

EFC  **SN**

European Fact-Checking
Standards Network

The Great Retreat

How platforms deprioritised
information integrity and
what to do about it

March, 2026

Executive Summary

Democracy relies on a shared foundation of reliable factual information. However, European information spaces are currently facing a systemic decline in safety. Disinformation is not only undermining democratic legitimacy and institutional trust but is also imposing significant economic and health costs.

This White Paper offers a **high-level overview of the state of information integrity in Europe** with a specific focus on issues with which the fact-checking community is deeply involved. To sum it up: **The situation is bad, but there is a lot we can do.**

A central theme of this White Paper is the "Great Retreat": a trend where the world's most **powerful technology companies have backtracked on their previous commitments** to combat disinformation. Survey results of the fact-checking community demonstrate that **disinformation is easy to access on many platforms, while their countermeasures are often inadequate.**

Community notes are one such countermeasure. Although they are increasingly adopted by other platforms following X's example, research shows that they are **largely ineffective in their current form**; notes are often late, rarely become visible, and fail to address polarized topics where they are needed most.

Digital platforms have been struggling to mitigate the spread of harmful disinformation for over a decade. **The rapid rise of Generative AI is exacerbating the problem.** We argue that **human-centered verification remains a vital tool for mitigating this crisis.**

Epistemic uncertainty is a state that authoritarian and anti-democratic forces seek to weaponize. Currently, Europe is being targeted by such efforts from the U.S. administration, which has disseminated misleading information regarding digital regulation while maliciously discrediting information integrity professionals and organisations. **Fact-checking is a fundamental expression of freedom of speech.** Fact-checkers consistently oppose content removals, preferring instead to empower users with labels, warnings, and expert context.

In sum, political pressure is increasing, technology is opening up new threat vectors and platforms are retreating from the fight against disinformation. To counter these trends, the EFCSN recommends:

- **Rigorous DSA Enforcement:** Investigating whether platform divestments constitute a failure to mitigate systemic risks as required by the Digital Services Act.
- **Hybrid Verification Models:** Combining the "wisdom of the crowd" (community notes) with professional expertise (fact-checking) to ensure accuracy and speed.
- **Sustainable Funding:** Utilizing the European Democracy Shield and the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) to address the resource asymmetry between misinformation actors and integrity researchers.



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Introduction: Why fighting disinformation is more important than ever

In an era of deepening societal divisions, increasing authoritarianism and accelerated digital flows of information, **defending the integrity of European information spaces is central to democracy, public health, markets and social trust.** At its core, the problem is this: democracy depends on a shared body of knowledge, on citizens knowing enough, trusting enough. As Harry G. Frankfurt pointed out, “Civilizations have *never* gotten along healthily, and *cannot* get along healthily, without large quantities of *reliable factual information*.”¹ When knowledge and trust erode, when people are lured into believing in alternative realities, or when institutions themselves are undermined, the very foundations of democratic governance become fragile.

Disinformation does not only undermine individual beliefs, it systematically **attacks the epistemic foundations of democracy.** It not only undermines policy-relevant debate but the [legitimacy of institutions](#) and the processes by which power is distributed, the electoral process foremost among them. When citizens no longer trust that votes count, that facts matter or that evidence can guide policy, the democratic system is weakened. Autocrats and authoritarian forces have been weaponizing disinformation to do exactly that.

Even though this problem has received significant attention in the last decade, **it is getting worse:** The prevalence of disinformation is still high, its toll on Europe is becoming more and more obvious and the most powerful actors in the world that have an outsized influence over our information spaces have abandoned the fight against disinformation; **in some instances they even contribute to the problem.**

Despite its prevalence **major platforms appear to no longer consider disinformation such a big problem.** In previous EU risk assessments, [they extensively stated](#) that disinformation poses a systemic risk for European users and democracies, civic discourse, public health, and social cohesion. However, following the U.S. presidential election in 2024, this prioritization has shifted; for instance, while the term “misinformation” appeared 77 times in a leading platform’s 2023 risk assessment, the 2025 edition mentions the word only once – and only because it is in the title of an event they used to host. This is a concerning sign of platforms backtracking on their mitigation responsibilities in an attempt to carry favour with a new administration while empirical data urges actions to the contrary.

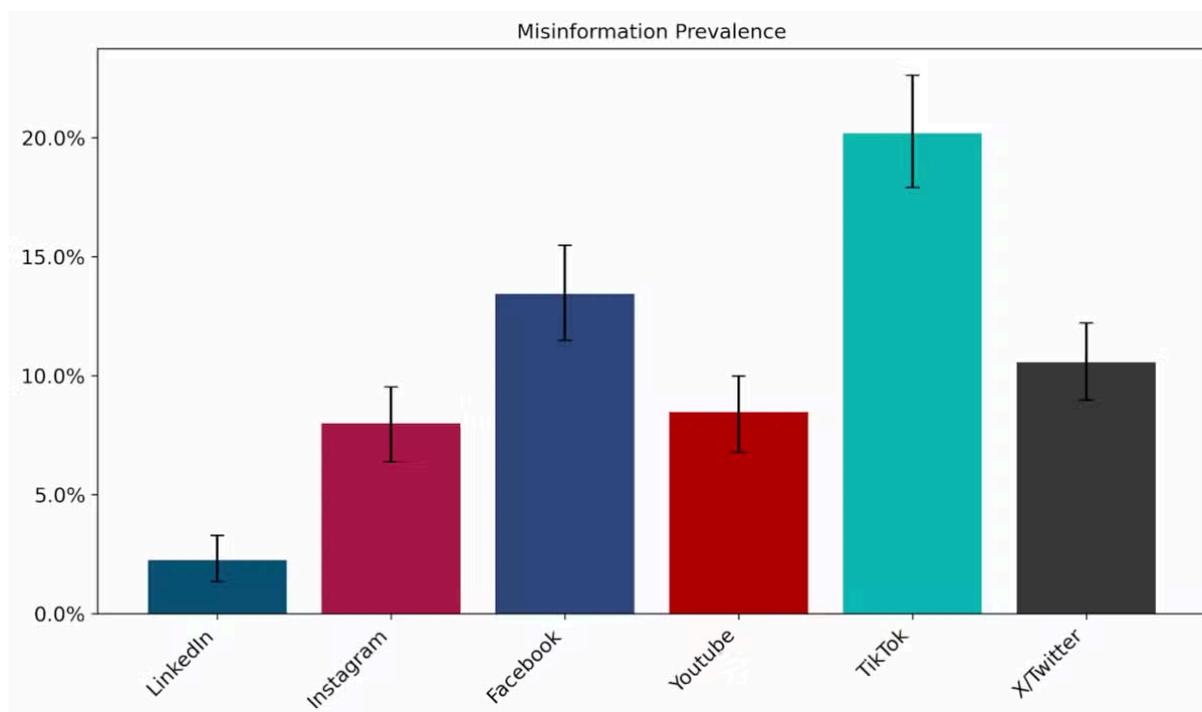
Prevalence of misinformation

A [study](#), led by EFCSN member Science Feedback and partners, investigated the prevalence of misinformation across six major platforms – TikTok, Facebook, X/Twitter, Instagram,

¹ Frankfurt, H. G. (2010). *On truth*. Random House, p. 34.



YouTube, and LinkedIn – in four EU countries. They found that **a significant share of posts on public-interest topics contained misinformation**. TikTok recorded the highest rate with about 20% of posts. Facebook (13%) and X/Twitter (11%) followed, while YouTube and Instagram stood at around 8%. LinkedIn showed the lowest prevalence at just 2%.



Prevalence of mis/disinformation across platforms (with 95% Confidence Intervals). Source: <https://science.feedback.org/first-measurement-disinformation-major-platforms-europe/>

Worryingly, low-credibility accounts generally received more engagement per post per 1,000 followers than high-credibility ones, up to 8 times more on YouTube and 7 times more on Facebook. The authors coined this phenomenon the **“Misinformation Premium”**, indicating that design choices by platforms might actively deteriorate information integrity, leading to enhanced visibility of disinformation

The cost and consequences of disinformation

Understanding the scale of the problem means considering not only the political and democratic risks, but also **the economic and health burdens** tied to disinformation.

