

Code of Practice on  
Disinformation – January  
2023 baseline report of  
**GLOBSEC**

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## Executive summary

Two main activities conducted by the GLOBSEC's Centre for Democracy and Resilience ("Centre") related to the Code are:

1. Research and Monitoring of disinformation: Centre regularly monitors the trends in narratives and methods used to spread disinformation, especially across the CEE region.
2. Awareness raising on disinformation: Centre engages with the public through a range of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities with a range of target groups on the issue of tackling disinformation and related topics.

GLOBSEC is participating in two subgroups: Crisis Response and Monitoring and Reporting Subgroup. GLOBSEC assigned specific people to attend meetings of the specific Task-force subgroups and the team always makes sure there is a person present in case the assigned representative is not able to attend. GLOBSEC has participated in two plenary sessions. The first one was attended by our representative, Jana Kazaz online, and the second she attended in person in Brussels.

GLOBSEC has set up monthly calls of civil society and fact-checking organisations which take place once a month on Mondays. This meeting is supplemented by email correspondence if necessary. The aim of the monthly meetings is to discuss ongoing work and align positions regarding ongoing debates. Civil society organisations and fact-checkers agreed to work together on the review and analysis of the reports and committed to preparing a joint statement following the submission of the reports.

Activities during the **monitoring period (June 16, 2022 – January 16, 2023)**:

### RESEARCH AND MONITORING DISINFORMATION

#### GLOBSEC has become part of EDMO and BROD

In December, GLOBSEC became a part of the European Digital Media Observatory. The Centre for Democracy and Resilience will contribute to EDMO's efforts by coordinating the investigation into disinformation campaigns and identifying key partners in the region.

Since January 2023, EDMO has expanded to all EU member states by creating additional 6 new EDMO Hubs, which will allow tailoring EDMO's mission to the specific local vulnerabilities of digital spaces in individual European countries. GLOBSEC is part of BROD – the Bulgarian-Romanian observatory of Digital Media – in which it is leading investigations.

#### GLOBSEC Trends Country Reports

In October GLOBSEC launched 9 GLOBSEC Trends Country Reports: Slovakia, Czechia, Poland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria, which the GLOBSEC team produced 10 country-specific reports analyzing the findings from the GLOBSEC Trends report published earlier in 2022. Country-specific reports go more in-depth when it comes to socio-demographic data including a closer look at the resonance towards disinformation narratives across the CEE region, and provide further recommendations. They can be found here:

- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Slovakia](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Czech Republic](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Poland](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Hungary](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Latvia](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Lithuania](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Estonia](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Romania](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022 Bulgaria](#)
- [GLOBSEC Trends 2022](#)

#### StratCom Hub Initiative

GLOBSEC brings representatives of Slovak public state institutions, NGOs, media and other sectors to develop joint coordination mechanisms to conduct planning and execution of strategic communication and counter disinformation efforts. Throughout the monitoring period, there were two meetings of the initiative, in June and October. During each StratHub meeting, communication activities, including current disinformation narratives and

counter-narratives are discussed. In October, GLOBSEC has published Manual on Strategic Communication. The manual contains the best practices, the challenges communicators face, pro-active and reactive forms of communication and OECD best practices. The manual serves any representatives of public administration who directly and indirectly communicates with public. Overall, 600 hard copies of the manual were distributed.

#### **Workshops organised by GLOBSEC**

- **Cyber Security Challenges Hampering Democratic Resilience:** 2 workshops in cooperation with Google Jigsaw in August focused on online/cyber threats with participants and representatives of civil society from Central European countries.
- **Countering disinformation: Role of Global Tech companies to achieve goals set in EDAP** – workshop in November within the Democratic Values in the Digital Age workshop series organised by Euractiv powered by Microsoft.

#### **MEDIA LITERACY AND AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES (Debates, Conferences)**

- **"Information War in Slovakia and How to Stop It?"** A debate in July at the most popular music festival in Slovakia, Pohoda, to raise awareness among the young generation on the topic and bring public institutions and their representatives closer to people;
- **"Café Europe: The War in Ukraine and Hybrid Threats around Us"** A debate in July in Pohoda music festival organized by the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia to raise awareness among the young generation on the resilience towards Russian disinformation and communication policies of the state administration;
- **Two interactive quizzes at high schools in Lučenec**, in southern Slovakia. The sessions were organized in cooperation with Lučenec Europe Direct situated at a local municipal office to raise awareness among high school students on disinformation online.
- **Joining Forces Against Misinformation conference** in November in Prague. GLOBSEC briefed the participants of the conference on how Central European countries counter disinformation highlighting the role and activities of civil society organizations and media.
- **High-Level Multi-Stakeholder Event on the Future of the Internet** In November GLOBSEC representative spoke at a high-level conference about best practices in strategic communication and cooperation with social media companies and lack of dedication from social media platforms.
- **Tackling Disinformation in Central Europe and the Western Balkans** In October GLOBSEC participated in an expert roundtable followed by a public conference Tackling Disinformation in Central Europe and the Western Balkans organized by the Slovak Embassy in Vienna and the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen.

