
Commitment 39.....	12
Commitment 40.....	12
Commitment 42.....	13
Commitment 43.....	13
Reporting on the service's response during an election.....	14
European Elections.....	15

Executive summary

Executive summary (max. 2 pages)

The European Fact-Checking Standards Network has grown to be a consolidated representative of the independent fact-checking organisations operating in Europe. After 19 new organisations became verified members since the last reporting period, the EFCSN is currently formed by 38 organisations. Those organisations together cover 17 EU member states and 9 additional European countries. Moreover, there are currently 14 organisations being assessed that will potentially become verified members of the Association for the next reporting period.

Each one of them has committed to the highest ethical, methodological and transparency standards as outlined in the European Code of Standards for Independent Fact-Checking Organisations, and has agreed to be evaluated for compliance by two independent academic assessors and the EFCSN board. The commitment of verified members with independent and quality fact-checking activities as well as the belief that promoting standards and collaboration is key against disinformation is undeniable.

Collaboration is not only promoted among verified members of the EFCSN but with other Signatories of the Code of Practice on Disinformation. The Empowerment of Fact-Checkers Sub group within the permanent task-force, chaired by the EFCSN, is one of the meeting points where we are in contact with other organisations and exchange relevant insights, including with representatives of VLOPs and VLOSEs. In addition, we evaluate reports submitted by major online services and make suggestions on actions under commitments on fact-checking that we hope lead to future improvements.

The EFCSN gathers fact-checking organisations from diverse backgrounds inside Europe who continuously collect evidence on disinformation. As the elections for the European Parliament fall in the next reporting period, the association is already promoting further cooperation among Signatories and to make sure that our insights are for the benefit of citizens against disinformation campaigns. Some of our current election-specific actions are outlined in the relevant section.

The report:

To provide prompt contextual information, the EFCSN prepared a survey that circulated among verified members focused on agreements between fact-checkers and online services, integration of fact-checks and proper access to information. A total of 33 organisations based in 25 different countries in Europe shared their data and impressions. The analysis of the answers to the survey was combined with information of the work conducted by the EFCSN and reflected within this report.

Guidelines for filling out the report

Reports are detailing how signatories have implemented their Commitments under the Code and 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.

Reporting period

The reporting period to be covered in the reports is 6 months for signatories who are not offering very large online platform services. Signatories shall submit reports outlining policy updates and actions taken to implement the Commitments and Measures they signed up to under the Code. All data and policy updates should be reported for a 12 months period from the submission of last reports.

Adjusting the reporting template

Signatories who are not offering very large online platform services can adapt the template to specific commitments and measures they subscribed to. This may include adapted wording for commitments, measures, QREs and SLIs. Relevant signatories will report only on commitments and measures they subscribed to and provide Member State-level data only if feasible.

Reporting per Service

When filling in a report for several services, use colour codes to clearly distinguish between services. At the beginning of the report, clarify what colour is used for which service.

Reporting in text form

Reporting in the form of written text is required for several parts of the report. Most of them are accompanied by a target character limit. Please stick to the target character limit as much as possible. We encourage you to use bullet points and short sentences. When providing information to the QRE, please make sure that your answer covers all the elements of the associated commitment and measure. Links should only be used to provide examples or to illustrate the point. They should not be used to replace explanations or to provide data in the forms. All relevant explanations and data must be included in the report directly, in written form.

Reporting SLIs and data

Reporting on SLIs requires quantitative information to be reported on in this harmonised reporting template.

- Where relevant and feasible, SLIs should be reported on per Member State.
- If no data is available on Member State level, SLIs might, instead, be exceptionally reported on per language. (NB that signatories agreed to revisit this issue after the first reporting, to ensure harmonised and meaningful reporting.)
- Please report data in the format provided by the harmonised reporting template, not through external links. Please use the Member State/language template provided in the harmonised reporting template. Where the table asks for "Other relevant metrics", please name the metric that you would like to report on in addition to the ones already provided. You may include more than the number of additional fields provided where necessary; in that case, please adjust the table as needed.
- Please contextualize all data as much as possible, i.e. include baseline quantitative information that will help contextualize the SLIs (e.g. number of pieces of content labelled out of what volume of content).
- If there are no relevant metrics to report on, please leave the respective columns blank.

