
Major online platforms, emerging and specialised platforms, players in the advertising industry, fact-checkers, research and civil society organisations delivered a strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation following the Commission’s Guidance of May 2021


The 2022 Code of Practice is the result of the work carried out by the signatories. It is for the signatories to decide which commitments they sign up to and it is their responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of their commitments’ implementation. The Code is not endorsed by the Commission, while the Commission set out its expectations in the Guidance and considers that, as a whole, the Code fulfils these expectations.

Signatories committed to take action in several domains, such as; demonetising the dissemination of disinformation; ensuring the transparency of political advertising; empowering users; enhancing the cooperation with fact-checkers; and providing researchers with better access to data.
Recognising the importance to make the Code future-proof, signatories agreed to establish a framework for further collaboration through a permanent Task-force. The Code also comes with a strengthened monitoring framework based on qualitative reporting elements and service-level indicators measuring the effectiveness of its implementation. Signatories will set up a Transparency Centre, providing a clear overview to the public of the policies they put in place to implement their commitments, and will update it regularly with the relevant data.

**The Strengthened Code**

The Code of Practice on Disinformation is a first-of-its kind tool through which relevant players in the industry agreed - for the first time in 2018 - on self-regulatory standards to fight disinformation.

Its revision process was launched in June 2021 and, after the signature and presentation of the revised Code on 16 June 2022, the new Code will become part of a broader regulatory framework, in combination with the legislation on Transparency and Targeting of Political Advertising and the Digital Services Act. For signatories that are Very Large Online Platforms, the Code aims to become a mitigation measure and a Code of Conduct recognised under the co-regulatory framework of the DSA.

The strengthened Code of Practice contains 44 commitments and 128 specific measures, in the following areas.

- **Demonetisation: cutting financial incentives for purveyors of disinformation**

  The strengthened Code aims to ensure that purveyors of disinformation do not benefit from advertising revenues. Signatories commit to stronger measures avoiding the placement of advertising next to disinformation, as well as the dissemination of advertising containing disinformation. The Code also sets up a more effective cooperation among the players of the advertising sector, allowing stronger joint action.

- **Transparency of political advertising**

  Recognising the importance of political advertising in shaping public life, the strengthened Code commits signatories to put in place stronger transparency measures, allowing users to easily recognise political ads by providing more efficient labelling, committing to reveal the sponsor, ad spend and display period. Moreover, signatories commit to putting in place efficient and searchable ad libraries for political advertising.

- **Ensuring the integrity of services**

  The Code will strengthen the measures to reduce manipulative behaviour used to spread disinformation (e.g. fake accounts, bot-driven amplification, impersonation, malicious deep fakes), and establishes a stronger cooperation among signatories to fight the challenges related to such techniques. A cross-service understanding of unpermitted manipulative behaviours and practices to spread disinformation will be agreed among signatories. They will be also required to periodically review the list of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) employed by malicious actors, and will implement clear policies, covering the range of behaviours and practices identified.
• **Empowering users**

Users will be better protected from disinformation through enhanced tools to recognise, understand and flag disinformation, to access authoritative sources, and through media literacy initiatives. In particular, the Code will ensure that safe design practices are put in place to limit the spread of disinformation and ensure more transparency of their recommender systems, adapting them to limit the propagation of disinformation.

• **Empowering researchers**

The Code foresees that online platforms provide better support to research on disinformation. Researchers will have a better and wider access to platforms’ data. This means ensuring automated access to non-personal, anonymised, aggregated or manifestly made public data, and working towards putting in place a governance structure to simplify access to data requiring additional scrutiny.

• **Empowering the fact-checking community**

The new Code will extend fact-checking coverage across all EU Member States and languages and ensure that platforms will make a more consistent use of fact-checking on their services. Moreover, the Code works towards ensuring fair financial contributions for fact-checkers’ work and better access to fact-checkers to information facilitating their daily work.

• **Transparency centre and Task-force**

The Transparency Centre, accessible to all citizens, will allow for an easy overview of the implementation of the Code’s measures, providing transparency and regular updates of relevant data. The permanent Task-force will keep the Code future-proof and fit-for-purpose, by establishing a forum - *inter alia* - to review and adapt the commitments in view of technological, societal, market and legislative developments. The Task-force is composed of representatives of signatories, the European Regulators’ Group for Audiovisual Media Services, the European Digital Media Observatory and the European External Action Service, and is chaired by the Commission.

• **Strengthened Monitoring framework**

The Code comes with a strong monitoring framework, including Service Level Indicators to measure the Code’s implementation throughout the EU and at the Member State level. By the beginning of 2023, signatories will provide to the Commission the first baseline reports on their implementation of the Code. Subsequently, Very Large Online Platforms, as defined in the Digital Services Act (DSA), will report every six-months while other Signatories will report on a yearly basis. The strengthened Code also contains a clear commitment to work towards establishing structural indicators, allowing to measure the overall impact of the Code on Disinformation.
Steps ahead

Signatories will have six months to implement the commitments and measures to which they have signed up.

Together with the European Regulators Group for Audiovisual Media Services (ERGA) (https://erga-online.eu/) and the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) (https://edmo.eu/), the Commission will regularly assess the progress made in the implementation of the Code, based on the granular qualitative and quantitative reporting expected from signatories.

The established Task Force, which will meet as necessary and at least every six months, will monitor and adapt the commitments in view of technological, societal, market and legislative developments.

The road that led to the 2022 Strengthened Code


Press release 26/05/2021: Guidance to strengthen the Code of Practice
Read the Strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation 2022

Press release 16/06/2022: Disinformation: Commission welcomes the new stronger ...
The Signatories of the 2022 Strengthened Code of Practice on Disinformation
2018 Code of Practice on Disinformation
Follow the latest progress and learn more about getting involved.
Follow the Commission's work on media @MediaEU (https://twitter.com/MediaEu)

**Latest News**

PRESS RELEASE | 15 December 2023
Commission welcomes political agreement on European Media Freedom Act


PRESS RELEASE | 08 December 2023
Commission launches public consultation on the Implementing Regulation on transparency reporting under the DSA
Today, the European Commission has launched a public consultation to gather feedback on the Implementing Regulation on the templates that intermediary services and online platforms will have to use for their future transparency reports under the Digital Services Act (DSA).

PRESS RELEASE | 20 October 2023
Commission adopts rules on independent audits under the Digital Services Act

The Commission has adopted today a Delegated Regulation with rules on independent audits to assess compliance of Very Large Online Platforms and Very Large Online Search Engines with the Digital Services Act (DSA).

PRESS RELEASE | 19 October 2023
New call for proposals supports EU fact-checkers in debunking disinformation

The Commission has published a new call for proposals worth €850 000 to support EU fact-checkers in identifying and debunking disinformation.
Browse Disinformation
Report / Study

- 30-08-2023
  Digital Services Act study: Risk management framework for online disinformation campaigns

- 31-03-2022
  Reports on January and February actions

- 26-01-2022
  Fighting COVID-19 Disinformation - Reports on November and December actions
The Commission is tackling the spread of online disinformation and misinformation to ensure the protection of European values and democratic systems.
See Also

COVID-19 disinformation monitoring programme

Signatories to the Code of Practice on Disinformation are carrying out a COVID-19 disinformation monitoring programme to keep people informed about the virus and vaccines.

Q&A: Guidance to strengthen the Code of Practice on Disinformation

Find out more about recent measures to strengthen the Code of Practice on Disinformation

European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO)

The European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) is a project that supports the independent community working to combat disinformation.

Source URL: https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/policies/code-practice-disinformation