Disinformation is increasingly recognised as a strategic threat to businesses and the economy. The World Economic Forum (WEF) [estimates](#) that **the global economy loses tens of billions of dollars** each year to disinformation and the WEF notes the scale of the problem is growing, particularly with AI-generated deepfakes. Businesses’ reputations, consumer trust, investor confidence, corporate decision-making and even supply-chain vulnerabilities are all affected. False narratives, fake reviews, manipulations of public perception can deter customers, [frighten markets and lead to financial harm](#). Notably, innovative industries or technologies of strategic importance like [renewable energy](#), [5G](#) or [e-mobility](#) are regularly targeted by disinfo campaigns.



Europeans can suffer damages through [manipulations](#), [investing frauds](#) or [phishing scams](#). EFCSN member organisation Greece Fact Check reports hundreds of posts advertising scams every month to Meta, giving a glimpse of the enormity of the challenge. Additionally, if trust levels in societies decrease, transaction costs can increase and economic activity might slow down. In short, disinformation is bad for the economy.

The cost of disinformation is particularly apparent when it comes to health issues: False claims have fueled **hesitancy around life-saving vaccines** such as the [HPV vaccine](#) and cause [questioning of evidence-based treatments like chemotherapy](#) in favor of unproven “cures”.

The consequences go further; health disinformation creates an economic burden, too. It [fuels costly vaccine-preventable outbreaks](#), drains healthcare systems when individuals turn to harmful alternatives or [delay treatments](#), and opens the door to opportunists who [profit from misleading health products](#). [One recent study](#) estimates that vaccine hesitancy related to the COVID-19 vaccine led to additional \$2 billion in health care costs.

Fact-Checkers on the frontlines

As the problem grows and major platforms retreat from their commitments to curb disinformation, Europe’s fact-checking community keeps fighting. The European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN) unites independent fact-checkers and information-integrity organisations across the continent. Far beyond “just checking claims,” EFCSN members monitor information spaces, educate citizens, and hold powerful actors to account:

- **Mapping and Monitoring the Information Space**
EFCSN members systematically collect and analyse data on false and misleading content, making the scale and evolution of disinformation visible to policymakers, researchers, and the public. This has, for example, resulted in collaborations to [expose scams on Facebook](#), [informed multiple scientific papers on information integrity](#), and [uncovered malicious monetisation schemes](#).
- **Media Literacy**
Fact-checkers invest heavily in media, information, and digital literacy to strengthen long-term societal resilience. As an example, AFP’s [Online Digital Courses](#), which are free to access for all but mainly designed for journalists and journalism students, are gathering 45,000 users across the world (more than 14000 in Europe), and tackle topics such as AI verification, climate disinformation and online investigations around elections.
- **From Debunking to Prebunking**
To prevent falsehoods from spreading in the first place, the EFCSN launched [Prebunking at Scale](#) in 2025, an initiative to anticipate emerging misinformation trends and coordinate responses across our network.



- **Investigations, Innovation, and Research**

Fact-checkers' in-depth investigations have exposed the actors and networks behind major disinformation infrastructure – from TjekDet's unmasking of “Mr. Deepfake” to CORRECTIV's [tracing of the “Doppelgänger”](#) operation to entities linked with the Russian government. Organisations such as Full Fact also develop AI-powered monitoring tools that detect misinformation across text, video, and audio, enabling faster, coordinated responses. AFP largely contributes to the development and the maintenance of the Verification plugin (also known as InVID-WeVerify), now enhanced by AI tools from the [veraai.eu](#) project, which is being used worldwide by 158k users (approximately 42% of them in Europe).

About this White Paper

The EFCSN and our member organisations also **hold powerful platforms to account**. This white paper is part of this effort. The European fact-checking community has been monitoring closely how some of the biggest technology companies in the world have **backtracked on previous commitments** to curb the spread of disinformation in the past years. Some of these steps have been publicly announced and advertised to score political points with the U.S. administration. Some have been taken quietly and stealthily to avoid public and regulatory scrutiny. Either way, these steps threaten the integrity of our European information spaces and put European users at peril.

With this white paper we **document and retrace** this trend, discuss the new frontiers for countering disinformation work, and we suggest ways forward. Our intention is to offer a concise overview of a complex field, highlight a couple of distinct aspects that warrant more attention in our opinion, and recommend concrete actions to improve information integrity in Europe.

The first section continues our work of assessing VLOPSEs compliance with the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, enriched with longitudinal data on fact-checkers' perceptions of platforms. This is followed by two deepdives: Into Alphabet's disengagement from information integrity work and into community notes. This is followed by an examination of how freedom of speech is used as a pretense to delegitimize the work of fact-checkers. Before turning to recommendations for improving information integrity in 2026, we also summarize the state AI and its role in disinformation.

A note on terminology: in this report we use the term disinformation according to the definition used in the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, which considers it “to include misinformation, disinformation, information influence operations and foreign interference in the information space”². In those instances where we use the term misinformation we explicitly refer to false or misleading information without intention to harm.

² Code of Conduct on Disinformation, I.a., accessible via https://disinfocode.eu/assets/pdfs/2025_Code_of_Conduct_on_Disinformation.pdf



This white paper has been jointly authored by the EFCSN Policy Taskforce, a group of volunteers from EFCSN member organisations.



State of the Code of Conduct on Disinformation

Following its previous reviews of Transparency Centre reports, the EFCSN Policy Task Force has analyzed the submissions from VLOPs and VLOSEs for the January–June 2025 reporting period.

The most noticeable aspect of this period is **the successful transition of the Code of Practice on Disinformation into a Code of Conduct** embedded in the DSA framework after months of discussions among the signatories. Nevertheless this move also contained the possibility for signatories to review their commitments under the Code of Conduct on Disinformation. And, as the EFCSN has [already flagged](#) last year, this led to the disappointing unsubscription of YouTube, Google Search, Bing Search and LinkedIn from all fact-checking chapter commitments (in addition to unsubscriptions from other parts of the Code). This withdrawal of some platforms from major commitments to which they were subscribed to for years - when the Code was not part of the DSA framework - puts the Code itself at risk of being emptied of its substance, at the very moment when it is supposed to be strengthened in relation to the implementation of the DSA. Considering that **the Code in its entirety is [viewed as a benchmark](#)** for the mitigation of disinformation as a systemic risk, **the unsubscriptions are an indication that those platforms might not be fully compliant with the DSA**. Due to these developments, we only reviewed TikTok's and Meta's transparency reports, the results of which are as follows.

TikTok

TikTok remains committed to the fact-checking chapter under the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, with increased leeway for partners in terms of journalistic independence but remaining issues on the transparency of their fact-checking programme.

Good

TikTok continues to build up **strong relationships with its fact-checking partners**, by regular conversations and feedback sessions, such as the election speaker series or the feedback session on footnotes with the global fact-checking community in June 2025; by the development of a variety of features allowing more proactive reporting from the partners to the platform such as Insight Reports within the fact-checking programme; but also on increased visibility for partners in media literacy actions in the application, for example around elections.

Less good

TikTok's fact-checking programme remains embedded in its moderation back office system, and the impact of it is thus not visible to the public nor to the partners of the programme. Also, most of the moderation actions taken are removals, rather than added



context information, when **the fact-checking community advocates for more information for users, not less.**

In the interest of transparency for the public as well as for the fact-checking partners, the EFCSN would welcome more detail on the relation between covered countries, languages and fact-checking partners within the EU. It seems that access to the fact-checking repository developed by TikTok within the context of its fact-checking programme would also be of immense benefit for quicker action from fact-checkers, and maybe even for TikTok users, if some of its data was made available - while respecting GDPR constraints.