Reporting on TTPs

If subscribed to Commitment 14, Integrity of Services, we ask you to report on each identified TTP individually. The number of identified TTPs may vary per service. Where more than one TTP are reported under the same action, clarify the reasoning in the methodology. Where input is not provided, keep the placeholder for the relevant TTP and explain reasons and planned remedial action. Additionally, as with all other SLIs, data can be provided per Member State for each individual TTP.

Missing Data

In case that at the time of reporting there is no data available yet, the data is insufficient, or the methodology is lacking, please outline in the dedicated field (i.e. in the field about further implementation measures planned) how this will be addressed over the upcoming six months, being as specific as possible.

Signatories are encouraged to provide insights about the data/numbers they provide by inserting possible explanations in the boxes of the template "*Methodology of data measurement & insights on data provided*". This should aim to explain the why of what is being reported, for instance – *Are there trends or curiosities that could*

require or use contextual explanation? What may be driving the change or the difference in the number? Please also indicate inconsistencies or gaps regarding methodology in the dedicated box.

Attachments

We ask you not to enclose any additional attachments to the harmonised reporting template.

Crisis and elections reporting template

Relevant signatories are asked to provide proportionate and appropriate information and data during a period of crisis and during an election. Reporting is a part of a special chapter at the end of the harmonised reporting template and should follow the guidelines:

- The reporting of signatories' actions should be as specific to the particular crisis or election reported on as possible. To this extent, the rows on "Specific Action[s]" should be filled in with actions that are either put in place specifically for a particular event (for example a media literacy campaign on disinformation related to the Ukraine war, an information panel for the European elections), or to explain in more detail how an action that forms part of the service's general approach to implementing the Code is implemented in the specific context of the crisis or election reported on (for example, what types of narratives in a particular election/crisis would fall into scope of a particular policy of the service, what forms of advertising are ineligible).
- Signatories who are not offering very large online platform services and who follow the invitation to report on their specific actions for a particular election or crisis may adapt the reporting template as follows:
 - They may remove the "Policies and Terms and Conditions" section of the template, or use it to report on any important changes in their internal rules applicable to a particular election or crisis (for example, a change in editorial guidelines for fact-checkers specific to the particular election or crisis)
 - They may remove any Chapter Section of the Reporting Template (Scrutiny of Ads Placement, Political Advertising, Integrity of Services etc.) that is not relevant to their activities
- The harmonised reporting template should be filled in by adding additional rows for each item reported on. This means that rather than combined/bulk reporting such as "Depending on severity of violation, we demote or remove content based on policies X, Y, Z", there should be individual rows stating for example "Under Policy X, content is demoted or removed based on severity", "Under Policy Y, content [...]" etc.
- The rows should be colour-coded to indicate which service is being reported on, using the same colour code as for the overall harmonised reporting template.

Reporting should be brief and to the point, with a suggested character limit entry of 2000 characters.

Uploading data to the Transparency Centre

The reports should be submitted to the Commission in the form of the pdf via e-mail to the address CNECT COP TASK FORCE CNECT-COP-TASK-FORCE@ec.europa.eu within the agreed deadline. Signatories will upload all data from the harmonised reporting template to the Transparency Centre, allowing easy data access and filtering within the agreed deadline. It is the responsibility of the signatories to ensure that the uploading takes place and is executed on time. Signatories are also responsible to ensure that the Transparency Centre is operational and functional by the time of the reports' submission that the data from the reports are uploaded and made accessible in the Transparency Centre within the above deadline, and that users are able to read, search, filter and download data as needed in a user-friendly way and format.

