

Code of Practice on  
Disinformation – Report of  
Newtral for the period  
July – December 2025

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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.

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.

## 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.

Measure 17.1	
QRE 17.1.1	<p>At Newtral, we have media literacy as one of our main objectives. In 2019, we launched Newtral Educación, a full division devoted to pursuing this goal. Through it, we participate in many activities with different types of civil society organizations, universities, and companies to generate a critical spirit and promote good practices in the field of verification.</p> <p>In the second half of 2025, Newtral Educación further expanded its reach through comprehensive programs targeting vulnerable communities and diverse audiences. Our initiatives included an extensive series of nearly 60 educational activities, such as workshops and training sessions, conducted across universities and institutions like the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad de Cádiz, Universidad de Sevilla, Universidad de Málaga, Universidad Francisco de Vitoria, and Universidad Rey Juan Carlos. These sessions focused on critical information analysis and the responsible use of new technologies. We also reinforced our international collaboration: we are part of the UNESCO MIL Alliance and participated in the global digital literacy week in October by sharing content on our networks. We also reinforced our commitment to scientific research, notably through the Psychology of Disinformation project (Journalism Science Alliance). Furthermore, our participation in IBERIFIER+, the HYBRIDS alliance, and initiatives like AI Detectives for teaching young students from rural areas how to face AI-generated content, reaffirm our holistic approach to advancing media literacy and research across Spain's regions.</p>
SLI 17.1.1 - Actions enforcing policies above [	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educational Outreach and Training Programs: An extensive series of educational activities (nearly 60), such as workshops and training sessions, were conducted across universities and institutions throughout Spain. Collaborations primarily included the Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM), Universidad de Cádiz, Universidad Rey Juan Carlos (URJC), and the ULE (Universidad de León), focusing on summer courses, specialized workshops, and research on disinformation and AI verification. These programs covered topics such as fact-checking, disinformation identification, and data journalism, targeting high school students (C.E. Jaime Balmes), university journalism programs, and professional development for educators (Edelvives + Maristas). Additionally, the Newtral newsroom hosted approximately 10 educational visits from schools and universities.</li> <li>• Professional Capacity Building: Programs were delivered to enhance the capacity of various professionals and institutions to identify and counter disinformation. These included specialized sessions, roundtables, and working breakfasts with groups such as Fundae and the Asociación de Medios de Información on AI in journalism, the Observatorio de Medios and Club de Roma on digital ecosystem veracity and disinformation, the Ilustre Colegio de la Abogacía de Madrid, and a workshop on the work of fact-checkers with the Centro de Estudios de Seguridad of Universidad de Santiago de Compostela.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International Collaboration and Research: The period saw a reinforcement of international collaboration and a commitment to scientific research, notably through being part of the UNESCO MIL Alliance, the Psychology of Disinformation project, IBERIFIER+, the HYBRIDS alliance, and initiatives like AI Detectives. Specific international engagements included the IFCN Global Fact 12 in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil, presentations to JournalismAI, and an encounter with the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs (CIDOB) on AI governance, as well as interviews and collaborations with Universidad Diego Portales (Chile).</li> <li>• Youth and Digital Natives Focus: Dedicated programs targeted young people, with a focus on emerging threats. This included the AI Detectives initiative for detecting AI-generated content. In response to mobile phone bans in schools, a printable worksheet was developed as an adaptable resource. Activities included university student collaborations (UCM, UC3M, URJC) and specific training on deepfakes, recognizing the specialized approach needed for media literacy among digital natives.</li> <li>• Community-Based Education: Local and regional educational efforts were carried out to reach beyond major urban centers. This included workshops and training in collaboration with local organizations and communities, such as those with Columbares and other groups to ensure media literacy reached rural and underserved populations.</li> </ul>
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<h2>X. Monitoring of Code</h2>	
<h3>Commitment 38</h3>	
<p>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.</p>	
<p>Measure 38.1</p>	<p>Newtral has appointed two dedicated representatives to actively engage in the Permanent Task Force and its associated Subgroups, as part of our commitment to the Code of Conduct on Disinformation (formerly the Code of Practice). These representatives are responsible for overseeing the coordination and alignment of Newtral's internal initiatives with the commitments outlined in the Code. Their role includes facilitating cross-departmental efforts, monitoring progress, and ensuring that our policies, tools, and outputs reflect both the spirit and the requirements of the Code.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

	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.
<b>QRE 38.1.1</b>	Newtral has allocated sufficient resources and has established appropriate internal processes to ensure the effective implementation of our commitments under the Code. We have formed a team of two people and instituted internal processes to achieve comprehensive coverage across all aspects of our commitment.

