

# BEYOND FACT-CHECKING

## RESTORING TRUST IN CENTRAL EUROPE

May 13, 2022

Adriana Dergam, CEDMO

# CEDMO Overview





Central European  
Digital Media  
Observatory

# THE ONLY CENTRAL EUROPEAN HUB ...AND THE MOST EASTERN

This project has received  
funding from the European  
Commission under the call  
CEF-TC-2020-2  
(European Digital Media  
Observatory)  
Reference: 2020-EU-IA-0267



Co-financed by the Connecting Europe  
Facility of the European Union





# EDMO HUBS

EDMO Ireland (Dublin)

NORDIS (Aarhus)

BENEDMO (Hilversum)  
EDMO BELUX (Brussels)



Central European  
Digital Media  
Observatory

DE FACTO (Paris)

CEDMO (Prague)

EDMO  
European Digital Media Observatory  
(Florence)

IBERIFIER  
(Pamplona)

IDMO  
(Rome)

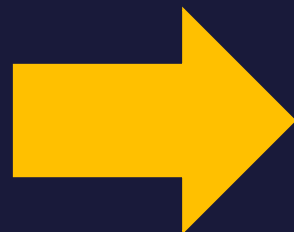
# Coordinator



Václav Moravec

—  
Charles  
University

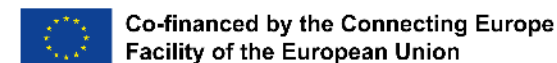
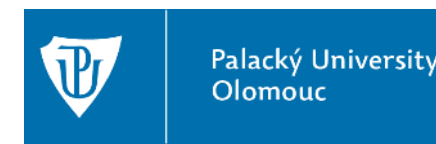
cedmohub.eu



## 8 PARTNERS



## 5 SUBCONTRACTORS



*Call objective 1*  
Creation/extension of national or multinational research hubs on digital media

Activity 1. Official constitution of the hub and project management

Activity 2. Creation of hub's website and internal infrastructure

Activity 8. Communication and dissemination

*Call objective 2*  
Detection, analysis and disclosure of harmful disinformation campaigns at national, multinational and EU level, and analysis of their impact on society and democracy

Activity 3. Development and research of technological and AI-based fact-checking support

Activity 4. Production and display of a continuous flow of fact checks

Activity 5. Analyzing the impact of disinformation on the society

*Call objective 3*  
Media literacy activities at national or multinational level

Activity 6. Campaigning for media literacy and education

*Call objective 4*  
Cooperation with national authorities for the monitoring of online platforms' policies and digital media ecosystem

Activity 7. Monitoring of the media landscape and proposals for better regulation

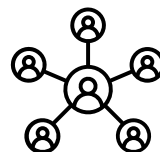


# CEDMO HUB

Website  
Repository  
Comms & Dissemination  
Events



Fact Checking  
Research and display  
Tech tools development  
Tech research  
Impact analysis



Educational Events  
Conferences and  
Workshops  
Media Literacy Campaigns  
Awareness Campaigns  
Online tools



Cooperation with  
authorities  
Online Platforms  
Monitoring  
Advisory to Regulators and  
Policy-makers

# Beyond Fact Checking





# FC Effectiveness and impact

- Effectiveness of both pre-emptive ('prebunking') and reactive ('debunking') interventions to reduce the effects of misinformation
- Whether and how fact-checking lessens peoples' intentions to share mis- and disinformation on social media
- Timing matters: longer-term impact of fact-checks depends on when people receive them ([Nadia M. Brashier](#) et al., 2020)
- How and why mis- and disinformation spreads and how best to counter it
- Ability to reach sub-populations most susceptible to misinformation (Nyhan, 2020; Swire, Berinsky, et al., 2017)

# Psychological aspects of disinformation

## Common narrative:

- Partisanship and politically motivated reasoning explain why people fall for mis- and disinformation?
- Due to poor truth discernment to a lack of reasoning and relevant knowledge?