II. Scrutiny of Ad Placements	
Commitment 2	
Relevant Signatories participating in advertising commit to prevent the misuse of advertising systems to disseminate Disinformation in the form of advertising messages. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 2.2	We will be open to assist in the development of tools and methodologies by Relevant Signatories to identify content and sources as distributing harmful Disinformation, to identify and take action on ads and promoted content that violate advertising policies regarding Disinformation mentioned in Measure 2.1.
QRE 2.2.1 [We will report on the conversations we engage in and partnerships we convene to identify content and sources that contravene policies mentioned in Measures 2.1 including information obtained by polling our members]	The EFCSN board has had conversations with several signatories that touched on the specific issue of disinformation in ads.

II. Scrutiny of Ad Placements	
Commitment 3	
Relevant Signatories involved in buying, selling and placing digital advertising commit to exchange best practices and strengthen cooperation with relevant players, expanding to organisations active in the online monetisation value chain, such as online e-payment services, e-commerce platforms and relevant crowd-funding/donation systems, with the aim to increase the effectiveness of scrutiny of ad placements on their own services. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 3.1	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 3.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	The EFCSN remains accessible and open for conversations with relevant actors in order to provide information regarding possible misuse of advertisement systems and tackling purveyors of harmful disinformation.

IV. Integrity of Services	
Commitment 16	

Relevant Signatories commit to operate channels of exchange between their relevant teams in order to proactively share information about cross-platform influence operations, foreign interference in information space and relevant incidents that emerge on their respective services, with the aim of preventing dissemination and resurgence on other services, in full compliance with privacy legislation and with due consideration for security and human rights risks. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 16.1	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 16.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	We actively participate in the sub-groups established within the Code, for instance, the Crisis Subgroup, to share relevant information provided by our verified members. Moreover, we regularly conduct 1-on-1 meetings with relevant signatories in order to flag specific concerns we've detected with respect to their services and exchange any relevant information. Our members also participate in events and open discussions where topics such as information manipulation, foreign interference in information space and incidents regarding disinformation campaigns are addressed and discussed upon.

V. Empowering Users	
Commitment 17	
In light of the European Commission's initiatives in the area of media literacy, including the new Digital Education Action Plan, Relevant Signatories commit to continue and strengthen their efforts in the area of media literacy and critical thinking, also with the aim to include vulnerable groups. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 17.2	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 17.2.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>Promoting media literacy for the public benefit is part of the purpose of the Association. The EFCSN continuously enhances and promotes efforts and initiatives conducted by its verified members and by fact-checkers which contributed to the formation of the association.</p> <p>For instance, the EFCSN collects some of these initiatives in a dedicated section of its official website, from fact-checking courses to tips and games.</p> <p>Aside from the support and visibility to initiatives promoting media literacy conducted by verified members, the EFCSN also aims to increase capacities of fact-checking organisations and offers internal training on several fields of action.</p>
Measure 17.3	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 17.3.1 [insert wording if adapted]	EFCSN's verified members and other fact-checking organisations that collaborate with the Association work closely with on media literacy initiatives and share of practices and learnings. Moreover, we exchange insights with other relevant stakeholders such as the EDMO and its national hubs, or ERGA in order to build more complete and updated knowledge.

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V. Empowering Users	
Commitment 21	
<p>Relevant Signatories commit to strengthen their efforts to better equip users to identify Disinformation. In particular, in order to enable users to navigate services in an informed way, Relevant Signatories commit to facilitate, across all Member States languages in which their services are provided, user access to tools for assessing the factual accuracy of sources through fact-checks from fact-checking organisations that have flagged potential Disinformation, as well as warning labels from other authoritative sources. [change wording if adapted]</p>	
<p>Measure 21.1</p>	<p>We are open to collaborate with relevant signatories by partnering with them to provide context and insights to develop and apply policies, features, or programs across Member States and EU languages to help users benefit.</p>
<p>QRE 21.1.1 [We will report on our engagement with Relevant Signatories on the policies, features, or programs they deploy to meet this Measure and on their availability across Member States, including information obtained by polling our members]</p>	<p>The EFCSN gave detailed feedback to relevant signatories as a reaction to their submitted baseline reports. Here, we collected impressions on the adequacy of different policies, features, or programs employed and reported under commitment 21.</p> <p>Furthermore, verified members of the EFCSN have reported the following regarding their impressions on current policies, features, or programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 65% strongly agree and 12.1% agree that responses to disinformation in X/Twitter and Telegram are inadequate, ineffective or nonexistent. Both services are described as key services in hosting disinformation and their participation in the Code is crucial for a coordinated and adequate response to the problem. • Impressions on the responses by YouTube are the most negative among the signatories of the Code, with 45.5% strongly agreeing and 33.3% agreeing to actions being inadequate, ineffective or nonexistent. The lack of fact-checking and the problematic role of the recommendation algorithms are mentioned, as is the lack of coordination with other digital services on repeated offenders and the insufficiency of a few nonspecific prebunking campaigns are mentioned by respondents. • When asked about Google Search responses to disinformation, respondents strongly agree (21.2%) or agree (33.3%) they are inadequate, ineffective or nonexistent (while 42.4% don't know). Respondents point towards the remuneration of ClaimReview and improve prioritisation in the search engine as immediate solutions and highlight that "putting money in a fund that is supposed to support fact-checkers (EMIF) is not to be confused with signing contracts to pay using the outputs of fact-checking."

