

Code of Practice on
Disinformation – Report of
VOST Europe for the period
JUN2022 to JAN2023

Table of Content

Executive summary.....	4
Guidelines for filling out the report.....	5
Reporting SLIs and data	5
V. Empowering Users.....	1
Commitment 17.....	1
Measure 17.1.....	2
QRE 17.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	2
SLI 17.1.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	2
Data.....	2
Measure 17.2.....	2
QRE 17.2.1 [insert wording if adapted]	2
SLI 17.2.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	2
Data.....	2
Commitment 29.....	3
Measure 29.1.....	3
VIII. Transparency Centre	4
Commitment 34.....	4
Measure 34.1.....	4
Measure 34.2.....	4
Measure 34.3.....	4
Measure 34.4.....	4
Measure 34.5.....	4
Commitment 35.....	4
Measure 35.6.....	4
Commitment 36.....	4
Measure 36.1.....	4
Measure 36.2.....	5
Measure 36.3.....	5
IX. Permanent Task-Force	5
Commitment 37.....	5
Measure 37.1.....	5
Measure 37.2.....	5
Measure 37.3.....	6
Measure 37.4.....	6

Measure 37.5	6
X. Monitoring of Code.....	6
Commitment 38	6
Measure 38.1	6
Commitment 39	6
Commitment 40.....	7
Measure 40.2	7
Measure 40.3	7
Measure 40.4	7
Measure 40.5	7
Measure 40.6	7
Commitment 41	7
Measure 41.1	7
Measure 41.2	7
Measure 41.3	8
Commitment 43	8

Executive summary

VOST Europe is a volunteer-led network of organizations working to counter disinformation and support crisis management. Established in response to the need for real-time information and effective communication during emergencies, VOST Europe has evolved into a large network dedicated to providing reliable and accurate information to the public during times of crisis.

As the threat of disinformation continues to increase, VOST Europe plays a role in promoting trust and resilience against disinformation, ensuring that accurate and trustworthy information is available during crises.

In the past six months, VOST Europe has supported European VOST in monitoring and reporting on disinformation related to COVID-19, the invasion of Ukraine, and other identified narratives.

In this period of time, VOST Europe has also developed a 10-episode television series, with the support of META, that focus on disinformation and how to fight it, and reinforced its team of volunteers that monitor, identify and report disinformation.

As part of the EU-HYBNET network, VOST Europe has also taken initiatives to share information with the consortium partners, regarding disinformation narratives relevant to the consortium and partner network, as well as explaining to several stakeholders what the Code of Practice on Disinformation is, and its importance.

VOST Europe has participated in the permanent task-force, that was setup by the Code of Practice on Disinformation, co-chairing the “Crisis Response Subgroup” and taken part in other sub-groups as an active member.

VOST Europe was also represented in the smaller group of signatories that managed the process of designing, developing, and deploying the Transparency Center.

VOST Europe will continue to play a role in countering disinformation and supporting local VOST in their initiatives for a more informed and resilient society.

Finally, VOST Europe commits to keep its strong representation in the Code of Practice on Disinformation’s Task Force and to keep reinforcing, and training, its teams to identify and report disinformation online.

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.

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	[insert wording if adapted]			
QRE 17.1.1 [insert wording if adapted]	VOST Europe has developed a 10-episode animated television series, a co-production with META, and the Portuguese Press Association (API), regarding the dangers of disinformation, based on Paulo Pena's Decalog. Target audience are young users of social media platforms. The series will be made publicly available soon, and thus there are, at this date, no metrics.			
SLI 17.1.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	N/A			
	Total count of the tool's impressions	Interactions/ engagement with the tool	Other relevant metrics	Other relevant metrics
Data	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Measure 17.2	[insert wording if adapted]			
QRE 17.2.1 [insert wording if adapted]	Outline relevant actions [suggested character limit: 2000 characters]			
SLI 17.2.1 - actions enforcing policies above [change wording if adapted]	N/A			
	Nr of media literacy/ awareness raising activities organised/ participated in	Reach of campaigns	Nr of participants	Nr of interactions with online assets
Data	1	N/A	N/A	N/A