The EFCSN also notices that the “share cancel rate” decreased a little compared to previous reports: as mentioned page 163 of TikTok’s report on the current reporting period, the “share cancel rate following the unverified content warning” is 30,95%, while it was measured at 32,24% in the previous report. Although the numbers are close, it would be interesting to see if there is any explanation to this.

Another area which would require more detail is the description of the amount of appeal overturns (pages 185-186, in the “empowering users” chapter), which seems incredibly high: as an example, the total appeal success rate of videos removed for violation of Civic and Election Integrity Policy in the EU is of 83,1%. Does that mean that TikTok’s moderation processes are too harsh in the first instance? Or that the moderation decisions are not robust enough, which explains the high amount of success rates of appeals? Maybe this could be eased by moderation processes which would allow other options than removals.

Meta (Instagram and Facebook)

Meta remains committed to the fact-checking chapter under the Code of Conduct on Disinformation and **maintains a fact-checking program in Europe that can be considered as a best practice across the industry.** Notably, an [in-depth academic](#) study recently found that the fact-checking program not only reduces the reach of misinformation but also produces behavioral responses: users themselves are more likely to delete posts that have been fact-checked, and users whose posts appear in fact-checked stories become less likely to share misinformation in the future.

Meta’s report, however, once again refers to the company’s public announcements on 7 January 2025, and claims that Meta “will continue to assess the applicability of this chapter to Facebook and Instagram”. In the EFCSN’s view, and based on the successful assessment Meta is making of its fact-checking programme in all its transparency reports, the fact-checking chapter is unquestionably applicable to and relevant for the services of Facebook and Instagram. This is clearly demonstrated by the number of fact-checked content on both platforms. Meta’s continued commitment to the fact-checking chapter is an indispensable condition without which its participation in the Code should not be considered as an appropriate risk mitigation measure under the Digital Services Act.



Good

Meta runs a robust and impactful third party fact-checking program in Europe, covering all EU countries except Malta, working together with fact-checking organisations certified by either the IFCN or the EFCSN. **The program respects the editorial independence of participating organisations** and provides fact-checkers with access to Meta's Content Library, an essential tool for identifying mis- and disinformation on its platforms. The Meta Content Library has been improved with new features during the reporting period. The Third Party Fact-Checking program continues to ensure that **a significant number of content (around 25 million during the reporting period) is treated with a fact-checking label**, and its effectiveness is also demonstrated by the high cancel rate (between 53% and 66% in EU countries) of attempted shares on those pieces of content. This is a significant increase in comparison to previous reporting periods. For example, for January - June, 2024, Meta reported cancelled share rates of 46% for Facebook and 43% for Instagram.

Less good

As noted in our previous reports, **the EFCSN finds it problematic that politicians cannot be fact-checked** in the context of Meta's third party fact-checking program.

While we welcome Meta's policy of never removing content because of it being fact-checked, the demotion policy could be improved. It makes sense for fact-checked content that has not gained significant traction already, however, in case of widely shared false or misleading content a better solution could be to show the content again (this time with the fact-checking label) to people who have already seen it or interacted with it.

While automatic access to the Meta Content Library helps organizations participating in the fact-checking program, a streamlined access process for fact-checkers who are not Meta partners would be an improvement. We note that the number of content treated with a fact-checking label decreased significantly on Instagram compared to the previous report (880k vs. 2.2m). Meta did not provide an explanation for this decrease.

As for reporting, Meta could provide more detail about the number of articles written by third party-fact checkers to justify a rating. For example, it is not clear if the numbers for individual countries refer to the number of articles written by fact-checkers working in that country or the number of articles written by fact-checkers anywhere that were used for labeling in that country. It is also not evident whether the number covers articles written by non-European fact-checkers but used in Europe to justify a rating. We note that in the share cancel rate table no EU average was given this time, and the cancel rates are always the same for Facebook or Instagram for a given country, which suggests that Meta might have pooled the statistics for the two platforms.



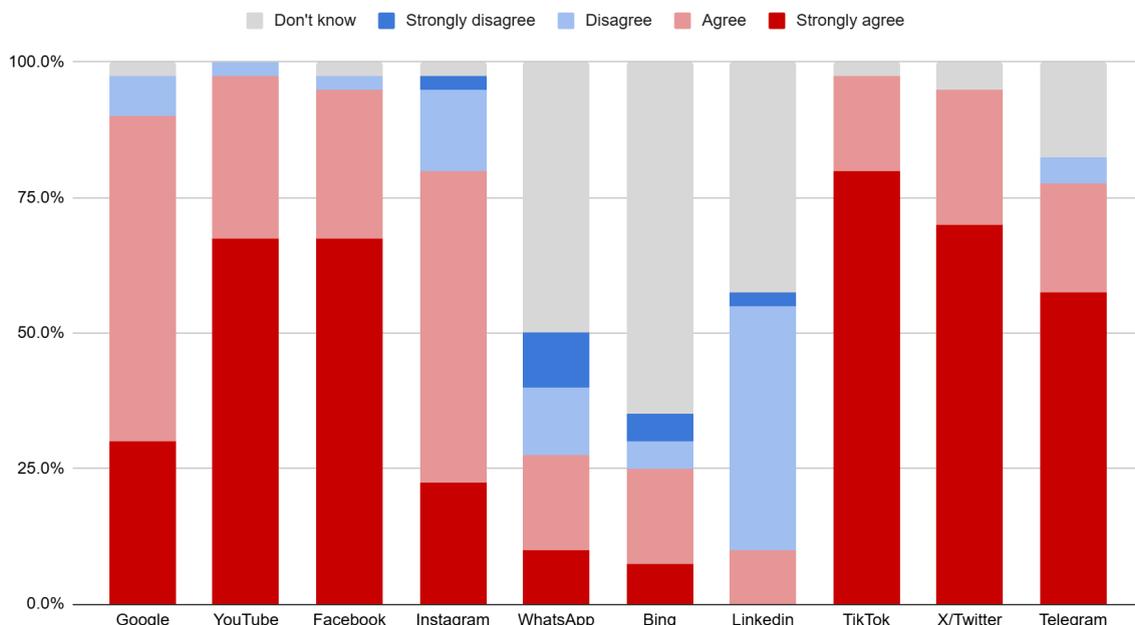
How fact-checkers rate platform responses to disinformation

Fact-checkers are **on the front lines** of the fight against disinformation. Through continuous monitoring – both manual and (semi-)automated – they maintain a **close, real-time understanding of the narratives, tactics, and actors** shaping the information environment at local, national, and regional levels. Their daily engagement with misleading content gives them a unique vantage point from which to assess **how platforms respond** to the spread of falsehoods, misleading claims or manipulative content.

Recognising this, the EFCSN surveys its member organisations to gather their **perceptions of platforms’ actions against disinformation**. These surveys capture first-hand assessments from practitioners who observe platform behaviour up close: if there is a lot of disinformation on any given platform, whether it is easily accessible, whether platforms take action against disinformation campaigns.

Findings from the EFCSN’s most recent surveys confirm that **not all platforms are created equal** in how they handle disinformation. Fact-checkers report that disinformation is particularly easy to access on platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, TikTok, X (formerly Twitter), and Telegram, where misleading or false narratives continue to circulate widely.