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regarding TikTok's, fact-checkers strongly agree (36,4%) or 69,70% agree on the inadequacy, ineffectiveness or non-existence of responses. Respondents are critical with the transparency of the fact-checking program and metrics provided and the integration of fact-checks not for direct benefit of the user. Moreover, lack of local expertise for fact-checking in many EU member states. Regarding Facebook, 9,1% strongly agree and 21,3% agree that responses to disinformation in the platform are inadequate or ineffective. While Instagram also gets positive impressions, it is lower than Facebook's even if the 3PFCP should work equally across both services. Respondents mention the need of mitigation actions for harassment to fact-checkers, more efficient tools and the issue of verification of political figures as areas of improvement. A disconnect between Microsoft's LinkedIn and Bing and the European fact-checking community is reflected in the high rate of respondents that do not know about the company's responses to disinformation (74% don't know).
Measure 21.2	We will, in light of scientific evidence, undertake and/or support research and testing conducted by relevant signatories on warnings or updates targeted to users that have interacted with content that was later actioned upon for violation of policies mentioned in this section. We will disclose and discuss findings within the Permanent Task-force in view of identifying relevant follow up actions.
QRE 21.2.1 [insert wording if adapted]	The EFCSN remains accessible to support research and testing efforts by signatories.
Measure 21.3	Where relevant signatories employ labelling and warning systems, we will be open to provide input in order for the design to be in accordance with up-to-date scientific evidence and help analyse the users' needs on how to maximise impact and usefulness of such interventions, for instance, such that they are likely to be viewed and positively received.
QRE 21.3.1 [We will report on our engagement with Relevant Signatories where we provide input on their procedures for developing and deploying labelling or warning systems, as well as maximising its usefulness for the user, including information obtained by polling our members]	The EFCSN gave detailed feedback to relevant signatories as a reaction to their submitted baseline reports, also regarding the use of labels and warning systems. For instance, the EFCSN highlighted the improvement of the number of "unverified" labels on videos in TikTok and the rate of those who decide not to share after encountering them, but users still cannot access the rationale and sources justifying such labels, so they are hardly empowered to make their own decisions. The EFCSN has also provided other feedback to signatories about more effective integration of fact-checking, including through labelling.

V. Empowering Users

Commitment 25

In order to help users of private messaging services to identify possible disinformation disseminated through such services, Relevant Signatories that provide messaging applications commit to continue to build and implement features or initiatives that empower users to think critically about information they receive and help them to determine whether it is accurate, without any weakening of encryption and with due regard to the protection of privacy. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 25.1	We will be open to act as a third-party partner and work with relevant signatories to design and implement features to facilitate users' access to authoritative information without any weakening of encryption and with due regard for the protection of privacy.
QRE 25.1.1 [We will report on the tools, policies, partnerships, programs, and campaigns that involved our input, if any, including information obtained by polling our members]	<p>Six organisations reported having an agreement with Meta for WhatsApp that involved fact-checking coverage, access to the API or a chatbot for community engagement as different services mentioned. All of these organisations believe that their agreement with WhatsApp has an overall beneficial impact for their organisation, that they have clear knowledge of how their insights are used and have efficient tools provided by Meta to carry out the service.</p> <p>Compensation schemes are different, depending on messages sent, number of conversations or interactions, or articles published.</p> <p>Impressions are divided regarding WhatsApp responses to disinformation: 24,2% agree or strongly agree that these are inadequate, ineffective, or nonexistent while 27,7% disagree or strongly disagree on that statements; 48,5% don't know, in part because the service is not popular in the countries of some respondents.</p>

