

Code of Practice on Disinformation –
Report of GLOBSEC for the period January
– December 2023

Table of Content

Executive summary 3

Commitment 12 6

Commitment 13 6

V. Empowering Users 7

Commitment 17 7

Commitment 29 7

VIII. Transparency Centre 8

Commitment 34 8

Commitment 35 9

Commitment 36 9

IX. Permanent Task-Force 9

Commitment 37 9

X. Monitoring of Code 10

Commitment 38 10

Commitment 39 10

Commitment 40 10

Commitment 41 11

Commitment 43 11

Commitment 44 11

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 four subgroups: Crisis Response, Monitoring and Reporting, Generative AI subgroups and WG on elections. 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 in 2023. The first one, in June, was attended by our representative, Jana Kazaz in person in Brussels, and the second, in December, was organized as an online event. GLOBSEC had presentation in both of the events, in June on GLOBSEC Trends, and in December on AI in Slovak elections.

Activities during the **monitoring period (January 2023 – December 2023)**:

Stop Hate Initiative:

In April 2023, GLOBSEC, together with 27 partners from the non-governmental sector and law firms, launched an initiative focused on countering online hate, "Zastavme nenávisť" (Stop Hate). The initiative's primary goal is to raise awareness in Slovak society about the limits of freedom of speech and combat the proliferation of hate speech and incitement to violence. The initiative also focuses on providing legal assistance to victims of hate speech and hosts joint events and public discussions on the subject. A website called zastavmenenavist.online was launched along with a social media campaign.

Whole of society coordination of strategic communication:

GLOBSEC was one of the key initiators of the exchange of best practices and know-how in strategic communication and countering disinformation activities between civil society, state institutions and academia. The coordination lasted until the parliamentary elections in September 2023.

GLOBSEC Trends 2023:

[GLOBSEC Trends 2023](#), released in May 2023, presents findings from a comprehensive survey conducted across eight CEE countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). The survey examines the susceptibility to key narratives – both true and manipulative – concerning the war in Ukraine, NATO, Western nations, the EU, democracy and public health.

DisinfoHub:

Through DisinfoHub GLOBSEC facilitated the exchange of best practices and expertise in strategic communication and combatting disinformation among diverse stakeholders. This coordination effort extended up to the parliamentary elections in September 2023, encompassing various events and initiatives aimed at fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. Among these events was the "**Forging a Collective Shield**" workshop, held in November, which provided a platform for experts to delve into effective strategies in countering disinformation.

Electoral monitoring:

GLOBSEC conducted [electoral monitoring](#) 3 months before Slovak parliamentary elections 2023. A weekly update dissected key themes, narratives, influential actors as well as the most resonating posts in terms of reach across distinct groups within Slovakia's most frequented social media platform - Facebook, with reports available in both Slovak and English. GLOBSEC also examined the impact of the LGBTI+ community and PRIDE Festival on the information space, producing a report and a short video in English released in October. Further contributions included a commentary in the daily SME on the aforementioned report, focusing on gender-based hate during the pre-election period. GLOBSEC's efforts extended to monthly pre-election monitoring on Facebook, with reports available in both Slovak and English.

Media literacy and awareness raising activities included:

