

EU CODE OF PRACTICE ON DISINFORMATION 2022

Subscription Document for Signatory

European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN)

Name of the Signatory

European Fact-Checking Standards Network, a.is.b.l. (EFCSN)

About the Signatory

[Provide a description of the Company/Organisation and the relevant products, activities and services it and its subsidiaries offer, which are covered by the listed commitments and measures.]

Depending on the type of signatory, describe also either the nature and specificities of the platform/service and the types of disinformation-related issues observed on the service (for online platform signatories), or the solutions or activities provided by the signatory to counter disinformation (for other type of signatories)]

If you are a trade association, provide information about your membership and any other relevant information.]

The European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN) is an association of European independent fact-checking organizations whose purpose is to uphold and promote the highest standards of fact-checking and promote media literacy for the public benefit. The Association and its members are committed to upholding the principles of freedom of expression. They will work to promote the public's access to fact-checked trustworthy data and information and to educate the public in how to assess the veracity of information in the public sphere. The association, a representative body of the independent fact-checking community in Europe, was launched in 2022 by more than 40 European fact-checking organizations. As of March 1st 2023, the EFCSN has received its first round of applications (27) for becoming verified members of the association. These applications will now be evaluated by external assessors, (experts in the field of disinformation, fact-checking and/or journalism in the applicant's countries or regions) that will determine if the organizations comply with the [European Code of Standards for Independent Fact-Checking Organisations](#). A call for a new round of applications to the EFCSN will open in May for any organization interested in being evaluated to becoming verified members.

II. Scrutiny of Ad Placements

List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
Commitment 2	<u>Measure 2.2 (adapted)</u> : We will be open to assist in the development of tools and methodologies by Relevant Signatories to identify content and sources as distributing harmful Disinformation, to identify and take action on ads and promoted content that violate advertising policies regarding Disinformation mentioned in Measure 2.1.	QRE 2.2.1: We will report on the conversations we engage in and partnerships we convene to identify content and sources that contravene policies mentioned in Measures 2.1 including information obtained by polling our members.
Commitment 3	<u>Measure 3.1</u>	QRE 3.1.1
Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable): Financial gain is one of the main reasons for the creation of disinformation. The EFCSN commits to collaborate and to offer our insights and experience, especially by assisting in the identification of sources.		

IV. Integrity of Services

List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
Commitment 16	<u>Measure 16.1</u>	QRE 16.1.1
<p>Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable):</p> <p>The EFCSN believes in the importance of cooperation within the fight against disinformation. Therefore, we commit to promote the exchange of relevant information and learning with Relevant Signatories.</p>		

V. Empowering Users		
List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
Commitment 17	<u>Measure 17.2</u>	QRE 17.2.1, SLI 17.2.1
	<u>Measure 17.3</u>	QRE 17.3.1
Commitment 21	<u>Measure 21.1 (adapted)</u> : We are open to collaborate with Relevant Signatories by partnering with them to provide context and insights to develop and apply policies, features, or programs across Member States and EU languages to help users benefit.	QRE 21.1.1 (adapted): We will report on our engagement with Relevant Signatories on the policies, features, or programs they deploy to meet this Measure and on their

		availability across Member States, including information obtained by polling our members.
	<u>Measure 21.2 (adapted):</u> We will, in light of scientific evidence, undertake and/or support research and testing conducted by Relevant Signatories on warnings or updates targeted to users that have interacted with content that was later actioned upon for violation of policies mentioned in this section. We will disclose and discuss findings within the Permanent Task-force in view of identifying relevant follow up actions.	QRE 21.2.1
	<u>Measure 21.3 (adapted):</u> Where Relevant Signatories employ labeling and warning systems, we will be open to provide input in order for the design to be in accordance with up-to-date scientific evidence and help analyze the users' needs on how to maximize impact and usefulness of such interventions, for instance such that they are likely to be viewed and positively received.	QRE 21.3.1 (adapted): we will report on our engagement with Relevant Signatories where we provide input on their procedures for developing and deploying labeling or warning systems, as well as maximizing its usefulness for the user, including information obtained by polling our members.
Commitment 25	<u>Measure 25.1 (adapted):</u> We will be open to act as a third-party partner and work with relevant signatories to design and implement features to facilitate users' access to authoritative information without any weakening of encryption and with due regard for the protection of privacy.	QRE 25.1.1 (adapted): We will report on the tools, policies, partnerships, programs, and campaigns that involved our input, if any, including information obtained by polling our members.

Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable)

In line with the purpose of the EFCSN agreed upon and reflected in the articles of association, we commit under Measures 17.2 and 17.3 to design, develop, promote and maintain innovative tools and content in order to promote media literacy for public benefit.

VII. Empowering the Fact-Checking Community		
List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
<u>Commitment 30</u>	<u>Measure 30.1 (adapted)</u> : We will assist Relevant Signatories in setting up agreements between them and independent fact-checking organizations (as defined in whereas (e)) to achieve fact-checking coverage in all Member States. These agreements should meet high ethical and professional standards and be based on transparent, open, consistent and non-discriminatory conditions, and will ensure the independence of fact-checkers.	QRE 30.1.1: We will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE
	<u>Measure 30.2 (adapted)</u> : We will intercede for the community of independent European fact-checking organizations in order to assure Relevant Signatories provide fair financial contributions for their work to combat Disinformation on their services.	QRE 30.2.3: We will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE

	<u>Measure 30.3</u>	QRE 30.3.1: We will report on actions taken to facilitate the cross-border collaboration between fact-checkers. We will also poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE
	<u>Measure 30.4 (adapted)</u> : to develop the Measures above, we will be open to engage in consultations.	QRE 30.4.1 (adapted): We will report on the conversations with Relevant Signatories we engage in, including the development of the framework of cooperation described in Measures 30.3 and 30.4. Furthermore, we will poll verified members of the EFCSN in order to offer contextual information to data reported by Relevant Signatories within this QRE
<u>Commitment 31</u>	<u>Measure 31.3</u>	SLI 31.1.3
		QRE 31.3.1
	<u>Measure 31.4</u>	QRE 31.4
<u>Commitment 33</u>	<u>Measure 33.1</u>	QRE 33.1.1 SLI 33.1.1
<p>Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable)</p> <p><i>While commitments 30 and 31 in themselves are not strictly relevant for EFCSN, the association commits to the particular measures, QRS and SLIs relevant to being the "elected body representative of the independent European fact-checking organisations" mentioned in the Code. The EFCSN commits to work with relevant signatories to implement Commitment 30 – Measures 1-3 (30.4). As such, it will assist, when needed, in the negotiations to set up agreements between relevant signatories and independent fact-checkers to achieve fact-checking coverage in all MS (30.1) meeting high ethical and</i></p>		

professional standards. We will constantly monitor the implementation of the measures within the commitment related to fact-checking by polling EFCSN verified members and report about it with EFCSN's own experience and information obtained from polling our members, including on the fairness of the signatory compensations to fact-checkers (as specified in QRE 30.2.3). In line with the mission of the association, we will contribute to cross-border cooperation between fact-checkers (30.3). We also commit to lead the effort for the establishment of the repository of fact-checking content outlined in measure 31.3, in order for the tool to be useful to a wide range of actors after a process of open discussion within the Task-force. We will explore technological solutions along other signatories to achieve a repository that is efficient in its use for all EU languages and across digital platforms (31.4).

The EFCSN will provide input and discuss the drafting of quantitative indicators that help contextualize SLIs under Measure 31.2, as considered in SLI 31.1.3, in order to empower fact-checkers, researchers, the Commission and other stakeholders.

As for commitment 33, EFCSN was born as a result of the resolve of more than 40 fact-checking organizations that wanted to raise the bar and work according to the highest standards in ethics, transparency, methodology, and independence as outlined in the Code of European Standards for Independent Fact-Checking Organisations (2022). Our members agree for their actual adherence to those standards to be evaluated by two different independent academic experts every two years, and EFCSN has a complaint procedure to deal with alleged non compliance by its members. All that much in line with Commitment 33.

VIII. Transparency Centre		
List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
<u>Commitment 34</u>	<u>Measure 34.3</u>	QRE 36.1.1
<u>Commitment 35</u>	<u>Measure 34.4</u>	
<u>Commitment 36</u>	<u>Measure 35.2</u>	

	<u>Measure 35.3</u>	
	<u>Measure 35.4</u>	
<p>Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable)</p> <p><i>[Provide narrative description of what circumstances and proportionality considerations guide the signatory's choice on the commitments and measures signing up to, including – where relevant - a general reasoning why the other commitments and measures of the chapter have not been signed (yet) (i.e. not appropriate/proportionate). Where applicable, give an indication of which commitments/measures might be under the service's consideration for signature in the future.]</i></p> <p>Transparency is a central value for EFCSN and we commit to update our information to the transparency center in order to make it a useful tool for citizens.</p>		

IX. Permanent Task-force		
List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
<u>Commitment 37</u>	<u>Measure 37.1</u>	QRE 37.6.1:
	<u>Measure 37.2</u>	
	<u>Measure 37.3</u>	
	<u>Measure 37.4</u>	
	<u>Measure 37.5</u>	

	<u>Measure 37.6</u>	
<p>Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable)</p> <p><i>[Provide narrative description of what circumstances and proportionality considerations guide the signatory’s choice on the commitments and measures signing up to, including – where relevant - a general reasoning why the other commitments and measures of the chapter have not been signed (yet) (i.e. not appropriate/proportionate). Where applicable, give an indication of which commitments/measures might be under the service’s consideration for signature in the future.]</i></p> <p><i>EFCSN sees the permanent task force as potentially critical to the successful implementation of the Code and commits to actively participate. In line with our commitment to Measure 31.3 on the creation of a fact-checking content repository, the EFCSN will be involved in the negotiation within the Task-force. We expect to lead the process to build it, facilitating an open process to make it valuable for different types of signatories. This way, when it is set up and prepared for use, it will be beneficial to all the many stakeholders, play a relevant role in the multifaceted battle against disinformation, and connect to other elements of the Code of Practice.</i></p>		

X. Monitoring of the Code		
List of adopted commitments and measures		Qualitative reporting elements and service level indicators
<u>Commitment 38</u>		QRE 38.1
<u>Commitment 39</u>		
<u>Commitment 40</u>	<u>Measure 40.2</u>	
	<u>Measure 40.3</u>	
	<u>Measure 40.4</u>	

	<u>Measure 40.5</u>	
<u>Commitment 42</u>		
<u>Commitment 43</u>		
<p>Provide reasoning for the choice of commitments and measures, as well as future plans (if applicable)</p> <p><i>[Provide narrative description of what circumstances and proportionality considerations guide the signatory’s choice on the commitments and measures signing up to, including – where relevant - a general reasoning why the other commitments and measures of the chapter have not been signed (yet) (i.e. not appropriate/proportionate). Where applicable, give an indication of which commitments/measures might be under the service’s consideration for signature in the future.]</i></p> <p>EFCSN subscribes to these commitments to collaborate with the effective monitoring of the Code.</p>		

Signature

Date and place

Clara Jiménez Cruz

Chair of the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN)

Brussels, Feb. 13 2023