VII. Empowering the fact-checking community	
Commitment 30	
Relevant Signatories commit to establish a framework for transparent, structured, open, financially sustainable, and non-discriminatory cooperation between them and the EU fact-checking community regarding resources and support made available to fact-checkers. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 30.1	We will assist Relevant Signatories in setting up agreements between them and independent fact-checking organisations (as defined in whereas (e)) to achieve fact-checking coverage in all Member States. These agreements should meet high ethical and professional standards and be based on transparent, open, consistent and non-discriminatory conditions, and will ensure the independence of fact-checkers
QRE 30.1.1 [We will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No organisations that participated in the survey reported having agreements of any kind in place with Bing, LinkedIn, X/Twitter, or Telegram while only one respondent reported having an agreement with YouTube, that being a media literacy training unrelated to fact-checking coverage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 agreements were signed specifically during the reporting period (July – December 31), 6 of them with Meta, one with Google and another with TikTok. • 97,9% of the agreements signed by respondents are NDA-protected, meaning some of the terms of the contract cannot be disclosed publicly. • The sustainability of collaborations between signatories and independent fact-checking organisations depends not only on financial contributions but on the duration of these contracts. About this, 28,88% of the agreements have a duration of at least one year while 66.67% of between 6 months to one year. • In the case of Meta, all agreements are focused on providing fact-checking coverage of a member state. Regarding Facebook and Instagram, 92% strongly agree or agree that they have clear knowledge of how their fact-checks are used and 73% that efficient tools supported for monitoring disinformation in this service. Meanwhile, 65,4% disagree or strongly disagree that tools for monitoring Instagram are efficient. • Majority of contracts signed with Google (83,3%) do not provide fact-checking coverage and are oriented towards the organisation of training, content creation or supporting other activities. Organisations with this type of agreement have a clear knowledge of the use of their insights and mostly agree they count on efficient tools while the one fact-checker providing fact-checking coverage is unaware of how insights are used and does not believe it has tools for monitoring. • 7 out of 8 agreements with TikTok that were reported were directed to providing fact-checking coverage for six countries. The majority believe they do not have a clear knowledge of how the platform uses the fact-checks provided nor efficient tools for monitoring disinformation in the service.
Measure 30.2	We will intercede for the community of independent European fact-checking organisations in order to assure relevant signatories provide fair financial contributions for their work to combat Disinformation on their services.
QRE 30.2.3 [We will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE]	<p>Out of the fact-checking organisations that participated in the survey, none had agreement with Microsoft’s services. Only one organisation reported an agreement with YouTube related to media literacy, which was signed prior to the current reporting period. Concrete data on the adequacy of their financial contributions to fact-checkers cannot be provided on those services.</p> <p>Regarding agreements signed with the various online services, fact-checking organisations in the survey believe these collaborations have a beneficial impact on them.</p>