Using [platform] in my territory, it is easy to accidentally access disinformation content



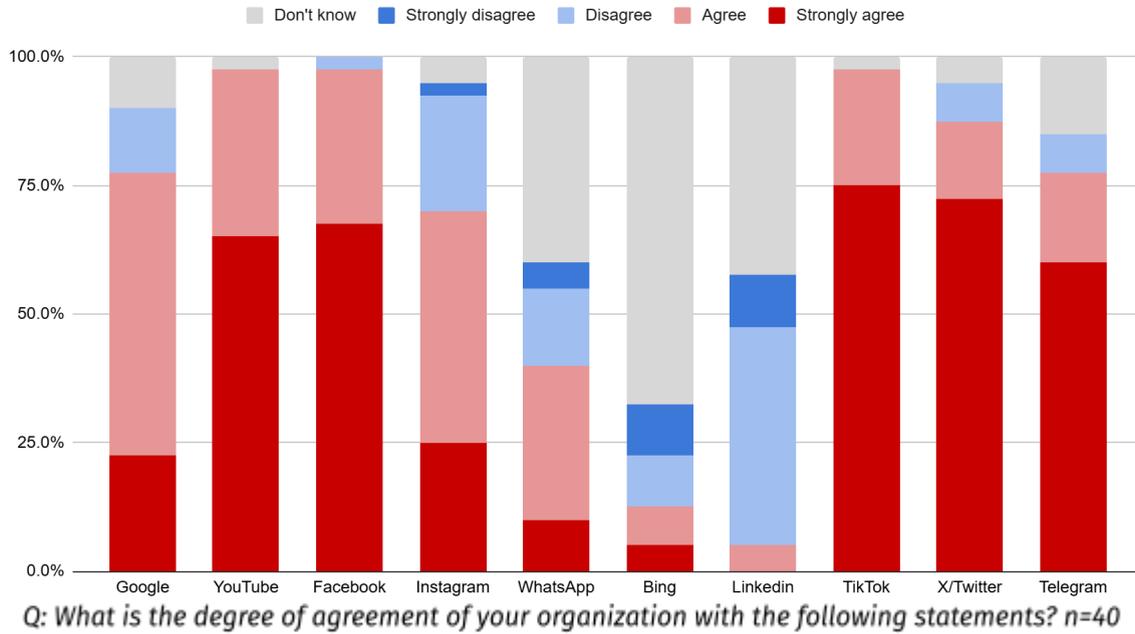
Q: What is the degree of agreement of your organization with the following statements? n=40

According to fact-checkers, **TikTok (97.5%), X (87.5%), Facebook (97.5%), and YouTube (97.5%)** are perceived as **the main platforms hosting or promoting disinformation**. Instagram is seen as moderately involved, while Google is also viewed as playing a



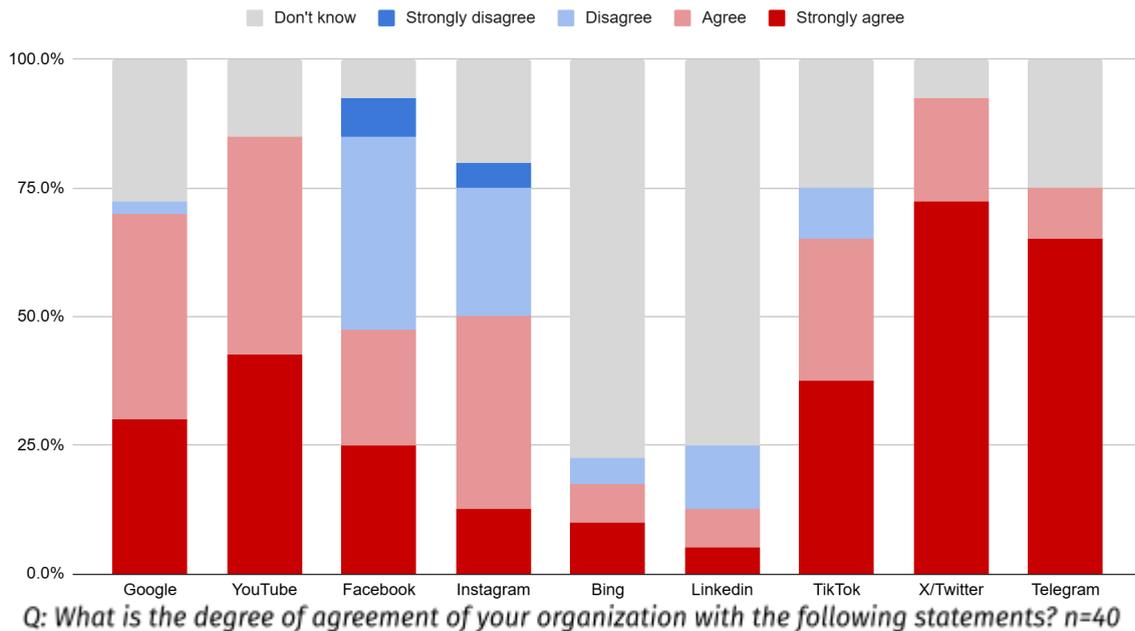
significant but secondary role (77.5% agreement). Telegram scores similarly high (77.5%), reflecting its known use for unmoderated disinformation networks.

[platform] plays an important role in hosting/disseminating/promoting disinformation in the territory my organization works in



When it comes to **platform responses after a debunk is published**, perceptions among fact-checkers are mixed. Facebook, Instagram, and (though to a lesser extent) TikTok are generally credited with taking visible steps to address disinformation once it has been fact-checked which reflects the impact of their fact-checking programs. In contrast, X, YouTube, and Telegram are consistently viewed as taking insufficient or almost no action, allowing proven falsehoods to remain online without correction or context.

Disinformation campaigns go generally unaddressed by [platform], even after my organization has published a debunk



The data presented here is drawn from an EFCSN survey conducted between **July and September 2025**, gathering responses from **40 fact-checking organisations across Europe**. More survey results can be found in the EFCSN’s [transparency report](#) for the Code of Conduct on Disinformation. The findings should be interpreted in light of differences in monitoring coverage. Only 7.7% of surveyed organisations monitor Bing, and 20% monitor LinkedIn, explaining the high share of “don’t know” responses and lower certainty in assessments for these platforms.



Google and YouTube

Over the past year, Google and YouTube have executed a series of **quiet yet consequential retreats from their previous commitments to information integrity and fact-checking**. While the company once positioned itself as a global leader in supporting reliable information ecosystems, recent actions suggest the platforms have taken a u-turn. The developments reviewed in this chapter illustrate how one of the world’s most influential technology companies has stepped back from the infrastructure of information integrity it once helped build, even as it publicly asserts continued dedication to openness, neutrality, and freedom of expression.

Discontinuation of the “ClaimReview” fact-check snippet in Google Search

In June 2025 Google announced in a [hidden developer blog](#) that it would no longer display the dedicated “fact-checking snippet” in search results. The snippet was a rich result box that had, for roughly a decade, surfaced fact-check articles via the ClaimReview schema markup. Importantly, fact-checkers had been contributing to ClaimReview without any fair compensation for years.

According to the announcement, Google’s internal data indicated that the snippet was “not commonly used in Search” and no longer provides “significant additional value for users.” **Google did not publish the underlying metrics or detailed analysis** supporting that assessment. The decision was made without prior consultation with the fact-checking community.

However, there is data to contextualize Google’s decision: in a transparency report under the then Code of Practice on Disinformation in 2024, **Google reported the snippet had been used to serve fact-check entries over 120 million times within the first six months in the EU alone**. Furthermore, the [Digital News Report](#) by the Reuters Institute found that globally about 25 % of online news consumers say they look for a fact-check to verify information; in Europe the average was around 23 %, with significantly higher percentages in certain countries (e.g., Norway at 44 %).