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]	In this period VOST Europe did not conduct any research, taking a more operational stance
QRE 29.1.2 [insert wording if adapted]	In this period VOST Europe did not conduct any research, taking a more operational stance
QRE 29.1.3 [insert wording if adapted]	In this period VOST Europe did not conduct any research, taking a more operational stance
SLI 29.1.1 - reach of stakeholders or citizens informed about the outcome of research projects [change wording if adapted]	In this period VOST Europe did not conduct any research, taking a more operational stance
	Reach of stakeholders or citizens informed about the project
Data	N/A

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	VOST Europe took an active role in the development of the Transparency Center and supporting the signatories with technical insight and information regarding the development of the Transparency Center.
Measure 34.2	N/A in this reporting cycle
Measure 34.3	N/A in this reporting cycle
Measure 34.4	N/A in this reporting cycle
Measure 34.5	N/A in this reporting cycle

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 35.6	The design and development of the Transparency Centre took all of this features into consideration

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	

Measure 36.2	N/A in this reporting cycle
Measure 36.3	N/A in this reporting cycle
QRE 36.1.1 (for the Commitments 34-36) [insert wording if adapted]	We are pleased to confirm that we have been an active participant in the subgroup that has successfully launched the common Transparency Centre this year. We have assisted with establishing the website's requirements, selecting a vendor to build the website and overseeing the development of the website's key functionalities and interface. We have ensured that the Center will allow the general public to access general information about the Code as well as the underlying reports (and for the Center to be navigated both by commitment and signatory). Each signatory will be responsible for ensuring that the information they upload to the website is correct and accurate. Entities interested in joining the Code's task-force will be able to sign up through a dedicated online application form on the website.
QRE 36.1.2 (for the Commitments 34-36) [insert wording if adapted]	N/A in this reporting cycle
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]
	N/A in this reporting cycle
Data	N/A in this reporting cycle

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	VOST Europe was an active member of the Task-force, co-chairing the Crisis Response subgroup, and participating in other subgroups, namely the Transparency Centre and Outreach subgroups.
Measure 37.2	The work on establishing a risk assessment methodology and a rapid response system to be used in special situations like elections or crises, has started within the Crisis Response subgroup. However, the situation in Ukraine, due to Russia's invasion, shifted the attention of this subgroup to more operational, and cooperation efforts, to deter the flow of disinformation on online platforms regarding this crisis.

Measure 37.3	VOST Europe was part of the The Task-force's efforts to comply with this measure. The Task-Force agreed on and defined its operating rules, including on the involvement of third-party experts, which was laid down in a Vademecum drafted by the European Commission in collaboration with the Signatories and agreed on by consensus between the members of the Task-force
Measure 37.4	VOST Europe was part of the set up of subgroups dedicated to the specific issues related to the implementation and revision of the Code with the participation of the relevant Signatories. VOST Europe also volunteered to co-chair the Crisis Response subgroup, and help other signatories in the chairing of the their respective subgroups.
Measure 37.5	N/A in this reporting cycle
QRE 37.6.1 [insert wording if adapted]	<p>VOST Europe co-chaired the Crisis Response subgroup and took an active part on the Outreach subgroup as well as in the Transparency Centre subgroup.</p> <p>The Crisis Response subgroup created a space where relevant signatories can establish an active dialog regarding current disinformation narratives, measures to tackle those, and analyse early signals with the help of the large number of signatories present in this subgroup.</p> <p>The work done in the Outreach subgroup involved analysing proposals for new signatories and interviews with prospective signatories in order to make a recommendation to the subgroup.</p> <p>The work done in the Transparency Center subgroup focused on supporting the signatories with technical insight regarding the design, development and deployment of the Transparency Centre.</p>

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]

Measure 40.2	VOST Europe has sent the first baseline report describing the implementation of its commitments of the Code of Practice
Measure 40.3	VOST Europe has uploaded this report, and made it available on the Transparency Center for this reporting period
Measure 40.4	VOST Europe participated in the discussions that led to the development of the harmonised reporting templates.
Measure 40.5	N/A in this reporting cycle
Measure 40.6	[insert 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]

Measure 41.1	[insert wording if adapted]
Measure 41.2	[insert wording if adapted]

Measure 41.3

[insert wording if adapted]

X. Monitoring of Code

Commitment 43

Signatories commit to produce reports and provide data following the harmonised reporting templates and refined methodology for reporting and data disclosure, as agreed in the Task-force. [change wording if adapted]