	<p>Most agreements signed between Meta and fact-checking organisations (75%) have a variable compensation linked to the number of articles published or contents rated. The case is similar with TikTok, although some organisations mention trend reports or special projects as other variables that influence compensation. Organisations that would not consider an agreement with TikTok mention they are “unviable in its variable remuneration” and “demands more of a monitoring service than a real partnership to allow fact-checking outlets to prioritise which disinformation to tackle.”</p> <p>83% of agreements with Google (Google Search and YouTube) have a fixed compensation and the organisations involved say the criteria used for setting it is not clear for them.</p> <p>Moreover, fact-checkers shared impressions on the signatories fair financial contributions to fact-checkers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 63,6% do not believe that X/Twitter provides fair financial contributions • 57,6% do not believe that Telegram provides fair financial contributions • 69,7% don't know if LinkedIn provides fair financial contributions while 30,3% think they don't • 63,6% don't know if Bing provides fair financial contributions while 36,4% think they don't • 39,4% don't know if TikTok provides fair financial contributions; 36,4% think they don't while 24,2% think they do • 51,5% do not believe Google Search provides fair financial contributions while 42,4% don't know. • 66,7% do not believe YouTube provides fair financial contributions while 33,3% don't know. • 72,7% believe Meta provides fair financial contributions
Measure 30.3	
<p>QRE 30.3.1 [We will report on actions taken to facilitate the cross-border collaboration between fact-checkers. We will also poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE]</p>	<p>The EFCSN, aside from ensuring high-standards for fact-checking organisations, offers access to a close-knit community where members can exchange knowledge, research, trends and other insights, as well as find opportunities to collaborate. The EFCSN also organises regular training and mentorship opportunities for its members, an annual conference and various forms of support for those facing harassment and other threats.</p> <p>Regarding the impressions of fact-checking organisations on online platforms' actions, polled organisations regarding the contribution of signatories to fostering cross-border collaboration between fact-checking organisations. These are the results:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 42,4% believe <u>Meta</u> contributes to fostering cross-border collaboration while 42,4% think that they do but not enough 2. 45,5% believe <u>Google</u> fosters collaboration but not enough while 18,2% think that they don't at all 3. 75,8% believe that <u>TikTok</u> does not foster collaboration at all while 21,2% think that they do but not enough 4. 87,9% believe that <u>YouTube</u> does not foster collaboration at all while 9,1% think that they do but not enough 5. Over 90% believe that <u>LinkedIn, Bing, X/Twitter and Telegram</u> do not foster collaboration at all

	Fact-checking organisations believe that providing cross-border data on disinformation and actors from different countries would give relevant insights useful for their job and provide a wider picture of disinformation at an EU-level. Improved technological tools that allow this collaboration are also much needed.
Measure 30.4	To develop the Measures above, we will be open to engage in consultations.
QRE 30.4.1 [We will report on the conversations with Relevant Signatories we engage in, including the development of the framework of cooperation described in Measures 30.3 and 30.4. Furthermore, we will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE]	<p>The EFCSN has engaged in conversation with relevant signatories both privately and within the Task-force of the Code. Within the sub-group on fact-checking, which the EFCSN chairs, we have brought to the table the conversation on recommendations for cooperation between verifiers and other signatories as well as other topics that aim to improve this collaboration for the benefit of users.</p> <p>The fact-checking community is willing to enter agreements with relevant signatories. Out of organisations that currently do not have a contract with them, 92,6% of them would consider an agreement with Google provided that fair remuneration is contemplated, 87,5% would consider the same with YouTube, 76% with TikTok, 66,7% with Bing, 69,7% with LinkedIn. On non-signatories, 72,7% would be interested in entering an agreement with X/Twitter and 84,8% with Telegram.</p> <p>Moreover, these organisations without an agreement, are already investing time and work in monitoring disinformation in these platforms without any financial contribution given the need. Specifically, 83,3% organisations without agreement with Meta do, 80% for TikTok, 78,8% for Twitter, 75,8% for Telegram, 65,6% for YouTube, and 59,3% for Google Search.</p>

VII. Empowering the fact-checking community	
Commitment 31	
Relevant Signatories commit to integrate, showcase, or otherwise consistently use fact-checkers' work in their platforms' services, processes, and contents; with full coverage of all Member States and languages. [change wording if adapted]	
SLI 31.1.3 – Quantitative information used for contextualisation for the SLIs 31.1.1 / 31.1.2 [change wording if adapted]	<p>The EFCSN has led the discussion regarding this SLI as Chair of the Empowerment of Fact-Checkers SG. After proposing a blueprint document that included ideal metrics regarding the use of fact-checking for showcasing, moderating, or machine-learning purposes, as well as regarding the impact of the fact-checking content used, it was considered by members of the SG who made comments taking their services into account.</p> <p>The document gathering metrics and types of quantitative information was modified to adapt to the suggestions, but the SG decided to leave the conversation open for future talks.</p>
Data	

