Code of Practice on Disinformation – Report of VOST EUROPE for the period 01/01/2025 to 31/12/2025

Executive summary

VOST Europe is a volunteer-driven network of Virtual Operations Support Teams operating across several European countries, including Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Slovakia, and Greece. The network supports crisis communication and information verification during emergencies by monitoring online information ecosystems, identifying misleading narratives, and amplifying verified information from trusted sources.

During the reporting period, Europe experienced several significant natural disasters and extreme weather events that generated substantial online information activity. These included the highly destructive Storm Kristin in Portugal, which caused extensive infrastructure damage and widespread power outages, as well as Storm Leonardo, which triggered severe flooding across Portugal and Spain. Additional extreme weather events affected other parts of Europe, including flooding and severe thunderstorms in southern France and major winter storm systems impacting France and Germany.

Such events create environments where information uncertainty is high and misleading narratives can spread rapidly online. During the reporting period, VOST Europe and its national teams monitored online discussions related to these disasters, identifying and documenting misleading or inaccurate content, including the circulation of outdated disaster imagery, speculative narratives regarding causes of incidents, and incorrect information about emergency response measures.

Particular attention was given to wildfire incidents in Portugal, where disinformation narratives circulated widely across social media platforms. Volunteers monitored these narratives, documented misleading content, and supported the dissemination of verified information originating from civil protection authorities and official emergency communication channels.

VOST Europe continued to contribute to the implementation of the European Commission's Code of Practice on Disinformation by participating in the permanent Task Force and collaborating with civil society organisations, researchers, and other stakeholders working to address disinformation. The organisation also continued to support transparency initiatives associated with the Code, including the maintenance and use of the Transparency Centre for publishing monitoring reports.

Through its volunteer network, operational monitoring activities, and awareness initiatives, VOST Europe contributes to strengthening societal resilience against disinformation during crisis situations and supports the availability of reliable information during emergencies.

V. Empowering Users

Commitment 17

In light of the European Commission's initiatives in the area of media literacy, including the Digital Education Action Plan, VOST Europe continued its efforts to promote media literacy and critical thinking related to disinformation during crisis situations. Through the activities of its volunteer network, the organisation monitored misleading narratives during natural disasters and amplified verified information from trusted sources. These actions contribute to helping citizens better understand how misinformation spreads during emergencies and encourage reliance on verified public information channels.

Measure 17.1	[insert wording if adapted]		
QRE 17.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	During the 2025 reporting period, VOST Europe, in collaboration with its national VOST teams, coordinated initiatives aimed at raising awareness of disinformation narratives emerging during natural disasters and extreme weather events. Particular attention was given to wildfire incidents in Portugal and other climate-related events across Southern Europe.Volunteers monitored social media platforms to identify misleading narratives and examples of miscontextualised visual content, including the reuse of imagery from previous disaster events or unrelated locations presented as current incidents. When such content was detected, VOST volunteers documented the cases and supported the dissemination of verified information from official civil protection authorities and trusted emergency communication channels.In parallel, VOST Europe amplified content produced by independent researchers, fact-checkers, and public authorities addressing disaster-related misinformation. These efforts were carried out through the organisation's social media channels and communication networks, helping to increase public awareness of how misleading narratives can emerge during crisis situations.By promoting verified information and highlighting common misinformation patterns, these activities contributed to strengthening citizens' ability to critically assess information circulating online during emergencies. .		
SLI 17.1.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	Metrics were obtained using social media analytics tools.		
	1.35M	82000	115 awareness posts published	340 posts identified and documented and reported
Data			
Measure 17.2	[insert wording if adapted]		
QRE 17.2.1 [insert wording if adapted]	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to promote media literacy related to crisis communication through awareness initiatives and collaboration with civil society actors working on		