**there is a large disconnect  
between what people  
believe and what they  
share on social media.**

**an effect largely driven by  
inattention.**



Source: [Gordon Pennycook and David G. Ran](#)

[www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364661321000516](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1364661321000516)

# Beyond Fact-Checking

- Attitude–behaviour gap
- Important contextual factors and nuanced cultural differences
- Cognitive, social and affective drivers of attitude formation and truth judgements
- Reasoning is driven more by personal or moral values than objective evidence
- Motivation to fact-check

## The psychological drivers of misinformation belief and its resistance to correction

*Ullrich K. H. Ecker<sup>1</sup>, Stephan Lewandowsky<sup>2</sup>, John Cook<sup>3</sup>, Philipp Schmid<sup>4</sup>, Lisa K. Fazio<sup>5</sup>, Nadia Brashier<sup>6,7</sup>, Panayiota Kendeou<sup>8</sup>, Emily K. Vraga<sup>9</sup> and Michelle A. Amazeen<sup>10</sup>*

## How Can Psychological Science Help Counter the Spread of Fake News?

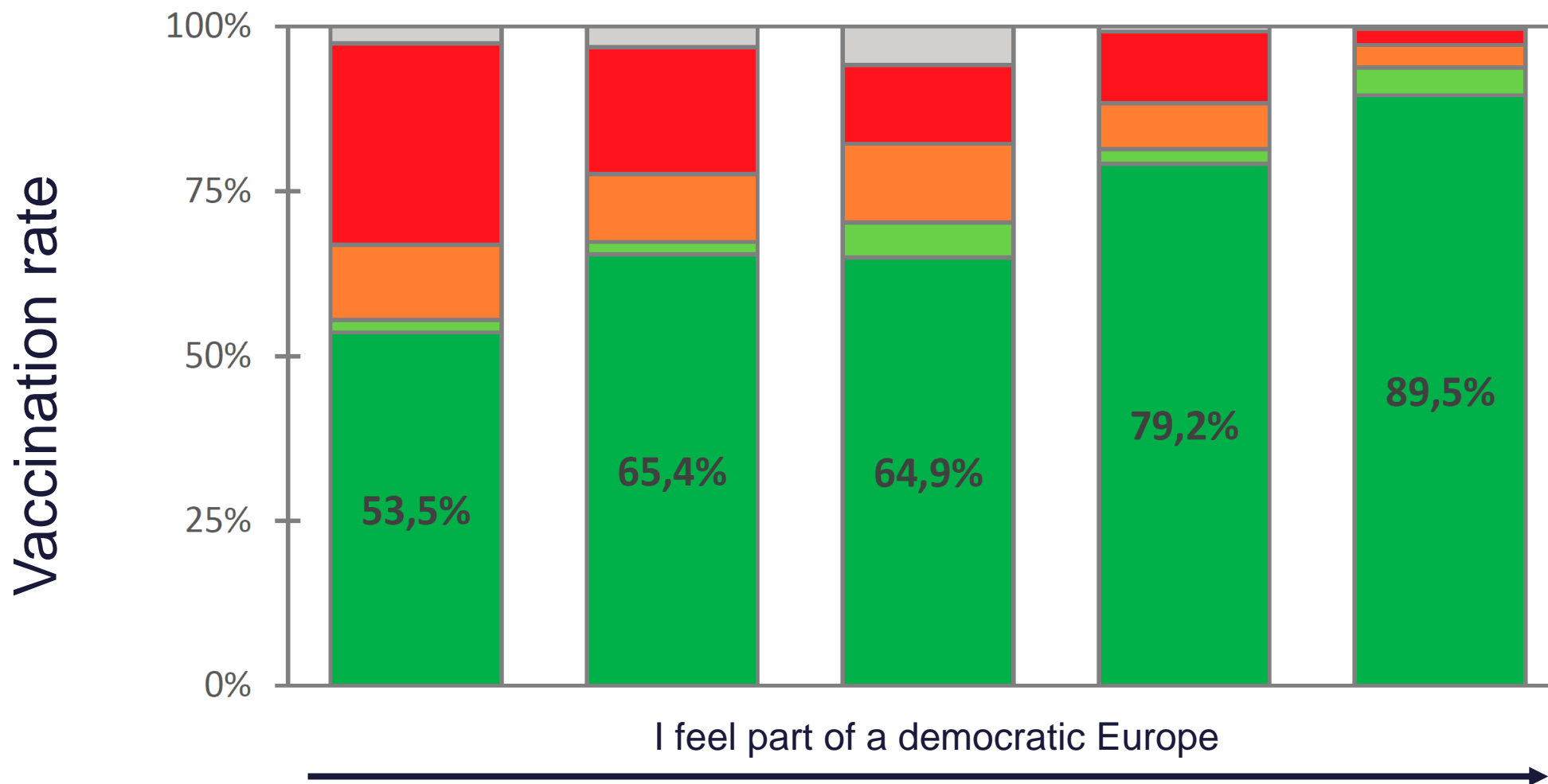
*Sander van der Linden<sup>1</sup>, Jon Roozenbeek<sup>2</sup>, Rakoem Maertens<sup>3</sup>, Melisa Basol<sup>4</sup>, Ondřej Kácha<sup>5</sup>, Steve Rathje<sup>6</sup> and Cecilie Steenbuch Traberg<sup>7</sup>*