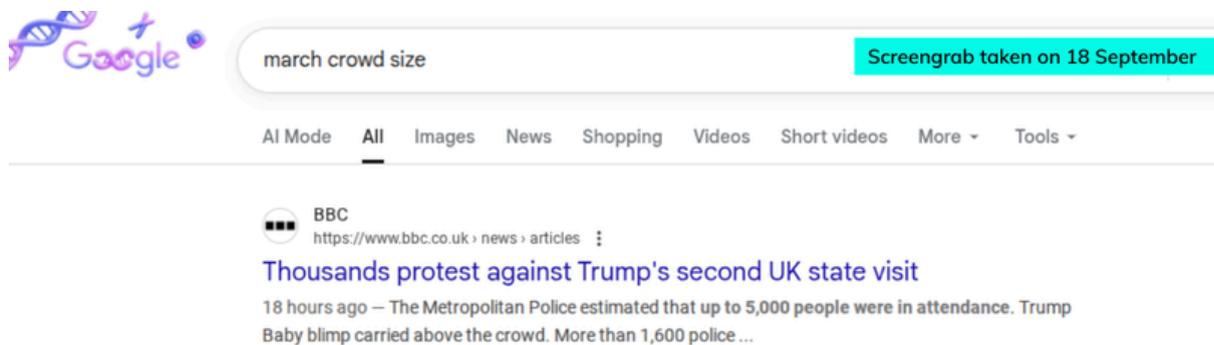
Our interpretation is that this change constitutes **a reduction in the visibility of structured fact-check content** in a key discovery channel. The removal of the snippet means that fact-check articles may now appear as ordinary links rather than being presented in a clear claim-verdict schema.

Additionally, a few months after the announcement an analysis by EFCSN member Full Fact found that [ordinary search result snippets sometimes distorts fact-check content](#), essentially exposing users to misinformation in some cases.

Full Fact recounts a case in which the crowd size for the “Unite the Kingdom” rally in London was widely mis-reported. The organiser claimed some three million attendees,



whereas police estimates placed the number at 110,000–150,000; Full Fact’s fact-check reported this correction. However, when users searched for the event, Google’s result snippet pulled a fragment from deep within Full Fact’s article out of context, still suggesting an attendance of “over a million” and even mis-assigning the setting to a previous event (the Iraq war) rather than the rally.



Full Fact’s further review found that **in approximately 10–15 % of searches on recent fact-checks from their site, Google offered snippets that explicitly suggested the opposite conclusion of the fact-check itself.** Google’s stated response was that it aims “to surface relevant, high-quality information in all our Search features” and that “when issues arise ... we use those examples to improve and take appropriate action under our policies.”

Overall, these observations point to a growing concern: when search engine presentation mechanisms (snippets, rich-results) mis-represent or fail to accurately encode the output of independent fact-checkers, the public dissemination of correct information is undermined at the “first glance” stage. The **user may draw a wrong inference before even clicking through**, simply because the snippet incorrectly frames the claim-verdict structure. The removal of structured metadata support for fact-checks further raises the barrier to ensuring clarity and consistency for users.



Google's divestments from the information integrity ecosystem

Over the past decade, Google played an important role in supporting strengthening information integrity globally. But in 2025 we saw **an abrupt u-turn**.

A major early contribution was support for the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN)-administered "Global Fact Check Fund". From 2013 onwards, Google and YouTube committed approximately U.S. \$13.2 million to the Fund, which [was designed to](#) "strengthen the operational and engagement capacities of local and regional media organisations to increase the impact of fact-checking journalism". **Google did not renew its engagement with the fund in 2025.**

Google also committed to a 25 million euro funding tranche for the European Media and Information Fund (EMIF). The fund supported projects aimed at media literacy, fact-checking and disinformation research in Europe, with an explicit objective of promoting a fact-based digital information ecosystem over a five year period. **Google will not renew its commitment** to the fund.

Smaller grants to individual organisations were also reduced. For example, the fact-checking charity Full Fact [reported](#) that **Google had ended its funding**, despite having provided "over £1 million" in the previous year. The organisation stated that these funds "have all either not been renewed, or have been cut altogether."

Of course, Google, YouTube and their parent company Alphabet are **free to spend their money as they see fit**. They may or may not give out grants, invest in information integrity or fund fact-checking. It is noteworthy, however, that **Google and YouTube referenced these investments in the past to demonstrate their commitment to fight disinformation** (for example, in their H1 transparency report under the Code of Practice they referenced EMIF 29 times). The **withdrawal** of financial support was done **without any public comment** or announcement on Google's part.

Quiet in Europe, dogwhistling in the U.S.

In the United States **Alphabet's messaging has been markedly different** since the Trump administration took power. In its ["Statement of Facts"](#) submitted to the House Judiciary Committee in September 2025, the company struck a defiant tone. It described its products as being "designed to work for everyone," claiming neutrality and usefulness "for users from all backgrounds." It also emphasised a strong commitment to freedom of expression throughout the entire document, which one could interpret as a **kowtow to an U.S. administration** that publicly pretends to champion freedom of speech absolutism but **whose actions have shown that they are in fact curtailing free speech and a free press** [time and time and time and time again](#).



On fact-checking, Alphabet sought to distance itself from any perception of formal collaboration, writing that, unlike other large platforms, YouTube “has not operated a fact-checking program that identifies and compensates fact-checking partners to produce content to support moderation” and “will not empower fact-checkers to take action on or label content.” This carefully phrased paragraph is correct, but **the framing omits that YouTube had in fact worked with fact-checkers in the past and publicly referenced those partnerships when convenient.** In 2022, YouTube committed under the DSA’s Code of Conduct on Disinformation to “integrate, showcase, or otherwise consistently use fact-checkers’ work” on its platform. That commitment was, at best, symbolic. For a period, YouTube pointed to fact-checking activity in Indonesia as proof of global engagement, despite little to no integration in Europe. As detailed in the [“State of the Code of Conduct on Disinformation”](#) section, **Google and YouTube have unsubscribed from these commitments in early 2025.**

More recently, **YouTube’s documentation and features relating to fact-checking have quietly disappeared** (though an archived version is still accessible [here](#)). Policies describing the use of European fact-checkers’ work on information panels are no longer online, and labels identifying verified fact-checkers’ YouTube channels have been removed.

At the same time, Alphabet has begun to criticise the European digital regulatory framework itself, writing to the House Judiciary Committee that it has “long expressed concern about the risk that the DSA may pose to freedom of expression”. **This contrasts sharply with its earlier public stance**, when the company [claimed](#) to be “long aligned with the broad goals of the DSA.”

Taken together, these shifts seem to reflect a deliberate strategic repositioning. In Europe, Google and YouTube maintain a tone of regulatory compliance, while simultaneously **quietly rolling back support and visibility for information integrity initiatives** while avoiding open confrontation with policymakers. In the United States, by contrast, Alphabet has adopted a louder, politicised narrative, **portraying itself as a defender of free speech** and distancing its platforms from structured collaboration with fact-checkers. For practitioners, regulators, and researchers, these developments point to a sobering conclusion: Google and YouTube are no longer investing in the long-term credibility and sustainability of information spaces, but in **the management of their own reputational and political risk.**



Community Notes

A few years after X launched its Community Notes, almost every one of the major digital platforms that showcase user-generated content have adopted some variation of the program: Meta launched its own in 2025 in the United States after cancelling its Third-Party Fact-Checking there; on the same year, [TikTok](#) started testing its ‘Footnotes’ in the U.S.; and [YouTube](#) had already announced a test in 2024.

Fact-Checking organisations have long been proponents of platforms involving their users in fighting misinformation in their services, and have demanded platforms pay much more attention to what users flag to them as misinformation as those reports are routinely ignored. Furthermore, most fact-checkers in Europe can only do the disinformation monitoring work they do because they rely on committed communities of users that share and support our mission.

However, that should not prevent us from saying clearly that **Community Notes, in its current implementation by Big Tech, is not an effective way to mitigate disinformation**. Among the platforms currently using Community Notes, only X offers comprehensive data about its program. Using that data, academics have been able to document how those systems rely on a flawed methodology based on consensus among different users that all but ensures that:

- Less than 10% notes proposed actually [become visible to users](#) and, when they do, show up too late to have an impact
- Even the users who are initially interested in contributing [lose interest quickly](#) as their notes rarely become visible
- Community Notes are even less likely [to appear on tweets regarding polarized topics](#), which might be where they are most needed
- The accounts that propose the notes are anonymized with pseudonyms, making it impossible for users to value their expertise: doctors, media, and [other experts](#)

Despite Elon Musk’s well-publicized disdain for our profession, professional fact-checking remains crucial for the rare instances in which the program actually works on X. [Fact-checking organisations were the 3rd most used reference globally](#) in proposed notes and links to their articles were present in 1 of every 27. The proposed notes that include links to EFCSN members were twice as likely to generate consensus about their usefulness.