<b>X. Monitoring of Code</b>
<b>Commitment 39</b>
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.

<b>X. Monitoring of Code</b>	
<b>Commitment 40</b>	
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 40.1	Newtral is delivering its sixth report.
Measure 40.2	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.
Measure 40.3	In the next six months, our focus will be on actively tracking the changes and new obligations arising from the implementation of the Code of Conduct (CoC) within the framework of the Digital Services Act (DSA). This includes not only the ongoing reporting but also addressing any additional requirements or developments as they emerge, ensuring our full alignment with the evolving standards and contributing to the ongoing work.
Measure 40.4	As part of the EFCSN, we contribute to monitoring the reports submitted by other stakeholders to check the degree of compliance.
Measure 40.5	Building on our prior engagement, we are pleased to report that the exchanges with the national coordinator in Spain, the Comisión Nacional de los Mercados y la Competencia (CNMC), have progressed constructively and yielded positive results. The dialogue has remained open, regular, and solution-oriented, allowing us to stay closely informed about recent regulatory and procedural developments at the national level.

	<p>The CNMC has informed us about the operational challenges they are currently facing while waiting for the approval of a pending legislative reform. This reform is crucial, as it will provide the institution with the necessary tools to properly enforce the Digital Services Act (DSA) in Spain. Additionally, regarding the requirements our organization must meet to be designated as a "Trusted Flagger," this matter is still under internal evaluation and consideration by our company.</p>
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<h2 style="color: #0070C0;">X. Monitoring of Code</h2>
<h3 style="color: #0070C0;">Commitment 42</h3>
<p>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.</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed #000;"/>
<p>From July to December 2025, Newtral maintained its commitment to providing proportionate and appropriate information to support the European Commission's rapid response system. Newtral engaged in extensive, real-time public verification and reporting actions for the Extremadura regional elections held on December 21, 2025.</p>
<p>These actions were designed to counteract disinformation and provide the public with verified data, covering the period before, during, and immediately after the election:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Real-time Disinformation Debunking:</b> Newtral addressed and debunked hoaxes and misleading content circulating across social media, particularly on Election Day. This included clarifying the legal criteria for null votes and dismantling false narratives about the improper delivery or invalidity of official ballots due to candidate appearance rules related to electoral districts.</li> <li>● <b>Proactive Anti-Hoax Public Guidance:</b> Prior to Election Day, Newtral published a comprehensive anti-hoax guide for the Extremadura elections. This guide provided the public with information on common disinformation tactics related to voting procedures, the role of vote-counting companies (Indra), the mail-in voting process, and how to spot content generated by Artificial Intelligence (deepfakes).</li> <li>● <b>Fact-Checking of Political Claims:</b> A series of rigorous fact-checks were published on official statements made by the main political candidates regarding key public policy issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Verification of claims concerning Extremadura's unemployment rate (Guardiola).</li> <li>○ Contextualized fact-checks on data comparing job creation in Extremadura versus the rest of Spain (Gallardo).</li> <li>○ Verification of statements regarding the historical nature of Extremaduran emigration (Abascal), providing expert data to clarify the context of legal versus clandestine migratory flows.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Factual Reporting on Election Security:</b> Newtral provided immediate and factual coverage of the reported robbery of 124 mail-in votes. The reporting clarified the status of the investigation (attributed by the Guardia Civil to common crime), countered political claims of systemic fraud with verified information, and confirmed the measures taken by the Provincial Electoral Board and Correos to guarantee the right to vote for all affected electors.</li> </ul>
<p>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.</p>

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## 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.