*University of Cambridge (UK)*

## The case of Cultural identification and Vaccination

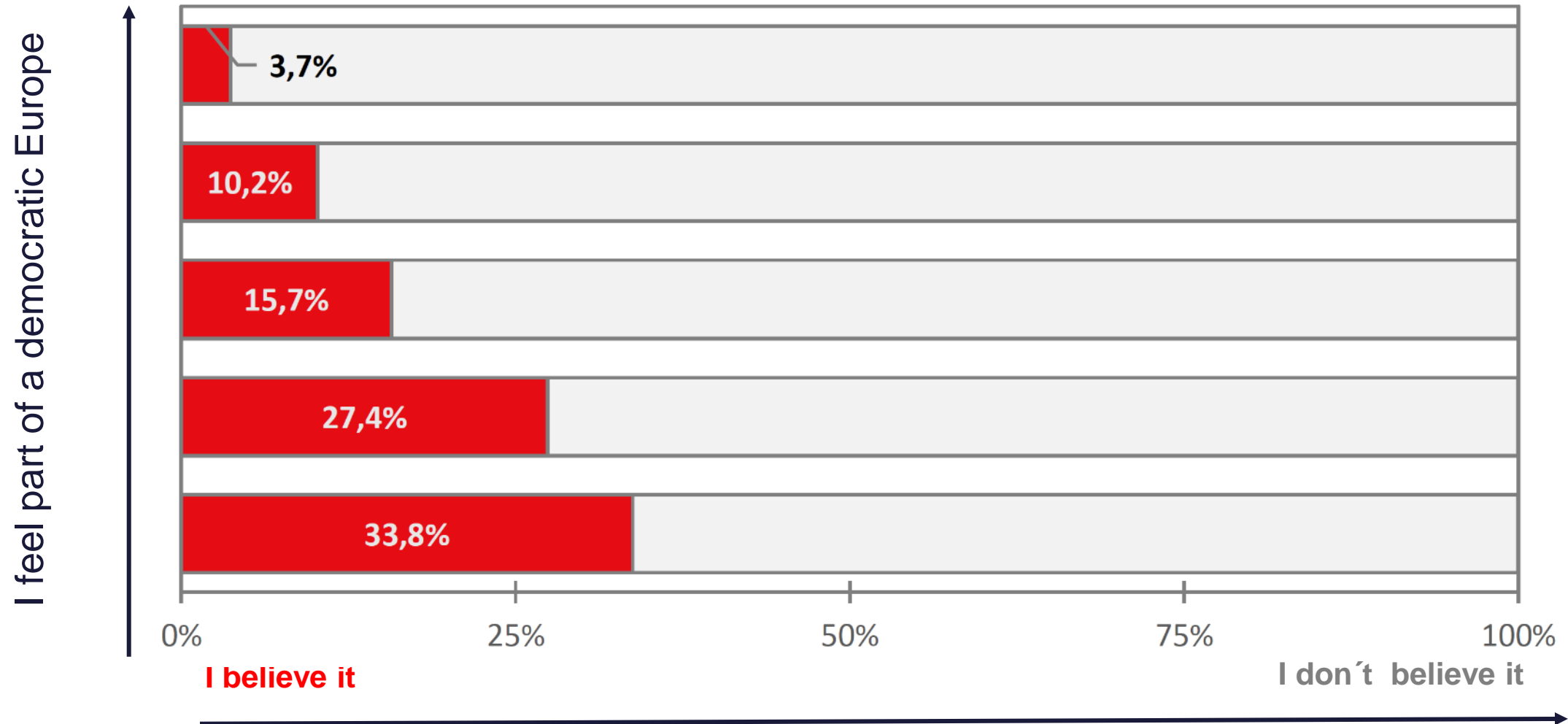
Significant and relatively strong relationship between vaccination and cultural circles, such as identification with a democratic Europe, resp. West and East.

Source: *Očkovanost jako kulturní fenomén: východ versus západ?*,  
Czech Institute of Psychology, 2022





# Disinformation acceptance



# Sense of community

## The people who spread disinformation, hoaxes and conspiracy theories feel a strong need to “be heard”

- Up to 10% of members of the general public regularly share information that they consider to be “censored by large media”, while at the same time, they believe at least several conspiracy theories.
- Citizens are seldom professionals in disinformation who do it for political or financial gains.
- Need to feel **appreciated by the society and to feel as its valued member** → half of thus identified “spreaders” consider this to be the most important motive for their actions.