- GLOBSEC organized a campaign in Slovakia aimed at maintaining and fostering support for Ukraine among key vulnerable audiences. Trusted voices were utilized to run tailored campaigns focusing on countering Russia-originated and/or supported narratives on energy security and explaining the importance of current policies and sanctions for the region's security and future.
- Patrik Szicherle [published](#) a policy report "Fighting Foreign Malign Influence in Democratic States" which takes a look at the main challenges democracies face regarding foreign malign influence and best practices in countering these activities.
- In March, Katarína Klingová spoke at a [public event](#) in Brussels titled "*Shaping our Digital Future: Tackling Disinformation in the EU, case of Central and Eastern Europe*".
- In March, Katarína Klingová spoke at an [online debate](#) titled "*On-the-ground reporting - Can it help to combat Russia's disinformation war?*". Online debate was organized by the Brussels Office of Euractiv.
- In June, Katarína Klingová spoke at *Countering Foreign Interference: CFI Dialogues 2023* international conference sharing methodological approaches to measuring vulnerabilities/ resilience experts from both sides of the Atlantic.
- In December, Katarína Klingová spoke at the *Annual NATO Senior Communicators Conference* organised at NATO HQ in Brussels, sharing GLOBSEC's insights on CEE vulnerable societal groups and experience with engaging with them.
- Dominika Hajdu [wrote](#) an article for Daily SME about regulations of AI and potential threats to democracy, available in [English](#) at the Slovak Spectator. (in English), she was [mentioned](#) in an article for RTVS news about the EU regulations on AI, [commented](#) on the perception of Russia and support for Ukraine in Slovakia in Slovak Spectator (in English).
- Katarína Klingová [gave](#) an interview about the Stop Hate Initiative for JOJ News, [commented](#) on the Russian disinformation operations on Euractiv (in French)
- Jana Kazaz [published](#) an article about the presidential election in Turkey and the perception of Erdogan in the country for Daily SME and [published](#) an article about the perception of NATO in the CEE countries for .týždeň news.
- Patrik Szicherle published a Hungarian-language [article](#) in one of the most popular Hungarian online media outlets introducing how fake accounts were trying to influence social media discussions on Twitter regarding Hungarian and European affairs.
- In June, Katarína Klingová spoke at the [annual conference](#) of Slovak civil society organizations titled "Joining Forces for Democracy" and discussed the increasing hostile environment and spear campaigns civil society organization face in Slovakia. The conference brought together over 250 representatives of NGOs, think tankers and public representatives was co-organized by the Special Envoy of the Government for Civil Society.
- Katarína Klingová discussed Slovakia's societal vulnerabilities and observed Trends data during at a [public debate](#) organized by the Czech AMO in September attended by 30 stakeholders from Slovak state institutions, media, and think tanks.
- In September, Dominika Hajdu participated in a public discussion attended by approx. 10 people, organised by Via Iuris on the topic of "Elections in social media" in Slovak.
- In September, Dominika Hajdu gave a lecture to approx. 20 youth Romanian representatives online, presenting the results of GLOBSEC Trends and vulnerabilities across the region.

- In September 27, Dominika Hajdu participated at a debate Democracy in times of crises and uncertainties: How to restore our lost trust? organized by GLOBSEC, in Slovak and streamed online.
- In October, Dominika Hajdu gave a presentation in an online webinar organised by the European Center for Digital Action, on the topic of “The Disinformation Dilemma: Lessons from Slovakia for European Elections” in English, the YouTube [recording](#) of the event gathered around 100 views.
- In November, Dominika Hajdu gave a lecture to young Slovaks studying abroad in a “Nexteria” program, attended by approx. 20 young people.
- In November, Dominika Hajdu and Katarina Klingova held a workshop on methods to counter disinformation for 10 educators during a conference organised by Post Bellum, a Slovak NGO.
- In November, Dominika Hajdu gave a lecture to 50 students at the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences at the Comenius University.
- In August, Dominika Hajdu participated at a summer school of the Civic-Democratic Youth in Slovakia, where she gave a lecture and held a discussion with 30 youth participants aspiring to be the next democratic leaders.
- Patrik Szicherle [published](#) a policy brief on *Lithuania's proactive stance against hybrid threats*, particularly from Russia and China and [published](#) a policy brief providing a Central and Eastern European perspective on countering disinformation and foreign influence.