#### **CAPACITY BUILDING**

- **Training for public institutions** GLOBSEC team organized three in-person pieces of training for the state administration officials to advance their communication skills and knowledge in accordance with the strategic manual released in October. Three pieces of training were attended by 51 participants altogether.
- **Seminar of the Civic-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence** GLOBSEC delivered a presentation at the seminar Misinformation and Disinformation organized by the Civic-Military Cooperation Centre of Excellence. The seminar was attended by over 70 representatives of public administration and armed forces from various EU member states.

### Guidelines for filling out the report

Baseline reports are detailing how Signatories have implemented their Commitments under the Code and provide the Qualitative Reporting Elements (QREs) and Service Level Indicators (SLIs), as they stand one month after the implementation. The baseline report should also include a comparison between the measures in place under the previous Code to the measures taken to implement the new Code. The measures taken to implement the new Code should be outlined per commitment in the dedicated field of the reporting template.

### Reporting period

The reporting period to be covered in the baseline reports is from 16 December 2022 to 16 January 2023 for all Signatories. (The implementation period of the Code from 16 June 2022 to 16 December 2022 is followed by a one-month reporting period from 16 December 2022 to 16 January 2023.) Signatories shall submit baseline reports outlining policy updates and actions taken to implement the Code during the implementation period. Data, e.g. on the number of actions taken under a specific policy, should be reported on from the end of the implementation period (16 December 2022) until the cut-off date of 16 January 2023. In case specific data is not available for the first reporting period (from 16 December 2022 to 16 January 2023), please provide the monthly average based on the previous quarter, clearly outlining the methodology used in the relevant field. The submission date for baseline reports is January 31, 2023.

### Adjusting the reporting template

Non-VLOPs can adapt the template to specific commitments and measures they subscribed to. This may include adapted wording for commitments, measures, QREs and SLIs. Non-VLOPs 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. 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 table directly, in written form.

### Reporting SLIs and data

Reporting on Service Level Indicators requires quantitative information to be reported in the reporting template. We ask you to report data in the format provided by the reporting template, not on external links.

### 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. Please also indicate inconsistencies or gaps regarding methodology in the field dedicated to methodology.

### Attachments

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

### Uploading data to the Transparency Centre

After the submission of the baseline reports and the launch of the Transparency Centre website, all data from the reporting template must be uploaded to the Transparency Centre within maximum 7 days, allowing easy data access and filtering. 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.

### III. Political Advertising

#### Commitment 12

Relevant Signatories commit to increase oversight of political and issue advertising and constructively assist, as appropriate, in the creation, implementation and improvement of political or issue advertising policies and practices. [change wording if adapted]

**QRE 12.1.1 (for measures 12.1-12.3)**

Research results will be shared after each election monitoring, and on ad hoc basis

GLOBSEC has committed to sharing research results of online political and issue advertising in the CEE region prior to elections. During the monitoring period, GLOBSEC has not done such a monitoring with its projects.

### III. Political Advertising

#### Commitment 13

Relevant Signatories agree to engage in ongoing monitoring and research to understand and respond to risks related to Disinformation in political or issue advertising. [change wording if adapted]

**QRE 13.1.1 (for measures 13.1-13.3)**

The scope of activities within Measure 13.2 only falls under the scope of countries, which will be included in GLOBSEC's research in the next years, depending on available projects and funding.

The assessment under measure 13.3 will be, so far, limited to Slovakia, as GLOBSEC has knowledge of the country's public administration, whereas it plans to expand to other countries in the future.

During the plenary meeting, GLOBSEC's representative discussed with partners the issue of the "blackout period" and their relevance and impact on elections monitoring. It is an open discussion at the moment, which will be elaborated latest by EP elections.

The scope of this measure is limited for GLOBSEC to Slovakia, and throughout the monitoring period no major elections took place. However, with current political turmoil and the possibility of early parliamentary elections, GLOBSEC will evaluate, together with partners in the Task-force, whether there is sufficient independent scrutiny of political and issue advertising in Slovakia.

