



Central European
Digital Media
Observatory



CEDMO Trends: Czech society in times of change (15th wave)

Espresso



MEDIAN

Table of contents

- 1 Basic parameters
 - 1.1 Specifics of the survey
- 2 Current trends
- 3 Perceived exposure to disinformation
- 4 Perception of current narratives
- 5 Most prominent disinformation narratives

1 Basic parameters

Name of survey: CEDMO Trends: *Czech society in times of change* (15th wave)

Timeline of data collection: 14. 6. 2024 – 30. 6. 2024

Target group: population 16+

Respondent selection method: quota sampling

Quota setting support: ČSÚ

Observed quotas: gender, age, education, region, size of place of residence, internet use, voting history in the 2021 general election and the 2023 presidential election

Survey method: CAWI, panel survey

Total surveys conducted: 2729

1.1 Specifics of the survey

The contracting authority is Charles University, or the research workplace CEDMO NPO, and the supplier is the company MEDIAN. The head of the research team for Charles University is Václav Moravec and the head of the research team for MEDIAN is Štěpán Žádník and Přemysl Čech. The questionnaire was prepared by the sponsor and its final version was compiled in cooperation with the supplier. The questionnaire was administered electronically. The selection of respondents was made from the MEDIAN Online Panel and respondents were recruited according to a quota regulation approved by the contracting authority.

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Funded by
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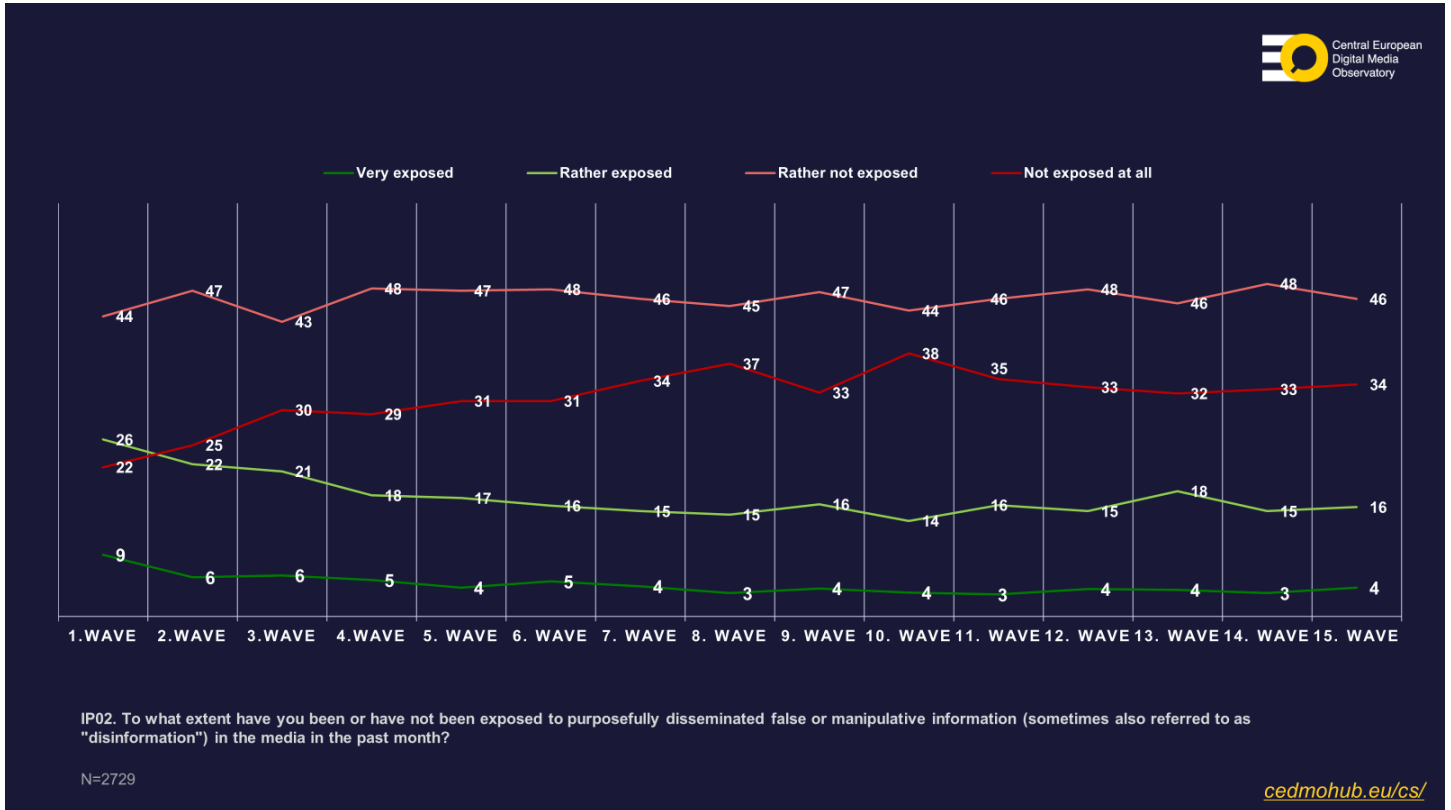
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1 Current trends