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

### Torre-Pacheco unrest (July 2025)

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

Following an assault on an elderly resident in Torre Pacheco (Murcia) on July 9, 2025, Newtral identified severe disinformation threats that escalated racial violence in this municipality of 40,000 inhabitants, where 30% are foreign residents. Primary threats included: systematic circulation of decontextualized violent videos falsely attributed to Torre Pacheco, including footage from Almería (May 2025), Guadalajara Mexico (2021), Torrevieja, and Fuenlabrada Madrid (2021); fabricated official communications falsely attributed to Torre Pacheco city council making xenophobic statements; coordinated hate networks using Telegram channels like "Deport Them Now" issuing calls for migrant "hunts" and threats; international disinformation amplification through Russian Pravda network (232 contents in 4 days), Polish extreme-right account 'Visegrad 24', and pro-Russian 'Radio Genoa' generating 3 million views; circulation of unverified suspect identities and vehicle information presented as confirmed attackers; false imagery including staged scenes (jamón display in Huelva 2024 presented as "counterattack against Muslims"); and manipulation of legitimate incidents (elderly man's fall in El Algar presented as immigrant assault). These narratives were strategically deployed by ultra-nationalist groups, VOX proxies, and international networks to inflame racial tensions, coordinate physical violence, and establish "vigilante patrols" featuring neo-Nazi symbolism, demonstrating sophisticated coordination between domestic extremist groups and foreign disinformation networks.

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

Newtral implemented comprehensive countermeasures to address the Torre Pacheco disinformation crisis through systematic debunking. Our response included immediate fact-checking of viral decontextualized videos, providing detailed verification showing true origins (Almería, Mexico, Torrevieja, etc.) with precise geolocation and temporal evidence. We debunked fabricated official communications by directly coordinating with Torre Pacheco city council spokespersons, who confirmed false documents had no institutional origin. Our investigation exposed the international coordination of hate networks, documenting connections between the Russian Pravda network, the Polish 'Visegrad 24', and domestic extremist groups, providing transparency about foreign interference in local conflicts.

We referred to Guardia Civil and local police to verify official information about arrests and investigation status, preventing the spread of false claims about suspect identities. Our mitigation strategy included real-time monitoring of Telegram channels used by hate groups to coordinate violence, documenting their expansion from 50 to 1,000 followers during the crisis. We provided detailed context about the broader coordination network, exposing VOX-linked propaganda channels (HerQles, Gaceta de la Iberosfera, Revuelta) that initially amplified the incidents.

Our reporting included expert analysis from criminologists and hate crime specialists, contextualizing the violence within broader patterns of rural precarity and structural conflicts rather than spontaneous racism. We maintained continuous updates as new false narratives emerged, creating a comprehensive resource documenting over 10 distinct disinformation pieces designed to inflame racial violence and coordinated by both domestic and international actors seeking to exploit local tensions for broader political objectives.

## Reporting on the service's response during a crisis

### Disinformation Narratives on the 'Dana': One Year Later (October 2025)

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

- Persistence of the "Hidden Dead" Narrative: Despite widespread debunking, hoaxes continued to circulate one year later, claiming that institutions were hiding the true number of fatalities from the 'dana'. Specific false claims included:
  - Misrepresenting a video of undertakers performing a routine service as evidence of bodies being found in garages.
  - Unsubstantiated claims by public figures of "more than 1,000 dead in Valencia," a figure contradicted by the official count and judicial investigation.
  - Exploiting the discovery of a recovered body to claim the government was deliberately concealing the number of victims.
- Systematic Discredit of Scientific and Public Institutions:
  - Continued hoaxes aimed at the Spanish Meteorological Agency (Aemet), falsely asserting that its rain radar failed or that the agency had concealed a flawed forecast.
  - False accusations against humanitarian organizations, specifically Cruz Roja and Cáritas, alleging that they were inactive, blocked aid, or profited from the tragedy.
- Geopolitical and Conspiracy Narratives: The persistence of conspiracy theories, such as the claim that the 'dana' was artificially caused by human-led geoengineering techniques, often linked to broader conspiracy channels.
- Exploitation for Distrust and Profit: Experts noted that the *hoaxes* were designed to "sow distrust towards institutions and the media." Disinformation was often "provoked and came from troll and bot farms" seeking to pollute the debate and profit from the public's fear and confusion.

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

Our primary mitigation response focused on sustained verification and debunking efforts, where our fact-checking team actively discredited false claims, including the misleading video of undertakers and the hoaxes targeting Aemet and NGOs. We relied on institutional transparency, as relevant bodies provided clarifications to counter the disinformation: Aemet confirmed its radar was active and explained the limitations of forecasting exact precipitation amounts, while Cruz Roja confirmed that a large portion of the funds raised (80 million out of 115 million euros) had already been mobilized. As fact-checkers, we played a vital role in media literacy, helping the public distinguish between verified facts and unfounded rumors. We found that incidents where disinformers were exposed in fraganti contributed to an "opening of eyes" for many people. Critically, we sensed a shifting public consciousness, suggesting a growing public "weariness" and awareness that these crisis situations are exploited for financial gain rather than being based on real facts. This increased public consciousness, in turn, has "caused a crisis of confidence in those who seek to create a crisis of confidence in others."