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]	
Measure 12.1	
Measure 12.2	
Measure 12.3	
QRE 12.1.1 (for measures 12.1-12.3) Research results will be shared after each election monitoring, and on ad hoc basis	On December 7, Katarína Klingová and Jana Kazaz presented a case study of AI-generated disinformation during the Slovak parliamentary election at the Sixth Plenary meeting of the Code of Practice on Disinformation, namely during the session on “Risks and opportunities of AI in the fight against disinformation during elections.” The focus centred on the impact of deepfakes and AI leading up to the Slovak elections in September 2023. GLOBSEC provided practical insights on different approach social media platforms to taking down AI-generated content, which undermined integrity of Slovak parliamentary elections and spread disinformation that election was manipulated.

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]	
Measure 13.1	
Measure 13.2	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.
Measure 13.3	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.
QRE 13.1.1 (for measures 13.1-13.3)	

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 17.1	
QRE 17.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	A summary of GLOBSEC's media literacy activities over the past year has been provided in Executive Summary section of this report.
Measure 17.3	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 17.3.1 [insert wording if adapted]	GLOBSEC is part of EDMO, BROD and CEDMO.

VI. Empowering the research community

Commitment 29

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]

QRE 29.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>GLOBSEC Trends 2023: GLOBSEC Trends 2023, released in May 2023, presents findings from a comprehensive survey conducted across eight Central and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia). The survey examines the susceptibility to key narratives – both true and manipulative – concerning the war in Ukraine, NATO, Western nations, the EU, democracy and public health.</p> <p>Electoral monitoring: GLOBSEC conducted electoral monitoring 3 months before Slovak parliamentary elections 2023. This weekly update dissected key themes, narratives, influential actors as well as the most resonating posts in terms of reach across distinct groups within Slovakia’s most frequented social media platform - Facebook, with reports available in both Slovak and English.</p>
---	--

	<p>GLOBSEC also examined the impact of the LGBTI+ community and PRIDE Festival on the information space, producing a report and a short video in English released in October. Further contributions included a commentary in the daily SME on the aforementioned report, focusing on gender-based hate during the pre-election period. GLOBSEC's efforts extended to monthly pre-election monitoring on Facebook, with reports available in both Slovak and English.</p> <p>GLOBSEC disseminated a newsletter highlighting gender-based hate and the final pre-election monitoring findings in Slovak, with an English version scheduled for October. The final report on pre-election monitoring of Facebook activity in the Slovak Information Space was published in Slovak, with an English version also slated for release in October.</p> <p>Final publications are published on GLOBSEC website: https://www.globsec.org/what-we-do/publications/monitoring-narativov-o-volbach.</p>
QRE 29.1.2 [insert wording if adapted]	Outline relevant actions [suggested character limit: 2000 characters]
QRE 29.1.3 [insert wording if adapted]	The research outputs of GLOBSEC during the monitoring period was distributed via email to all stakeholders and signatories of the Code of Practice. Additionally, as members of EDMO, we have consistently kept EDMO and other signatories informed about our research activities, and whenever feasible, we have shared research outcomes and related methodologies with the broader public.
SLI 29.1.1 - reach of stakeholders or citizens informed about the outcome of research projects [change wording if adapted]	Methodology of data measurement [suggested character limit: 500 characters]
	Reach of stakeholders or citizens informed about the project
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 34.5	[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 35.1	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.2	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.3	[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.

Measure 36.1	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 36.2	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 36.3	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 36.1.1 (for the Commitments 34-36) [insert wording if adapted]	Outline relevant actions [suggested character limit: 2000 characters]
QRE 36.1.2 (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]

QRE 37.6.1 [insert wording if adapted]	GLOBSEC is participating in four subgroups: Crisis Response, Monitoring and Reporting, Generative AI and Election Subgroups. 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.
---	---

	GLOBSEC has engaged in two plenary sessions. The initial session, held in Brussels, was attended by our representative, Jana Kazaz, who presented the GLOBSEC Trends 2023 report in person. The second plenary, conducted online, saw the participation of Katarína Klingová and Jana Kazaz, who delivered a presentation on the utilization of AI content in Slovak elections in September 2023.
--	---

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]
QRE 38.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	Outline relevant actions [suggested character limit: 2000 characters]

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]	

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 43

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 44

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]