Measure 31.3	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 31.3.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>Within the sub-group on empowerment of fact-checkers chaired by the EFCSN, we have delivered a proposal agreed by members of the EFCSN for the establishment of the fact-checking repository envisioned in the Code.</p> <p>The proposal includes a general overview of how the repository should be envisioned, a description of the data that members of the EFCSN will provide through the tool, information on the expected volume and scope, and a proposed timeline to continue with the discussions.</p>
Measure 31.4	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 31.4.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>Within the steps proposed by the EFCSN for the establishment of the repository and as discussed in the Empowerment of fact-checker SG, we explore various ways in which the disinformation repository can be useful for a wide set of users, including researchers and universities.</p>

VII. Empowering the fact-checking community				
Commitment 33				
<p>Relevant Signatories (i.e. fact-checking organisations) commit to operate on the basis of strict ethical and transparency rules, and to protect their independence. [change wording if adapted]</p>				
Measure 33.1	[insert wording if adapted]			
QRE 33.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>The EFCSN was established by a wide group of European fact-checking organisations that wanted to raise the bar and work according to the highest standards in ethics, transparency, methodology, and independence as outlined in the Code of European Standards for Independent Fact-Checking Organisations (2022). Our members agree for their actual adherence to those standards to be evaluated by two different independent academic experts every two years, and EFCSN has a complaint procedure to deal with alleged non-compliance by its members. The Code of the EFCSN is contemplated under Measure 33.1 as an instrument to comply with it.</p>			
SLI 33.1.1 - number of European fact-checkers that are IFCN-certified [change wording if adapted]	Methodology of data measurement [suggested character limit: 500 characters]: We have taken into account fact-checking organisations based in EU Member or Council of Europe states, plus Belarus and Kosovo. For both networks, we have included the status of the organisations as for March 2024			
	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Nr of fact-checkers IFCN-certified</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Nr of members of EFCSN</td> </tr> <tr> <td>50 signatories 27 organisations under renewal 8 organisations with certification expired</td> <td>38 verified members 14 under assessment after applying</td> </tr> </table>	Nr of fact-checkers IFCN-certified	Nr of members of EFCSN	50 signatories 27 organisations under renewal 8 organisations with certification expired
Nr of fact-checkers IFCN-certified	Nr of members of EFCSN			
50 signatories 27 organisations under renewal 8 organisations with certification expired	38 verified members 14 under assessment after applying			
Data				

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. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 34.3	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 34.4	[insert wording if adapted]

VIII. Transparency Centre	
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. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 35.2	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.3	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.4	[insert wording if adapted]

VIII. Transparency Centre	
Commitment 36	
Signatories commit to updating the relevant information contained in the Transparency Centre in a timely and complete manner. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 36.1	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 36.1.1 (for the Commitments 34-36) [insert wording if adapted]	The administration of the Transparency Centre website has been transferred fully to the community of the Code's signatories, with VOST Europe taking the role of developer.

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. [change wording if adapted]

Measure 37.1	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.2	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.3	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.4	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.5	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.6	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 37.6.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>As a signatory of the Code, the EFCSN is currently part of the Task-force, specifically of the following sub-groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowerment of fact-checkers SG, which the EFCSN chairs, - Monitoring & Reporting SG, - Crisis Response SG, - Ad Scrutiny SG, - Outreach and Integration of New Signatories SG and - Generative AI SG.