## Reporting on the service's response during a crisis

### Debunking the myths of Francoism half a century later (November 2025)

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

The main threat observed is the continuous and widespread dissemination of pro-Francoist disinformation and hoaxes across social media (including reels, TikTok, and podcasts), a problem that is amplified during sensitive historical dates, such as the 50th anniversary of Francisco Franco's death. These narratives utilize half-truths and historical decontextualization to romanticize the dictatorship's legacy and are noted to be infiltrating younger, digital-native audiences.

- The threats, as anticipated and observed, and the corresponding narratives verified in Newtral's special report and supporting content, include:
- Misattributed Social Achievements (Hoax): The false narrative that the Franco regime was solely responsible for major social advances, such as the creation of the Social Security system, paid vacations, and social housing, ignoring the existing preceding laws and institutions that were either inherited or maintained.
- Economic Progress Myths (Hoax): Claims promoting the "economic miracle" of the dictatorship, including arguments about the absence of taxes, while omitting the severe consequences of the Civil War and the subsequent policy of autarky.
- Infrastructure Propaganda (The Reservoirs Hoax): The persistence of the myth that Franco was the architect of Spain's entire reservoir policy, which downplays the policy's inherited nature, the construction's reliance on forced labor, and the resulting mass displacements.
- Targeting Youth and "Countercultural" Discourse (Threat): A concerning trend where Francoist propaganda is being rebranded as "countercultural and modern" to appeal to young people on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, leading to the resurgence of reactionary discourse in classrooms.
- Distortion of Women's Educational Role (Hoax): Narratives that selectively highlight women's access to university during the regime but ignore the restrictive social and political conditions placed on them by the dictatorship.
- Misinformation on Historical Memory:
  - Mass Graves Data (Hoax): The misleading circulation of a claim, partially generated by an incomplete regional study, that 67% of bodies found in Civil War mass graves are Francoist victims, a figure that is at odds with the national historical consensus pointing to a significantly higher number of Republican repression victims.
  - Monuments and Destruction (Hoax): False claims that the new government project for the Valley of Cuelgamuros (formerly Valley of the Fallen) will destroy the site's monumental sculptures, a narrative that misrepresents the plan to conserve them.
  - AI-Amplified Misleading Imagery (Threat): Disinformation campaigns using historical photos (e.g., a family photo from 1952 Málaga) to promote the "we lived better with Franco" narrative, sometimes amplified by unreliable AI tools (like Grok), which incorrectly dispute the image's Spanish origin.

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

Newtral's mitigation strategy for the observed rise in pro-Francoist disinformation, particularly amplified around the 50th anniversary of Francisco Franco's death, was comprehensive, combining in-depth investigation with broad public outreach.

- Launch of a Special Report: A dedicated special report, "*Los bulos que no mueren 50 años después de Franco*", was launched to systematically address and debunk the resurfacing narratives across various platforms.
- Systematic Fact-Checking: Newtral's verification team conducted specific fact-checks on the most viral and misleading hoaxes, which included:
  - Debunking claims of social achievements (like the creation of Social Security and paid vacations) being solely attributable to the Franco regime.
  - Challenging the narrative of the "economic miracle" by contextualizing the impact of the Civil War and the policy of autarky.
  - Verifying the true history behind the construction of reservoirs, counteracting the myth that Franco was the sole architect.

- Addressing hoaxes related to Historical Memory, specifically the misinformation around mass graves data and the false claims of monument destruction at the Valley of Cuelgamuros.
  - Disputing the use of misleading imagery, some amplified by AI tools like Grok, to promote the "we lived better with Franco" narrative.
- Addressing Youth Engagement: The report specifically identified and analyzed the threat of Francoist propaganda being repackaged as "countercultural and modern" to appeal to young audiences on platforms like Instagram and TikTok, highlighting the need for increased media literacy in educational settings.
- Leveraging Existing Infrastructure: These efforts were integrated into Newtral's ongoing anti-disinformation work, which includes:
  - Proactive debunking through partnerships with platforms like Meta and TikTok.
  - Utilizing the WhatsApp fact-checking tipline to receive user submissions and address viral content directly.
  - Reinforcing efforts via Newtral Educación to promote critical thinking and media literacy among vulnerable groups and students.