## 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]

<p><b>QRE 17.2.1</b> [insert wording if adapted]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>"Information War in Slovakia and How to Stop It?"</b> A debate in July at the most popular music festival in Slovakia, Pohoda, to raise awareness among the young generation on the topic and bring public institutions and their representatives closer to people;</li> <li>• <b>"Café Europe: The War in Ukraine and Hybrid Threats around Us"</b> A debate in July in Pohoda music festival organized by the Representation of the European Commission in Slovakia to raise awareness among the young generation on the resilience towards Russian disinformation and communication policies of the state administration;</li> <li>• <b>Two interactive quizzes at high schools in Lučenec</b>, in southern Slovakia. The sessions were organized in cooperation with Lučenec Europe Direct situated at a local municipal office to raise awareness among the high school students on disinformation online.</li> <li>• <b>Joining Forces Against Misinformation conference</b> in November in Prague. GLOBSEC briefed the participants of the conference on how Central European countries counter disinformation highlighting the role and activities of civil society organizations and media.</li> <li>• <b>High Level Multi-Stakeholder Event on the Future of the Internet</b> In November GLOBSEC representative spoke at a high-level conference about best practices in strategic communication and cooperation with social media companies and lack of dedication from social media platforms.</li> <li>• <b>Tackling Disinformation in Central Europe and the Western Balkans</b> In October GLOBSEC participated in an expert roundtable followed by a public conference Tackling Disinformation in Central Europe and the Western Balkans organized by the Slovak Embassy in Vienna and the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen.</li> </ul>
<p><b>QRE 17.3.1</b> [insert wording if adapted]</p>	<p>In December, GLOBSEC became a part of the <b>European Digital Media Observatory</b>. The Centre for Democracy and Resilience will contribute to EDMO’s efforts by coordinating the investigation into disinformation campaigns and identifying key partners in the region.</p> <p>Since January 2023, EDMO has expanded to all EU member states by creating additional 6 new EDMO Hubs, which will allow tailoring EDMO’s mission to the specific local vulnerabilities of digital spaces in individual</p>

	<p>European countries. GLOBSEC is part of BROD – <b>the Bulgarian-Romanian observatory of Digital Media</b> – in which it is leading investigations.</p> <p>In July GLOBSEC participated in a webinar co-organized by the Slovak Council for Broadcasting and Retransmission titled “<b>Effectively and transparently against disinformation</b>” alongside representatives from the European Commission, the organising Council, Charles University, and Google.</p>
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<b>VI. Empowering the research community</b>	
Commitment 29	
<p>Relevant Signatories commit to conduct research based on transparent methodology and ethical standards, as well as to share datasets, research findings and methodologies with relevant audiences. [change wording if adapted]</p>	
<b>QRE 29.1.1</b> [insert wording if adapted]	GLOBSEC has shared its research relevant to the Code of Practice during the Task Force meetings of Crisis and Reporting Group.
<b>QRE 29.1.2</b> [insert wording if adapted]	Once the Transparency Centre is set up, GLOBSEC will update its research on the platform.
<b>QRE 29.1.3</b> [insert wording if adapted]	GLOBSEC has shared its research papers relevant to the Code of Practice during the Task Force meetings of Crisis and Reporting Group. Research papers contained detailed information on methodology.

<b>VIII. Transparency Centre</b>	
Commitment 34	
<p>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]</p>	

<b>VIII. Transparency Centre</b>	
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]

### VIII. Transparency Centre

#### Commitment 36

Signatories commit to updating the relevant information contained in the Transparency Centre in a timely and complete manner.

<b>QRE 36.1.1 (for the Commitments 34-36)</b> [insert wording if adapted]	Joint declaration of Signatories involved in operating or adding content to the Transparency Centre.
<b>QRE 36.1.2 (for the Commitments 34-36)</b> [insert wording if adapted]	N/A in the first report. Updates on changes to the Transparency Centre’s content will be provided by Signatories involved in operating or adding content to the Transparency Centre.

### 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]

<b>QRE 37.6.1</b> [insert wording if adapted]	<p>GLOBSEC is participating in two subgroups: <b>Crisis Response and Monitoring and Reporting Subgroup</b>. GLOBSEC assigned specific people attending meetings of the specific Task-force subgroups and the team always makes sure there is a person present in case the assigned representative is not able to attend.</p> <p>GLOBSEC has participated in two plenary sessions. The first one was attended by our representative, Jana Kazaz online, and the second she attended in person in Brussels.</p> <p>GLOBSEC has set up monthly calls of civil society and fact-checking organisations which take place once a month on Mondays. This meeting is supplemented by email correspondence if necessary. The aim of the monthly meetings is to discuss ongoing work and align positions regarding ongoing debates.</p>
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**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]

**QRE 38.1.1** [insert wording if adapted]

GLOBSEC, as a civil society organization, can only dedicate human and financial resources it has available from external sources and projects, on which the team working on disinformation depends. GLOBSEC is participating in two subgroups: Crisis Response and Monitoring and Reporting Subgroup. GLOBSEC assigned specific people to attend meetings of the specific Task-force subgroups and the team always makes sure there is a person present in case the assigned representative is not able to attend. GLOBSEC has participated in two plenary sessions. The first one was attended by our representative, Jana Kazaz online, and the second she attended in person in Brussels.

**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]

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]

**X. Monitoring of Code**

Commitment 41

Signatories commit to work within the Task-force towards developing Structural Indicators, and publish a first set of them within 9 months from the signature of this Code; and to publish an initial measurement alongside their first full report. To achieve this goal, Signatories commit to support their implementation, including the testing and adapting of the initial set of Structural Indicators agreed in this Code. This, in order to assess the effectiveness of the Code in reducing the spread of online disinformation for each of the relevant Signatories, and for the entire online ecosystem in the EU and at Member State level. Signatories will collaborate with relevant actors in that regard, including ERGA and EDMO. [change 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.