The results from the current wave of research are still fairly constant compared to past waves. The same number of people believe that they have not been exposed to disinformation in the past month, the same percentage of respondents perceive the spread of disinformation as a problem and threat to the security of the Czech Republic, and the trend of blurring differences between true and false narratives continues. Here are the most significant findings from the current survey:

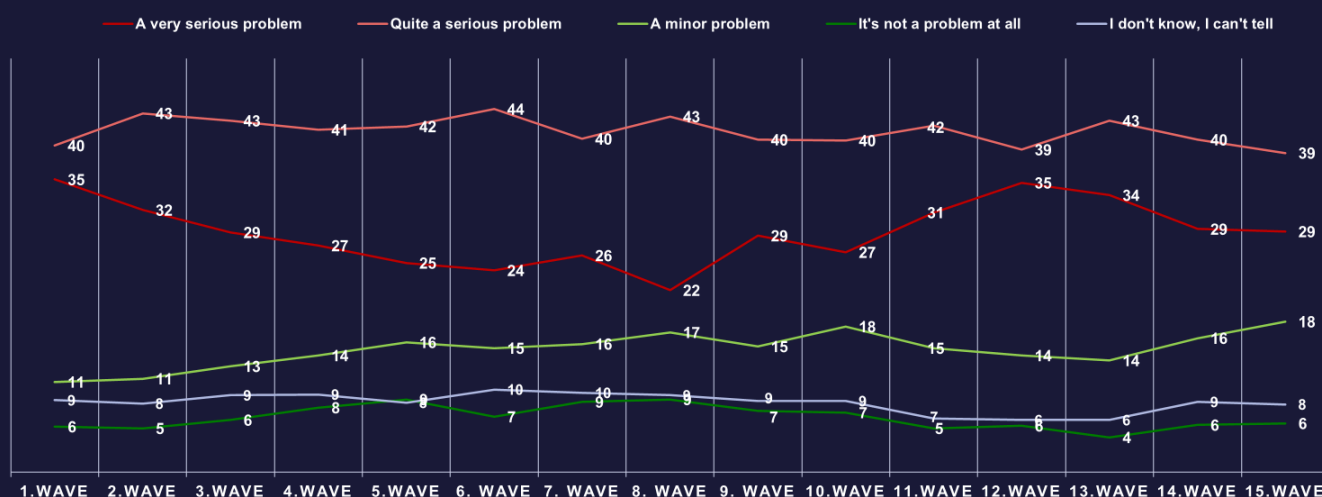
- Four-fifths of respondents (up to 80%) believe that they have not been exposed to disinformation in the media in the past month. This proportion has not changed for several waves.
- The number of respondents who believe that the spread of false and manipulative information over the internet is a serious problem (the sum of "Very serious problem" and "Quite a serious problem") has remained constant (68%) compared to the last wave after a slight decrease. In contrast, the number of respondents who perceive the threat of misinformation over the internet as not very serious has slightly increased.
- Responses to the question asking whether the spread of disinformation threatens the security of the Czech Republic remain the same as in recent waves. Two thirds of respondents believe that the spread of disinformation threatens the security of the Czech Republic, while one third of respondents are inclined to believe that the security of the Czech Republic is not threatened by the spread of disinformation.
- Respondents' conviction in answering whether or not media spreading disinformation should be restricted remains constant compared to the last wave (70% are in favour and 30% against). However, the number of convinced supporters of state intervention has dropped. Compared to the last wave, 2 people were more likely to vote "Rather Yes", making the situation similar to the results of the tenth wave.
- Respondents' awareness of true narratives was higher than false narratives in this wave. While the credibility of true narratives remained the same as in the last wave, the credibility of false narratives decreased. All narratives in this wave were described as credible by less than half of the respondents.
- In the current wave, the amount of disinformation recorded about the European Parliament elections increased. Awareness of where respondents encountered each instance of misinformation has decreased slightly compared to the last wave. Conversely, the number of respondents who know the type of media outlet at a minimum has increased.