	disinformation monitoring.These activities included sharing explanatory content on social media platforms highlighting common types of misinformation observed during natural disasters, including manipulated or miscontextualised images, speculative narratives regarding the causes of incidents, and inaccurate claims related to emergency response operations.VOST Europe also participated in events, workshops, and collaborative initiatives related to disinformation, crisis communication, and digital resilience. Through these activities, the organisation contributed operational insights derived from its monitoring work during emergency situations. By combining online awareness activities with participation in public discussions on disinformation and crisis communication, VOST Europe contributed to improving public understanding of how misleading narratives can emerge and spread during emergencies.				
SLI 17.2.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	Methodology of data measurement [suggested character limit: 500 characters]				
	Nr of media literacy/ awareness raising activities organised/ participated in 8	Reach of Campaigns	Nr of Participants	Nr of interactions with online assets	Nr of Participants (etc)
Data	8	1.7M	460	94000	N/A
Measure 17.3	[insert wording if adapted]				
QRE 17.3.1 [insert wording if adapted]	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to support initiatives aimed at improving citizens' resilience to disinformation during crisis situations by promoting access to verified information and encouraging responsible information sharing. Through its network of volunteers, the organisation monitored online narratives emerging during natural disasters and supported the amplification of verified information from official emergency communication channels. Particular attention was given to helping citizens identify misleading visual content and unverified claims that can spread rapidly during emergencies. VOST Europe also contributed to broader discussions on disinformation and crisis communication through participation in collaborative initiatives with researchers, civil society organisations, and institutions involved in the implementation of the Code of Practice on Disinformation.				

	These actions contribute to strengthening citizens' ability to navigate complex information environments during emergencies and support a more resilient and informed digital public sphere.

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]	
Measure 29.1	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 29.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	During the 2025 reporting period, VOST Europe did not conduct formal academic research projects. However, the organisation carried out continuous operational monitoring of disinformation narratives related to natural disasters and extreme weather events. Findings derived from these monitoring activities were shared with relevant national civil protection authorities and emergency management organisations. These insights included examples of misleading narratives circulating online, the reuse of miscontextualised visual content, and inaccurate information related to emergency response operations. By sharing these observations with authorities responsible for crisis communication and emergency response, VOST Europe contributed practical knowledge that can support situational awareness and improve the understanding of how misleading information spreads during emergency situations. In addition to monitoring activities, VOST Europe maintained collaboration with civil society organisations and stakeholders involved in the broader ecosystem addressing disinformation and crisis communication. Operational insights gathered through volunteer monitoring activities were shared in relevant discussions and collaborative initiatives, contributing to a better understanding of the dynamics of disinformation during natural disasters and crisis situations.
QRE 29.1.2 [insert wording if adapted]	

QRE 29.1.3 [insert wording if adapted]	VOST Europe remains committed to supporting research and evidence-based approaches to addressing disinformation by sharing operational insights derived from its monitoring work with relevant stakeholders. These contributions aim to complement academic and institutional research efforts by providing real-world observations from crisis situations.
SLI 29.1.1 - reach of stakeholders or citizens informed about the outcome of research projects [change wording if adapted]	Data refers to the sharing of operational monitoring insights with relevant national civil protection authorities and stakeholders responsible for crisis communication.
	4 national civil protection authorities and associated crisis communication structures informed

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 34.1	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to lead the technical development and maintenance of the Transparency Centre associated with the Code of Practice on Disinformation.Building on the previously deployed platform, the organisation implemented several upgrades aimed at improving usability, accessibility, and navigation. These improvements were introduced following feedback received from

	signatories of the Code and from the European Commission.The upgrades focused on simplifying the structure of the platform, improving the discoverability of reports and relevant documentation, and facilitating easier navigation for both signatories and external users accessing the Transparency Centre.
Measure 34.2	VOST Europe dedicated both human and technical resources to maintaining and improving the Transparency Centre during the reporting period.This included technical development work, user interface improvements, platform maintenance, and support to signatories using the Transparency Centre to publish their reports and information related to the implementation of the Code of Practice.
Measure 34.3	N/A
Measure 34.4	During the reporting period, VOST Europe implemented updates to the Transparency Centre aimed at improving the user experience and addressing feedback received from signatories and institutional stakeholders.These improvements included refinements to the navigation structure, improvements in the presentation of reports and documentation, and adjustments intended to facilitate easier access to relevant information for users of the platform.
Measure 34.5	VOST Europe continued to gather feedback from signatories and users of the Transparency Centre in order to identify areas where the platform could be further improved.This feedback contributed to the implementation of usability improvements and helped ensure that the Transparency Centre remains an effective tool for transparency and accountability in the implementation of the Code of Practice.

