



Belgium-Luxembourg
Digital Media and
Disinformation Observatory

Platform policy monitoring

Executive summary of D3.3.1.

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EDMO BELUX is the Belgian and Luxembourgish hub for research on digital media and disinformation (EDMO BELUX). It brings together an experienced and extensive network of fact-checkers, media, disinformation analysts, media literacy organisations and academics to detect, analyse and expose emerging harmful disinformation campaigns. Through rapid alerts in the network, fact checks and investigative reporting will reach first responders to disinformation (media, civil society, government) in order to minimize the impact of disinformation campaigns. In addition, through media literacy campaigns, EDMO BELUX will raise awareness and build resilience among citizens and media to combat disinformation. Finally, the hub will embed its disinformation monitoring, analysis and awareness into a multidisciplinary research framework on the impact of disinformation and platform responses on democratic processes.

Within EDMO BELUX, the research pillar of the hub aims at assessing the impact of disinformation and disinformation responses.

Room for improvement. Analyzing redress policy on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter *by Trisha Meyer and Claire Pershan*

<https://belux.edmo.eu/room-for-improvement-analysing-redress-policy-on-facebook-instagram-youtube-and-twitter/> (June 2022)

This article reviews how users can appeal (in)action taken against content and/or accounts on four major social media platforms. It provides policy advice in the context of the next steps of the EU Digital Services Act (DSA), in particular Article 17 concerning internal complaint handling and redress mechanisms. We took a deep dive into the policies and community guidelines of Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter to understand how users can appeal platform content moderation decisions, including ‘under-moderation’ or platform inaction. We find that there is ample room for improvement in current appeal mechanisms, most notably in informing and allowing the person who flagged the content or account to seek redress for platform (in)action.

Tough luck if you’re in BELUX? Platform responses to disinformation in Belgium and Luxembourg *by Samuel Cipers and Trisha Meyer*

<https://belux.edmo.eu/tough-luck-if-youre-in-belux-platform-responses-to-disinformation-in-belgium-and-luxembourg/> (October 2022)

This brief article reviews how platforms have taken action to counter online disinformation in Belgium and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. We analysed the reports published by signatory social media platforms to the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation, including Meta (Facebook & Instagram), Google (including YouTube), Twitter and TikTok, from August 2020 until April 2022, and identified platforms’ initiatives that were aimed at these countries. We find that platforms focus their efforts on prioritising and amplifying content. These initiatives are low-cost efforts to inform the public. Moreover, most platforms’ country-specific responses were only taken at the height of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, with Twitter distinguishing itself positively as the exception. We conclude that platforms make few efforts for country-specific responses when these countries constitute small markets.

What is political? The uncoordinated efforts of social media platforms on political advertising *by Samuel Cipers and Trisha Meyer*

<https://belux.edmo.eu/what-is-political-the-uncoordinated-efforts-of-social-media-platforms-on-political-advertising/> (December 2022)

This article reflects on platform policies and guidelines on political advertising. These entities are voluntary signatories to the Code of Practice on Disinformation. Building on our previous studies of platform actions on disinformation, we analysed the initiatives of Meta, Google, TikTok, and Twitter on political advertising. We find that while some choose to allow and regulate political advertisements, others ban them from their platforms. We also dug deeper into their policies to gain an understanding of how platforms define political content and advertising. The differences between all platforms reveal that political advertisements are not currently defined in their content or scope, which allows social media platforms to cherry-pick decisions on what is political (speech).