Source:

*Can online participation help with disinformed or polarized society?*, STEM, 2021

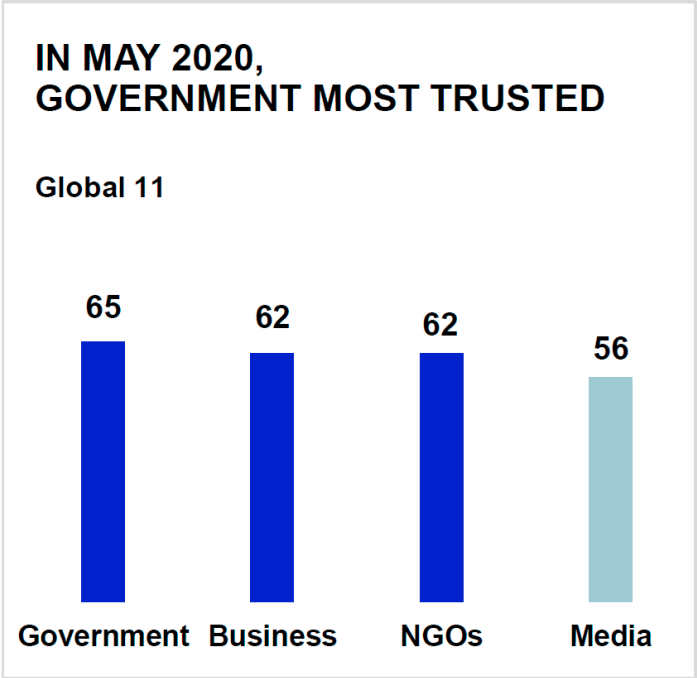
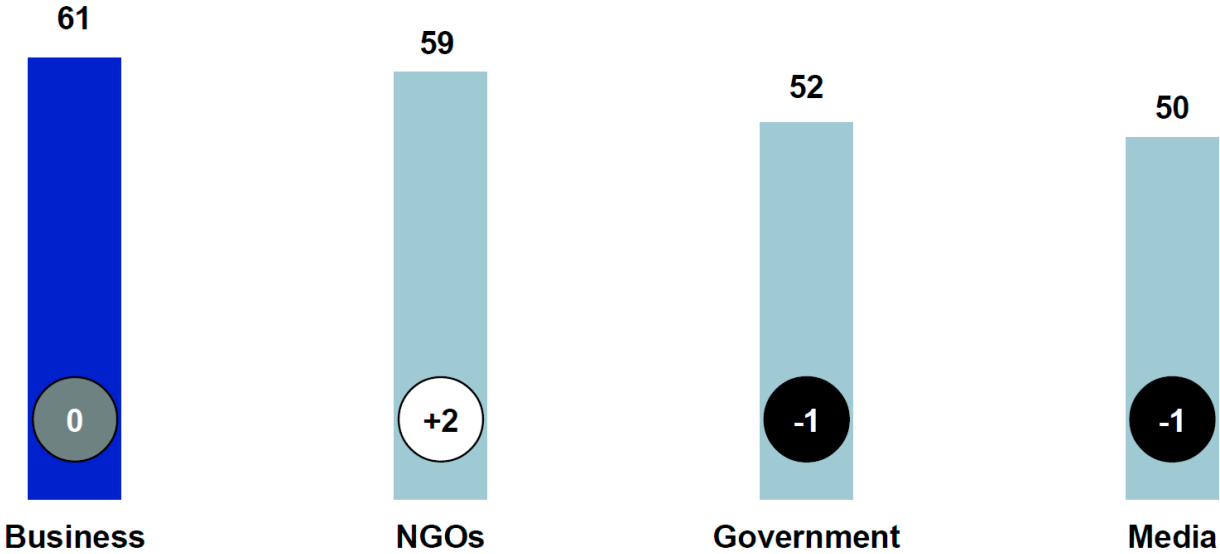


# GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA FUEL A CYCLE OF DISTRUST

# TRUST DECLINES FOR GOVERNMENT AND MEDIA; BUSINESS STILL ONLY TRUSTED INSTITUTION

Percent trust

Global 27



2022 Edelman Trust Barometer. TRU\_INS. Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. General population, 27-mkt avg.

2020 Edelman Trust Barometer Spring Update. TRU\_INS. Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right. 9-point scale; top 4 box, trust. General population, 11-mkt avg.