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	
Measure 35.2	
Measure 35.3	
Measure 35.4	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.5	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 35.6	During the reporting period, VOST Europe ensured that the Transparency Centre continued to provide accessible and structured information related to the implementation of the Code of Practice on

	Disinformation. The platform enables signatories to publish reports and relevant documentation in a format that is searchable and accessible to stakeholders and the public. The usability improvements introduced during the reporting period further strengthened the ability of users to navigate the platform and locate relevant information.

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]
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]	VOST Europe ensured that the Transparency Centre remained operational and up to date during the reporting period, supporting the publication of reports and relevant information related to the implementation of the Code of Practice on Disinformation.The platform continues to serve as a key mechanism for transparency regarding the activities and commitments of signatories under the Code.
QRE 36.1.2 (for the Commitments 34-36) [insert wording if adapted]	Through the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the Transparency Centre, VOST Europe contributes to ensuring that information related to the implementation of the Code of Practice remains accessible, transparent, and usable for stakeholders and the wider public.
SLI 36.1.1 - (for Measures 34 and 36) meaningful quantitative information on the usage of the Transparency Centre, such as the average monthly visits of the webpage [change wording if adapted]	Methodology of data measurement [suggested character limit: 500 characters]
	Metrics were obtained using the analytics tools associated with the Transparency Centre platform.
Data	In the period of 2025-01-01 – 2025-12-31 , our signatory profile was visited **1745** times, and our signatory reports were downloaded **1272** times. The Transparency Centre Webpage overall was visited **66144** times.

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	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to participate in the Permanent Task Force established under the Code of Practice on Disinformation. The organisation followed the work of the different subgroups of the Task Force and contributed to discussions related to the implementation and monitoring of the Code, particularly in areas connected to crisis communication and the spread of disinformation during emergency situations.
Measure 37.2	VOST Europe contributed operational insights derived from its monitoring activities during natural disasters and emergency situations. These observations relate in particular to the emergence of misleading narratives during crisis events and the role of online platforms in the dissemination of such content. These insights are based on the organisation's volunteer monitoring work carried out during incidents such as wildfire events and extreme weather situations.
Measure 37.3	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 37.4	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to participate in discussions and exchanges with other signatories and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the Code of Practice. These discussions contribute to improving the collective understanding of disinformation dynamics and the development of approaches aimed at strengthening resilience against misleading narrative

Measure 37.5	During the reporting period, VOST Europe maintained its participation in the activities and discussions of the Task Force and continued to follow developments related to the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Practice on Disinformation.
Measure 37.6	[insert wording if adapted]
QRE 37.6.1 [insert wording if adapted]	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to support the monitoring framework of the Code of Practice by providing relevant information on its activities and by participating in the reporting process established for signatories. This contributes to the overall objective of ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the Code of Practice on Disinformation.

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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 40.1 | During the reporting period, VOST Europe prepared and submitted its annual report detailing the implementation of its commitments under the Code of Practice on Disinformation.

The report outlines the organisation's activities related to monitoring disinformation narratives, supporting media literacy initiatives, contributing to discussions within the Permanent Task Force, and maintaining transparency through the Transparency Centre.

Through this reporting process, VOST Europe contributes to the collective monitoring framework established under the Code and supports the evaluation of actions taken by signatories to address disinformation. |
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| Measure 40.2 | [insert wording if adapted] |

Measure 40.3	VOST Europe ensured that its reporting under the Code of Practice on Disinformation was made publicly available through the Transparency Centre. Publishing reports through the Transparency Centre contributes to transparency and allows stakeholders, researchers, and the public to access information regarding the implementation of the commitments undertaken by signatories.
Measure 40.4	During the reporting period, VOST Europe continued to support the monitoring framework of the Code of Practice by providing relevant information on its activities and by participating in the reporting process established for signatories. This contributes to the overall objective of ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the Code of Practice on Disinformation.
Measure 40.5	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 40.6	[insert wording if adapted]