3 Perceived exposure to disinformation



Respondents' perceived exposure to disinformation in the media remains constant. The vast majority of respondents still believe that they have not been exposed to disinformation in the past month. In this wave, this is up to 80% of respondents (with the sum of "rather not exposed" + "not exposed at all").

Men on average feel more exposed to disinformation (23% "very" + "rather exposed"). Similarly, people who voted for Andrej Babiš in the second round of the presidential election (26%) felt more exposed to disinformation compared to voters of Petr Pavel (16%). People who did not vote in the presidential election are in between these two camps (20%).

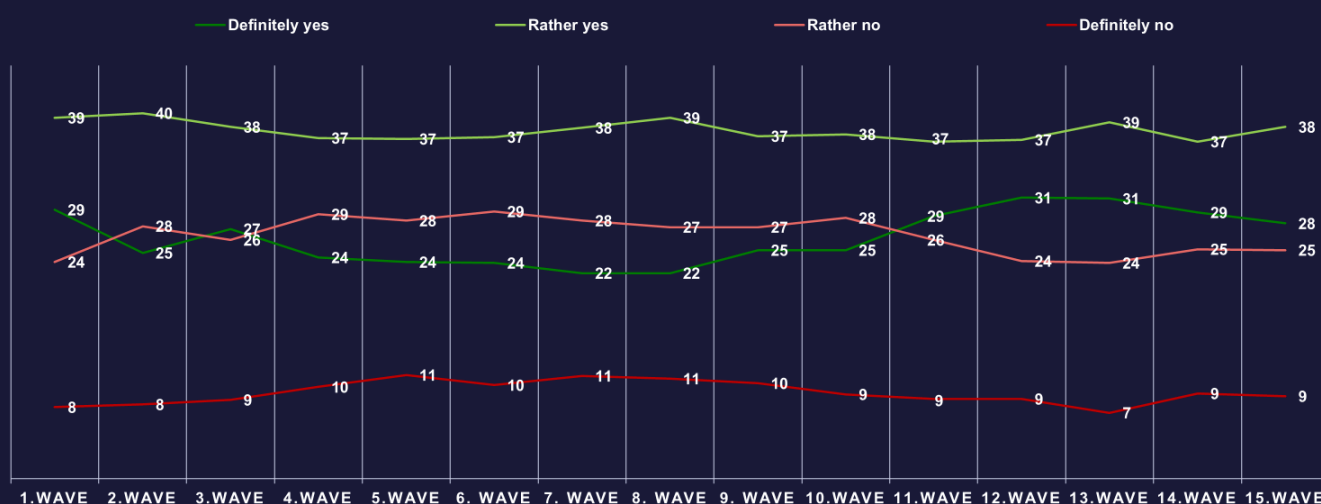


IP04. How serious a problem do you think is the spread of false and manipulative information (sometimes also referred to as "disinformation") on the Internet?

