



ERGA Statement on the progress and challenges within the Code of Practice on Disinformation

ERGA reaffirms its strong commitment to combating disinformation and fully supports the conversion of the Code of Practice on Disinformation into a Code of Conduct under the Digital Services Act (DSA). As an active member of the Code of Practice Permanent Task-Force, ERGA has supported Code's development and enhanced its impact since 2018. ERGA believes that its continued involvement, also in the future as the European Board for Media Services (EBMS), will be essential to uphold the diligence and effectiveness of the Code, ensuring that it remains a robust tool in the fight against disinformation, protecting rights and freedoms of European citizens.

The involvement of ERGA, alongside the European Board for Digital Services (EBDS) and the European Commission, will play a vital role in scrutinizing the actions of very large online platforms and search engines (VLOPSEs). This collaborative framework will help maintain transparency and accountability, ensuring that platforms fulfil their commitments and contribute meaningfully to reducing disinformation in the European digital space. As demonstrated during the European Parliament elections, coordinated efforts and effective communication among stakeholders have yielded significant results in mitigating the spread of disinformation.

In the spring of 2024, nine National Regulatory Authorities (NRAs) contributed to a pilot assessment of the quality of the reports submitted by Code signatories. They highlighted their views on key areas where platforms' reporting is still falling short. The information provided by the platforms indicates ongoing challenges, particularly in areas such as political advertising, the provision of access to data for researchers, support for fact-checking and media literacy initiatives, and lack of reporting for all EEA States for some of the VLOPs. These reporting gaps underscore the need for continued pressure on platforms to enhance their commitments and ensure that they meet the Code's minimum standards. Recent technological development calls for collaboration on finding solutions to new challenges (such as generative AI), and share best practices in a multistakeholder environment.

Despite these challenges, ERGA acknowledges the value of collaboration within the Code's Permanent Task-Force, particularly the progress made on establishing a Rapid Response System in view of the European elections 2024. This system has proven functional in addressing emerging disinformation threats, especially during critical periods such as elections.

ERGA believes that platforms must invest more resources at the national level to better meet their commitments. This includes increased support for fact-checking organizations and targeted media literacy initiatives. National markets pose unique challenges, and platforms should foster their efforts accordingly to support building society's resilience against disinformation.

As the Code transitions into a Code of Conduct, ERGA, soon as European Board for Media Services, stands ready to continue its role in monitoring the Code's implementation. Signatories are expected to transform the Code by beginning of 2025, and it is expected of platforms that they maintain a high level of scrutiny over the commitments they made under the Code. Any setback may be interpreted as a lack of sufficient dedication to mitigate the risks of disinformation on their services in Europe. Our ongoing cooperation with the European Commission, and other stakeholders will ensure that the Code of Conduct remains and becomes an even more effective tool in tackling disinformation. Together, we can foster a safer and more transparent digital environment, strengthening public trust and protecting democratic processes across Europe.