The biggest threat to the sustainability of Community Notes is hardly professional fact-checking, but the **utter failure of the current approach** by platforms that makes notes visible only when they are rated as useful by users [who usually disagree](#) on the usefulness of a note. As users hardly see their notes become visible and the effectiveness of the program is in question, the number of those contributing them [continues to drop](#), which has led the platform to resort to [using AI to propose and write notes](#) to keep the program alive.



The situation seems **even more dire on other platforms**. On YouTube, sightings of a note are so rare there is hardly a record of them; [Meta has said](#) that 900 Community Notes became visible in the first six months of its rollout in the U.S., a figure that looks even less impressive when you realise that, over a similar period, Meta put fact-checking labels on around 35 million Facebook posts in the European Union alone.

In the current political environment in the U.S., those mostly American companies have clearly seen an opportunity to **unload the disinformation problem onto their users** but they must realize they are failing them by setting up a system that simply does not work. To name just one example, [less than 15%](#) of the disinformation identified by EFCSN fact-checkers on X about the 2024 European Parliament Election had a visible community note.



Freedom of Speech

Fact-Checking is an expression of freedom of speech. It is exercising the liberty to disagree, to offer context, to dispute the reality of someone else's assertion, to engage in conversation and discovery about facts. Fact-Checking is — plain and simple — the exact opposite of censorship.

Yet in the last few years, there has been a concerted effort to falsely portray fact-checkers as censors. It has been **a convenient tale for some digital platforms in their quest to avoid responsibility for their own content moderation decisions, and a powerful propaganda tool for political leaders** who do not want to be contradicted and who characterize anyone who holds them accountable for their falsehoods as 'fake news'.

The most recent example of this trend can be seen in the U.S. House Judiciary Committee's February 2026 report, which paradoxically labels fact-checking itself as a 'foreign censorship threat' — **a claim that inverts reality by portraying accountability as suppression** — and threatens European fact-checking organisations directly. This rhetorical strategy not only misrepresents the role of fact-checkers but also **weaponizes the language of free expression to shield disinformation from scrutiny.**

The reality, as the EFCSN has made clear for years, is that **fact-checkers have consistently opposed content removals** as an effective tool against online disinformation. Fact-checkers believe in the power of providing additional context, expert sources, and a real explanation on why something should be considered misinformation. Removing posts and videos creates mistrust in the affected users while — most of the time — not giving them an explanation of why the action has been taken.

Fact-Checking labels, content warnings, and information panels are the fact-checkers' preferred measures against legal disinformation in digital platforms. They provide real assistance to the users when they are most vulnerable to misinformation, right at the moment they are consuming it, while fully respecting its right to do as they please if they do want to read, share, like, or comment on the content.

Those responses, while undoubtedly effective and fully respecting freedom of speech, are often not adopted by the major platforms because they are labor intensive and expensive, and because they would force those companies to **rely on trusted third parties: quality sources, professional fact-checkers, and strong human supervision.** Automated content moderation leading to content removals is undoubtedly cheaper, but also much more prone to errors and harmful to their users' freedom of speech.

Even more importantly, **content monetization schemes** within the platforms as well as platform-native advertising **have recently come to play an increasingly important role in the production and distribution of disinformation.**



The next frontier: Generative AI and the degradation of information spaces

The rapid integration of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) into the digital ecosystem represents **a pivotal shift in the threat landscape for information integrity**. While earlier waves of disinformation relied heavily on human labor and coordination, the current era is defined by the industrial-scale automation of deceptive content, the erosion of the economic foundations of quality journalism, and a growing epistemic uncertainty that undermines the very concept of verifiable facts and a shared public reality.

The volume of AI-generated or manipulated disinformation has reached unprecedented levels. In December 2025, [survey results](#) from the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) showed that 16% of all fact-checked articles in Europe focused on AI-related content, a new record. GenAI drastically lowers the cost and time required to produce persuasive, emotionally charged, and realistic-looking content tied to current events.

Beyond the creation of misleading content, GenAI is fundamentally altering the information economy:

The Traffic Apocalypse: The roll-out of AI-generated summaries in search results, such as Google's AI overviews, has led to a ["zero-click" crisis](#). Early data indicates that worldwide search traffic to publishers declined by 15% in 2024, with users clicking on source links in AI summaries in just 1% of cases. Many EFCSN members confirm similar effects.

This shift deprives newsrooms of the referral traffic, advertising revenue, and visibility essential for sustaining independent journalism and fact-checking. To enhance transparency and safeguard operational sustainability, AI or platform companies — especially those running end user products with AI integrations — should provide publishers with granular analytics detailing how and where their content is cited. It is essential that such data access be formalized and standardized. These metrics are critical for organisations to adequately assess their reach and societal impact.

Accountability Gaps: AI deepens structural asymmetries between publishers and the new intermediaries. Informational and economic power is increasingly concentrated in a small number of model AI companies and platforms that control distribution, summarization, and user access to content. The growing mediation of information through generative AI blurs lines of accountability. When content is aggregated, reformulated or generated, it becomes more difficult to assign responsibility for inaccuracies, distortions or harmful content.

Transparency standards, citation, and traceability mechanisms are therefore essential — not only to safeguard independent publishing, but also to ensure that users can see where information comes from and evaluate its credibility. This would also support AI literacy and partially mitigate the well-documented [risk of AI 'hallucinations'](#).



The Rise of "AI Slop": Platforms are increasingly inundated with "AI slop": low-quality, mass-produced content designed solely to exploit the incentive structures of the attention economy. This content often exploits human empathy through sensationalized, AI-generated stories [to monetize engagement](#). Examples of this "dangerous distortion" are Facebook groups flooded with AI-generated "historical" photos, including [fabricated images of Holocaust victims](#).

Non-consensual image abuse

Another worrying trend is the abuse of the likenesses of real people in AI-generated content without their consent. **This affects public figures as well as private citizens.** Prominent politicians, including French President [Emmanuel Macron](#) or far-right leader [Marine Le Pen](#), have confronted a proliferation of AI manipulations. Generated video and audio recordings falsely depicted them making fictitious statements to sow confusion or discredit their positions.

Additionally, non-consensual AI-generated imagery, specifically through ['nudifier' applications](#), **continues to undermine privacy rights, dignity and personal safety.** Most notably, Grok has been embroiled in scandal for allowing users to generate sexually explicit and suggestive alterations of real photos of women and minors. Many nation states as well as the EU have taken action against X because of it. But non-consensual image abuse is widespread and not limited to a single platform; it reflects a broader ecosystem problem.

Holding perpetrators remains a significant challenge. However, investigative journalism provides a template for action. A [landmark investigation](#) by EFCSN member TjekDet successfully unmasked "Mr. Deepfake", the individual behind one of the world's largest deepfake pornography websites, demonstrating how fact-checking and OSINT methodologies hold malicious actors to account.

The "Liar's Dividend"

One of the most insidious effects of GenAI is not the success of the fakes themselves, but **the shadow of doubt they cast on authentic evidence.** Referred to in academia as the "Liar's Dividend", this phenomenon describes public figures dismissing damaging but true information as a "deepfake" or "fake news". With the increasing prevalence of AI-generated content, uncertainties about what is real and what is not are likely to grow. This epistemic uncertainty risks accelerating the deterioration of trust and may be strategically exploited by bad actors.

Put simply, **technological progress has far outpaced (self-)regulatory, societal, and individual responses** designed to mitigate the negative effects of GenAI: Legislation processes are slow and even longer to implement. AI literacy programs are hard to scale



and it takes years if not decades to build the necessary widespread competences to understand and critically engage with such a fundamentally new technology.

