

Minutes

First meeting of the Multistakeholders Forum on Disinformation

29 May 2018

Berlaymont S11, Brussels, Belgium

The Forum discussed the format proposed by the Commission, and some members criticised the proposal to create subgroups. Ultimately, the members agreed to keep the two subgroups, with a commitment by the Working Group (platforms, advertising industry) to take more input from the Sounding Board. To this end, the Working Group will share their drafts in order to enable the Sounding Board to provide timely comments ahead of the Forum's meetings. There was also agreement that that Working Group rather than the Sounding Board should define the Key Performance Indicators to be used to measure the effectiveness of the Code. Finally, the members of the Forum expressed strong concerns that the proposed timetable for the Code was not only ambitious but could prove impossible to meet.

Working Group

The Working Group agreed to group the Commission's objectives around the 5 themes below. The Code will include a disclaimer that not all provisions of the Code will apply to all signatories.

1-Advertising: This section of the Code will focus on enforcement, by identifying policies and criteria on advertising that members should agree on, as well as tracking/measurement mechanisms and the tools that should be in place.

2- Transparency and political ads (to mark the difference with other forms of advertising): The aim here will be to ensure transparency of sponsored content, which is different from "native advertising". Labelling of ads will be one tool. The group will draw on practices followed by platforms and will work on defining "transparency" and "political advertising".

3-Integrity of services: This section will cover the closing of "fake accounts," broadly conceived, as the concept of "fake account" varies depending on the platform or the service provided. Broadly, identification of fake accounts should be made by looking at the behaviour and objectives of these accounts. This section will also address clear marking systems for bots and consider policies, enforcement and tracking mechanisms in this area, including examples of best practices.

4-Consumer empowerment: This section will concern indicators of the trustworthiness of sources as well as issues related to verified identity (eIDAs). It will concern safeguards against disinformation "by design". The Working Group considers that consumer empowerment tools will improve progressively, on a trial and error basis. It also agreed that the media sector should make an effort to raise awareness about tools for consumers to rate information sources.

5-Fact checking and academia: Items under this heading will be discussed during the next two weeks with input from the Sounding Board.

Siada El Ramly was appointed spokesperson of the Working Group. Members of the Working Group agreed to hold four meetings between the formal meetings of the Forum and will exchange documents using an online platform.

Sounding Board

The Sounding Board proposed changes to the Vademecum, which the Commission should circulate to the Working Group.

The subgroup expressed some concerns about the concept of “purveyor of disinformation” and stressed the need for clear definitions, e.g. “trustworthy”, “transparency”, “rules for bots”, “quality content”. It also asked for more information on the functioning of programmatic advertising and discussed issues around transparency of algorithms, including access to data for research purposes.

The Sounding Board stressed the importance of the monitoring mechanisms for effective implementation of the Code. Representatives of the media sector will provide feedback on this topic.

Catherine Garcia-Van Hoogstraten was appointed spokesperson of the Sounding Board. Its members also agreed to organise meetings between the plenary meetings of the Forum.

Next steps:

The Forum committed to try to meet the 17th July deadline (with a draft Code), with the aim to have the Code reviewed and endorsed by the companies concerned, including respective members of the trade associations, by September. Many members of the Sounding Board, in particular, stressed that they cannot commit their members to review the Code by the end of July.

Regarding the second meeting, many members of the Forum would not be available on the 19th of June and preferred to keep the 14th June date as planned. The Working Group will share its first draft of Code with the Sounding Board on the 7th of June, in order to enable the Sounding Board to provide useful feedback at the second meeting.

A list of Forum members attending the meeting is attached.

Annex

Attendance List

Multistakeholder Forum on Disinformation – 29/05/2018

Name	First Name	Organisation
Antemir	Razvan	European Brands Association
Armitage	Catherine	World Federation of Advertisers
Boudet	Lucas	European Advertising Standards Alliance
De Cordier	Marie	European Newspaper Publishers Association European Magazine Media Association
Dimitrov	Dimitar	WIKIMEDIA
El Ramly	Siada	EDIMA –Online Platforms Association
Elzer	Nina	European Association of Communications Agencies
Frank	Nicola	European Broadcasting Union
Garcia-Van Hoogstraten	Catherine	The Hague University of Applied Sciences
Goyens	Monique	BEUC
Gutierrez Velazquez	Ricardo	European Federation of Journalists
Jimenez Martin	Maria Luisa	Facebook
Macdonald	Raegan	Mozilla
Mills Wade	Angela	European Publishers Council
Mroczkowski	Gregoire	Interactive Advertising Bureau Europe
Olivier	Jeremy	Facebook
Pancini	Marco	Google
Polad	Gregoire	Association of Commercial Television
Pollicino	Oreste	Bocconi University
Sneed	Vincent	Association Européenne des Radios
Turner	Stephen	Twitter
Van Wijk	Wout	News Media Europe
Vatrapu	Ravi Kiran	Copenhagen Business School
Wagner	Christian	Google