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. [change wording if adapted]

Measure 38.1	[insert wording if adapted]
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QRE 38.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>In order to work and report on our commitments under the Code, the EFCSN counts on a Policy Task-force formed by representatives of some verified members of the association, in charge of duties related to both reporting information and engaging with relevant actors, including the Task-Force and other signatories.</p> <p>The elected Governance Body of the EFCSN is ultimately responsible for following the development of the Code and ensuring its compliance. Meanwhile, verified members of the association continuously contribute by giving insights based on their experience that the EFCSN can report on to contextualise information provided by other signatories or flag possible breaches in commitments. For the task of reporting on the EFCSN commitments, verified members respond to a survey that helps reflect their impressions on the disinformation landscape and contextualise the information provided by other Signatories.</p>
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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. [change wording if adapted]

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. [change wording if adapted]	
Measure 40.2	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 40.3	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 40.4	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 40.5	[insert wording if adapted]

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. [change wording if adapted]

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. [change wording if adapted]

Reporting on the service's response during an election

Reporting on the service's response during an election

European Elections

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

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

[Note: Signatories are requested to provide information relevant to their particular response to the threats and challenges they observed on their service(s). They ensure that the information below provides an accurate and complete report of their relevant actions. As operational responses to crisis/election situations can vary from service to service, an absence of information should not be considered a priori a shortfall in the way a particular service has responded. Impact metrics are accurate to the best of signatories' abilities to measure them].

Empowering Users

Outline approaches pertinent to this chapter, highlighting similarities/commonalities and differences with regular enforcement.

Specific Action applied (with reference to the Code's relevant Commitment and Measure)

Regarding measure 17.2 (activities to improve media literacy and critical thinking) the EFCSN is working with other signatories in specific projects around the EU parliamentary elections. Over 40 EFCSN members from 37 European countries (EU member states and not) are partnering in **Elections 24 Check** to create a public database of political fact-checks, disinformation debunks, prebunking articles and narrative reports on transnational trends that is already accessible at <https://elections24.efcsn.com/> in preparation for the election. This action receives support from the Google News Initiative. The EFCSN is also preparing a media literacy campaign to raise public awareness of how to spot digitally altered media, including AI-generated media, with the support of Meta.

Regarding commitment 21 and related measures (tools for assessing the factual accuracy of sources through fact-checks from fact-checking organisations that have flagged potential Disinformation, as well as warning labels) EFCSN members expect to ramp up their production of fact-checks, debunking, and prebunking around the election in the coming months.

Impact of Elections 24 Check is to be observed in the use of the database by the public, but also by other actors including researchers and institutions. Another key deliverable is the production of narrative analysis and other types of research based on the data. The media literacy campaign on digitally altered media in partnership with Meta is also designed with KPIs to assess impact,

Empowering the Fact-Checking Community

Outline approaches pertinent to this chapter, highlighting similarities/commonalities and differences with regular enforcement.

<p>Specific Action applied (with reference to the Code's relevant Commitment and Measure)</p>	<p>The EFCSN contributes to the empowerment of the European fact-checking community by providing a common voice for fact-checkers and by ensuring the members of the associations comply with the standards in the European Code of Standards for Independent Fact-Checking Organisations through rigorous independent biannual assessments and a dedicated complaint-handling system. By March 2024 and with the EU Parliamentary Election in sight, the EFCSN has 38 verified members in 26 European countries, including in 17 member states. 14 more organisations are being assessed and 10 more are receiving mentorships from EFCSN to qualify for those standards in the future with the support of Porticus.</p> <p>In addition to that, the EFCSN has boosted collaboration on EU election-specific issues among over 40 of its member organisations by creating a coalition to develop a public database of political fact-checks, disinformation debunks, prebunking articles and narrative reports on transnational trends that is already accessible at https://elections24.efcsn.com/. This action has been supported by the Google News Initiative.</p> <p>The EFCSN also has an ongoing project to train fact-checkers across Europe on the best way to identify and evaluate AI generated and digitally altered media, and to extract best practices from that work. That initiative has received support from Meta.</p> <p>The EFCSN is also starting a project to increase cross-country collaboration in detecting and debunking climate disinformation across the EU, that has been identified by members as a likely key topic for the elections. This project receives support from the European Climate Foundation.</p>
	<p>The aforementioned projects should result in increasing fact-checking capacity during the EU parliamentary election in several European countries, as well as in increased capacity to be aware of what other fact-checking organisations are doing in other countries, thus facilitating synergies, information exchanges, and better allocation of resources. The capacity to identify and debunk AI-generated and digitally altered media will increase.</p>