Technological attempts to ensure the integrity of the GenAI ecosystem are no silver bullet either: AI detection tools “produce inconsistent results across file types, modalities, and contexts, with significant false-positive and false-negative rates”, as WITNESS [has noted](#). [Content provenance initiatives](#) remain unevenly adopted and can be circumvented. Moreover, universal AI-labeling risks confusing users and devaluing the importance of disclosures. Without clear distinction between routine digital editing and deceptive deepfakes, such measures may lead to widespread label blindness and fail to effectively highlight the most harmful forms of synthetic content.

At the same time, increased reliance on AI-generated summaries and answers leads to “[cognitive offloading](#)”: It may reduce users’ engagement in independent verification and critical reasoning. But democratic public debate depends on active source evaluation and critical thinking – capacities that cannot be outsourced to automated systems.

Thus, **human-centered verification of suspected AI-generated disinformation remains a vital part in countering the epistemic uncertainty triggered by AI**. While this raises obvious questions about scalability, the structured data generated through professional fact-checking can feed into claim- or content-matching systems, multiplying the impact of this approach.



Recommendations

As digital platforms increasingly backtrack on their commitments and disinformation continues to harm Europe, we identify several critical areas where immediate action from regulators and policymakers is required. Chief among these is the **robust and rigorous enforcement of the DSA**. The evidence of platform negligence is well-documented; it must now be translated into decisive regulatory action to ensure systemic risks are mitigated rather than ignored.

However, enforcement alone is not enough. Policymakers must adopt a more holistic approach to information integrity by **strengthening the long-term operational conditions for fact-checking, independent media and countering disinformation work across Europe**. While initiatives like the European Democracy Shield are a welcome starting point, they must be underpinned by a substantial and sustainable financial commitment.

The fact-checking community stands ready to contribute its unique expertise. We believe the future of platform safety lies in **complementing professional fact-checking with community-based moderation models**. By combining the rigorous methodology of certified fact-checkers with the scale of community-led approaches, we can create a more responsive and accurate information environment. Furthermore, the EFCSN and its members remain committed to **providing the essential data and metadata necessary to map the health of our digital public sphere**.

Finally, while this paper focuses on important aspects with which fact-checkers are deeply involved, **we recognize that other systemic issues require urgent scrutiny**: from data access for researchers and the transparency of algorithmic recommender systems to AI safety and the perverse incentives created by current monetization models (to name a few). While the EFCSN is an active participant in these broader debates, the following recommendations prioritize the immediate, actionable steps necessary to safeguard European information integrity today.

Enforce and investigate: the DSA in 2026

Since the Digital Services Act entered into force for the larger platforms in 2023, the European Commission has opened investigations against them on 14 occasions and found 6 of them had not complied with the different aspects of the law. X remains the only company that has been fined, after [publicly refusing](#) to take the opportunity to rectify the infringements alleged, but it can appeal the Commission's decision in court.

The EFCSN and its members have [extensively documented](#) how many of the platforms fail to adequately mitigate the disinformation-related systemic risks their services pose for their users in the EU, but investigation and enforcement decisions by the European Commission still happen slowly and not with the level of transparency that would be ideal.



Urgent action is needed to rectify clear **infringements on data access** for researchers, **illegal content**, and **civic discourse manipulation** to name just a few areas. The European Commission has repeatedly expressed that part of what might look as lack of progress is just making sure that any cases brought forward are solid and the evidence is strong to avoid any surprises in court. The EFCSN understands those concerns and yet, **we still think more cases are needed to ensure a level of enforcement that is up to the expectations DSA created for Europeans.**

Until the courts have had the opportunity to hear cases and rule on the merits of different arguments, there will not be full legal certainty on what kind of evidence is useful and actionable to serve as proof of DSA breaches. Fact-checking organisations have been contributing some of the most convincing, sophisticated evidence of different platform systemic risk mitigation infringements. **So far, the most important bottleneck is still enforcement decisions based on that evidence.**

However, the DSA is still regarded by the EFCSN and fact-checkers worldwide as a promising framework to advance towards a safer online environment which enables freedom of speech and holds powerful platforms to account. The fact that the DSA is presented by the current U.S. government as a sinister tool for censorship is not only false, it is strategic for some companies that want to avoid making the necessary investments to protect their users, and for the Trump administration on its campaign to impeach the legitimacy of democratic governments to establish rules to critical companies that operate within their borders.

Moreover, the **adoption and effective implementation of the DSA in EU candidate countries** from the Western Balkans is not only a formal obligation under the EU accession process and alignment with the *acquis communautaire*, but also a strategic safeguard for democratic resilience. A lack of regulation of online platforms and the absence of coordinated institutional responses leave electoral processes and information integrity [vulnerable to foreign information manipulation and interference](#) (FIMI).

EU institutions should more proactively encourage the adoption of these EU standards to address the current regulatory gaps in legislation dealing with online media, platform accountability and systemic risk mitigation in some candidate countries. The positive experience of enhanced citizens' rights protection across the region through harmonization with the GDPR, demonstrates that **alignment with EU digital acquis generates tangible governance and market benefits**; the systemic effects of the DSA are expected to follow a similar trajectory.

Community notes meets professional fact-checking:

Combining wisdoms of crowds and experts

Programs such as Community Notes are not living up to the promises of Meta and X for now when it comes to ensuring information integrity for their users – as we have shown higher up in this report. While claimed by their creators as the new one-size-fits-all



solution to go beyond (and without) fact-checking, information integrity and fighting disinformation still require a multiple stakeholder approach.

Considering the prevalence of disinformation online and its detrimental effects, it would be appropriate for **digital platforms to run a fact-checking program and an additional community notes program**. Such programs could either be independent of one another or they could be integrated. Community based approaches can fruitfully complement fact-checking by inputting professional, independent skills and expertise in the information mix.

Crowd-based notes systems can support fact-checking in various ways, keeping in mind that time and accuracy are both of the essence: by suggesting verified, high quality notes themselves; by checking the crowds' notes to accelerate their visibility to other users; by offering innovative, technical solutions to quickly match claims and verified notes.

Building on prior work by EFCSN member organisation Lead Stories presented at Global Fact 2025, we propose **seven recommendations** to successfully integrate professional fact-checking with a community notes approach:

- **A "fast lane" for fact-checkers:** Why wait for a consensus vote if you have professionally, independently researched facts available? A consensus voting system may suppress valid notes if they benefit one side of a partisan debate too much. This is not how facts work. Consensus is great to avoid offending partisans, but if the goal is to display verified information, it is not the right tool. A fast lane for fact-checkers could take different forms: auto-approve notes by fact checkers, weigh their votes more heavily, have fact-checkers crosscheck each other's notes, to name a few.
- **Fact-checking crowd-based notes:** Sometimes user-based notes are just wrong, and the consensus voting system used by platforms is not good at taking those down, because accuracy is not central to their voting system. That poses a problem to the reliability and the integrity of the information shared and commented on.
- **Quick access for better results:** Give fact-checkers access to all the proposed or requested notes in real time. User notes can be an early warning to a content problem, and some of them provide useful clues, but professional fact-checkers are better equipped, after years of experience, at collating, researching, evaluating and summarizing the available evidence into a clear conclusion.
- **Impact at scale with more information:** The neutral and informative way in which community notes are displayed, as well as the efficiency of AI-powered algorithms, could help to match verified information to claims more effectively and at scale. Adding more information is always preferable over moderation tools like takedowns or shadow banning.
- **Transparency on partnerships:** These notes could be a great opportunity to make the partnerships between platforms and independent fact-checkers more transparent to the users, and linking back to, whenever possible, in-app fact-checking videos, articles or other content.



- **Avoid bias:** Work with professional fact-checkers who are part of networks such as the EFCSN adhere to standards on non-partisanship and independence. They must prove that they are compliant with these principles when applying to be certified. They also advocate for all types of content to be tackled by any sort of labelling (including political speech, when false, and ads).
- **Independence is key:** Making sure that fact-checkers are fairly remunerated for the work provided while remaining editorially independent is a way to ensure sustainable, reliable quality of the online service and information access.