# Regulating New Media and Platforms



# Regulatory overview

**NO specific LEGISLATION that deals with disinformation.  
NO CONSENSUS on the definition of disinformation.  
Law must be applied in accordance with FREEDOM OF SPEECH.**



## Czech Republic

- Many laws may be applicable on disinformation depending on the content and the media through which they are spread
- Civil or criminal law may apply: online platforms like Facebook are generally not liable unless they have a knowledge about an illegal content



## Slovakia

- Proposal for a new Media Law that sets a time limit for online platform to act
- Proposal for a new crime "spreading of disinformation"



## Poland

- Online platforms' liability under safe harbour regime
- Act on Providing Services by Electronic Means excludes their liability unless they were aware of the illegal content or received a notification
- Widely discussed law proposal to prevent unlawful deleting of content from social media

# Reaction to the war in Ukraine



## Czech Republic

- The Czech government recommended domain blocking of several websites known for spreading disinformation
- There is a current debate whether the decision was not in violation of net neutrality principle or whether there was a sufficient legal basis for this decision.



## Slovakia

- Cybersecurity law was temporarily amended
- National Security Authority further asked operators to carry out blocking in accordance with EU Council regulation



## Poland

- Polish government called on social media platforms to block Russian disinformation channels
- National Broadcasting Council blocked Russian TV channels

# 1. IPSOS-CEDMO SURVEY



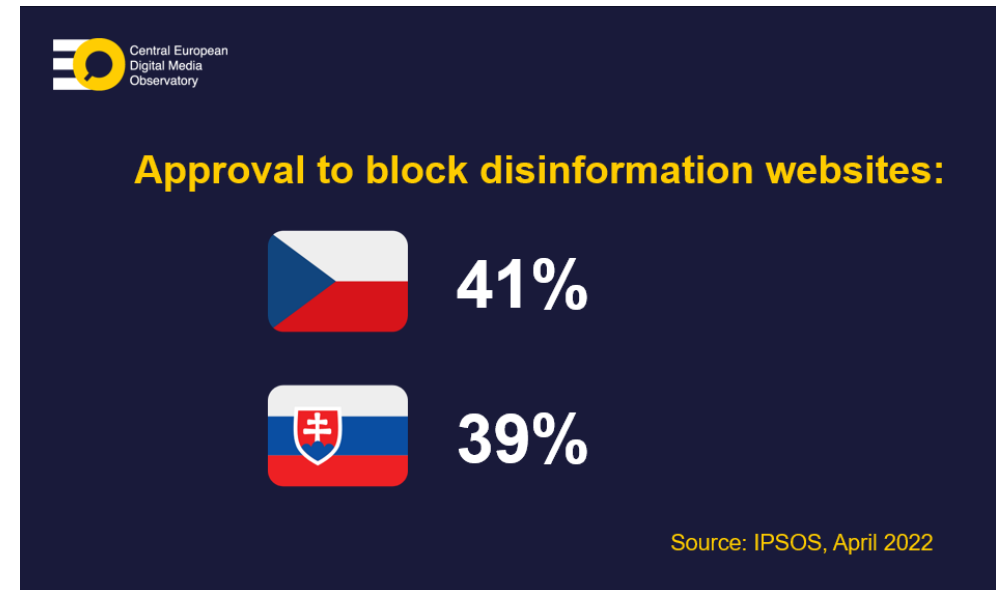
My country is part of the information war waged by the Russian Federation:

CZ 52%  
SK 40%



Information warfare is merely a pretext for Western governments (including their own) to restrict freedom of speech:

CZ 15%  
SK 29%



## 2. IPSOS-CEDMO SURVEY



- 75% of the Czech population thinks that the intensity and amount of disinformation in the Czech Republic is increasing.
- Most people also agree that social networks deliberately amplify and make visible emotional and false contributions.



- According to a quarter of the population, constitutionally guaranteed freedom of speech also means that politicians or the media can knowingly lie.

# Recommendations

1. Disinformation is not just a security issue
2. Constructive debate requires clear concepts
3. People trust mis-/disinformation for various reasons
4. The popularity of disinformation is related to the decline of trust in institutions
5. Population has a vague awareness of the issue of disinformation and do not know how to defend themselves
6. Politicians must take the problem of disinformation seriously
7. The state must improve its communication
8. The state must consistently enforce the law in the online space
9. Regulation of social platforms should be a key task for the EU Czech Presidency
10. Disinformation is a serious challenge but can be tackled



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