European Democracy Shield and the next MFF

The EFCSN recognizes the European Commission’s proposal for a European Democracy Shield as a step in defending the Union’s information space. However, to effectively counter the deterioration of user safety, this **framework must be significantly strengthened**, as highlighted by the European Parliament’s Special Committee reports. The Committee rightfully stressed that disinformation is not solely the result of external interference; it is increasingly **driven by domestic actors who frequently parrot foreign narratives or whose own talking points are amplified by foreign entities**. In several Member States, these domestic sources are more impactful and concerning than foreign ones. Furthermore, we must acknowledge that disinformation and foreign interference increasingly originate from the U.S., with networks now active in Europe attempting to delegitimize both the fight for information integrity and European legislation, such as the Digital Services Act (DSA).

Addressing the resource asymmetry

A primary concern remains the massive funding gap between democratic defense mechanisms and malign influence operations. While the EU’s current media support is limited, Russia reportedly spends over one billion euros per year on its propaganda apparatus. The proposed AgoraEU program as part of the next MFF is a step into the right direction. But it should be further strengthened which is why we recommend the following enhancements to the AgoraEU program³:

Fair and Predictable Resource Allocation

The Media+ strand (€3.2 billion) requires a more transparent division of resources to ensure news and public-interest information are not sidelined by audiovisual interests.

- **Structured Allocation:** We recommend a distribution model of 40% for news, 40% for audiovisual, and 20% flexibility to prevent structural imbalances.
- **Increased Support:** The EU should at least double the current support for fact-checking, journalism, media pluralism, and media literacy.

³ More details can be found in the open letter “[Invest in Free Media: Europe’s Democratic Foundation](#)” which the EFCSN and several of its member organisations co-signed.



- **Geographic Equity:** Funding must reflect the diverse vulnerabilities of different Member States and candidate countries.

Long-term Viability and Core Funding

Short-term, project-based grants often fail to provide the stability required for rigorous fact-checking and investigative journalism.

- **Core Grants:** AgoraEU should provide 3-5 year multi-year funding windows for non-profit and independent investigative outlets.
- **Sustainability over Content:** Support should prioritize organisational sustainability and business development rather than just content creation to ensure long-term resilience.

Targeted support for information integrity

While AgoraEU focuses on supporting independent media – which is a vital component of a healthy information space – Europe also needs more targeted support for information integrity and countering disinformation.

That is why we proposed the creation of an **Independent Information Integrity Fund (I3F)**, designed to support a whole-of-society approach to strengthening information integrity and societal resilience. This fund would provide sustained support for **fact-checking, independent journalism and digital literacy initiatives**, the development and maintenance of technological tools, and broader efforts to promote critical thinking in the public sphere.

A key priority of this fund must be to prioritize core funding and real-world impact over short-term, project-based funding. Too often, funding cycles focus on developing new, temporary tools rather than sustaining effective, long-term solutions. By ensuring stability for organizations engaged in information integrity work and by developing a comprehensive long-term funding strategy, the fund would enable more strategic, scalable, and impactful interventions.

Funding Structure

To ensure financial sustainability and independence, the fund should draw from a diverse pool of contributors, including:

- Initial funding from the EU, providing the foundational financial support.
- Contributions from EU Member States, encouraging national governments to co-invest in protecting democratic information spaces.
- Open access to funding from the private sector, philanthropies and other interested funders, allowing private donors and foundations to contribute to strengthening Europe's information integrity ecosystem.

Governance Structure



A well-structured governance model is essential to maintain the fund's independence, transparency, and effectiveness. A potential structure for this could be the following:

- Oversight by a Governance Board, composed of:
 - Representatives from EU institutions and other contributing funders.
 - Elected representatives from the independent information integrity community, ensuring that the sector's expertise and needs are included.
- Funding decisions made by an Executive Board, a subset of the Governance Board, informed by independent expert reviews to guarantee fairness and impact-driven allocation.
- Management by an established network such as the EFCSN, ensuring funds are distributed efficiently and in alignment with the needs of the information integrity community.

Benefits of the I3F

- A coordinated funding strategy, ensuring resources are allocated effectively to avoid fragmentation and duplication.
- Streamlined, centralized grant-making, reducing administrative inefficiencies and enabling faster, more impactful interventions.
- Strong governance safeguards, ensuring that funding decisions remain independent and free from political influence.

The fund should be designed with minimal administrative burdens and efficient processes to maximize its impact. By moving swiftly and strategically, the Independent Information Integrity Fund will provide sustained support for Europe's efforts to combat disinformation and strengthen democratic resilience.

By integrating the Independent Information Integrity Fund into a strengthened AgoraEU framework, the Union can provide the long-term stability and technological edge necessary to counter both domestic and foreign threats. Protecting the integrity of our information space is not merely a policy goal, but a fundamental prerequisite for the continued safety and sovereignty of European citizens.

Providing data for information integrity in Europe

Fact-check data is a vital tool to mitigate the growing threat of mis- and disinformation exacerbated by generative AI and the increasing volume of digital content. Fact-checkers do not only produce debunks; they systematically monitor and analyze information spaces, acting as an early warning system against both foreign and domestic interference. By transitioning from simple content production to the provision of structured data, the fact-checking community will significantly enhance the safety of the European information environment.

The Power of Fact-Check Metadata



A cornerstone of this effort is the collection and utilization of comprehensive metadata associated with the fact-checking process. This includes:

- **Content metadata:** Categorizing information such as keywords, topics, language, and country.
- **Fact-check metadata:** Documenting the specific claim, the assigned rating, the original platform, and the content format.
- **Process metadata:** Detailing the verification methodology, the evidence gathered for and against a claim, and the level of confidence in the conclusion.

The EFCSN aims to expand this data collection to include structured information on claimants (their affiliations and influence) and harms (the scale of impact and potential consequences of a claim) to provide a deeper understanding of disinformation trends .

One database

To maximize the utility of this data, we will build a **central fact-check database** in 2026. Governed by the independent fact-checking community to ensure editorial autonomy, this database would serve as a critical infrastructure for several key areas:

- **AI and LLM Training:** Providing high-quality, verified data to train models to identify claims, match them to existing fact-checks, and understand intent.
- **Product and Process Integration:** Enabling platforms to incorporate integrity signals directly into the user experience through in-feed labels, enhanced search results, and real-time responses to user prompts.
- **DSA Enforcement and Auditing:** Assisting regulators and auditors in assessing systemic risks by providing independent, data-driven insights into platform performance and content moderation effectiveness .
- **Research and Analytics:** Supporting scientific research on the prevalence and characteristics of disinformation, as well as locating similar or related content across borders for more efficient responses.

We invite all stakeholders to get in touch with us and explore opportunities to leverage this data for the good of our shared information spaces. Because there is much more we can and must do to counter disinformation, provide verified information and empower everybody to form and express their own opinions — free from manipulation.



About the EFCSN

The EFCSN is the voice of European fact-checkers who **uphold and promote the highest standards of fact-checking** and media literacy in their effort to combat misinformation for the public benefit. The EFCSN and its **62 verified members from 36 countries** are committed to upholding the principles of freedom of expression. They 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.



Fact-checking organizations and fact-checking units within larger media organizations can become EFCSN members by undergoing a rigorous evaluation process. The **EFCSN Code of Standards** sets out in detail the standards member organizations have to comply with. Applications are reviewed by two independent assessors, usually academics, scholars or experienced media practitioners with proven expertise in the fields of fact-checking, journalism and disinformation. Based on the reviews of the independent assessors, the EFCSN Governance Body decides whether an applicant organization is approved as a member or not. Each approved member may display the EFCSN badge on its website.

To ensure that high standards are upheld over time, **membership expires after two years**. To renew their membership, fact-checking organizations have to reapply and must undergo the same rigorous assessment process as outlined above.

Read more about the EFCSN on our website: efcsn.com



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