N=2729

Although the spread of disinformation over the Internet is perceived as a serious problem by slightly fewer respondents as time passes, it is nevertheless true that, as in previous waves, the majority of respondents perceive disinformation as problematic - 68% in total (with the sum of "Very serious problem" + "Somewhat serious problem").

Disinformation is perceived more seriously by women (69%) than men (66%) and the youngest respondents aged 16-24 (75%). Students (82%) and people who spend time on the internet several times a day (72%) consider disinformation to be a serious problem. It should also be noted that misinformation is more often perceived as a problem by people who voted for Petr Pavel in the second round of the presidential election (80%) than by Andrej Babiš voters (57%).

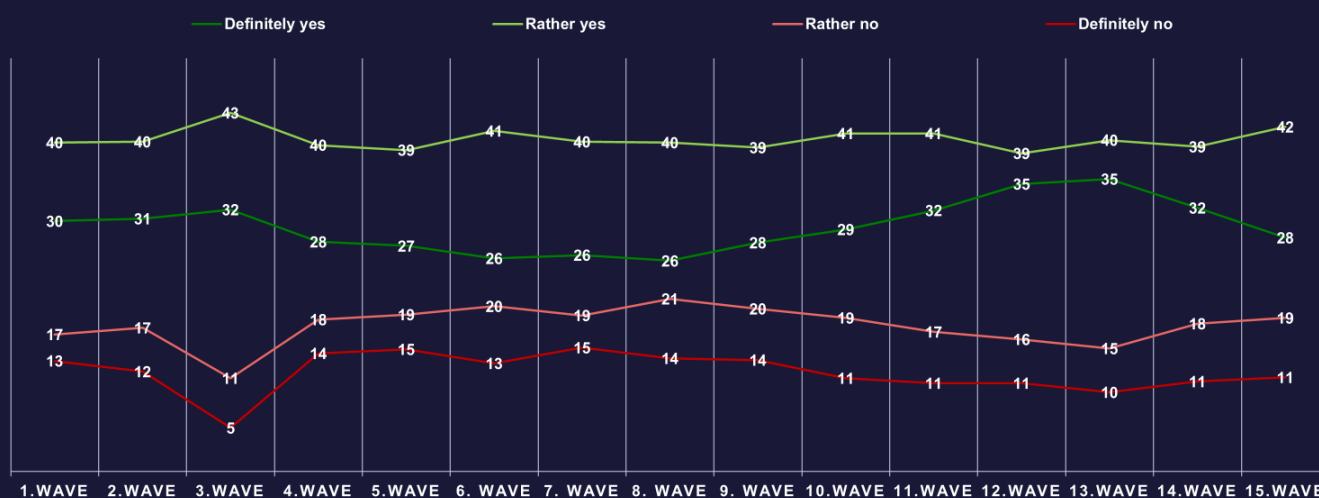


IP05. Do you think that the spread of false and manipulative information (sometimes also referred to as "disinformation") threatens the security of the Czech Republic?

N=2729

Still, when assessing the threat of disinformation, we cannot see any large trends between responses across waves. The numbers remain almost constant. Again, as in the last measurement, we can see that two-thirds of respondents (66%) consider the spread of disinformation to be a threat to the security of the Czech Republic ("definitely" + "rather yes"), with the remaining third (34%) believing the opposite.

Similar to previous questions on this topic, disinformation is more often considered a threat to the security of the Czech Republic by the youngest 16-24 year olds (84%), students (84%) and frequent internet users (70%).



IP07. Is it right for the state to restrict or prevent the operation of media that spread false or manipulative information (sometimes also referred to as "disinformation")?

N=2729

A significant majority of respondents still believe that it is right for the state to restrict the media activities that spread manipulative or false information (70% with the sum of "definitely yes" + "rather yes"). However, in the last three waves the number of respondents who are unequivocally convinced of the virtue of state regulation have been decreasing. The percentage of those who are opposed remains constant.

As in previous waves, women (72%) are more likely than men (68%), respondents aged 16-24 (79%), and people who voted for Petr Pavel in the second round of the presidential election (79%) compared to Andrej Babiš voters (58%) to be in favor of limiting media that spread disinformation.

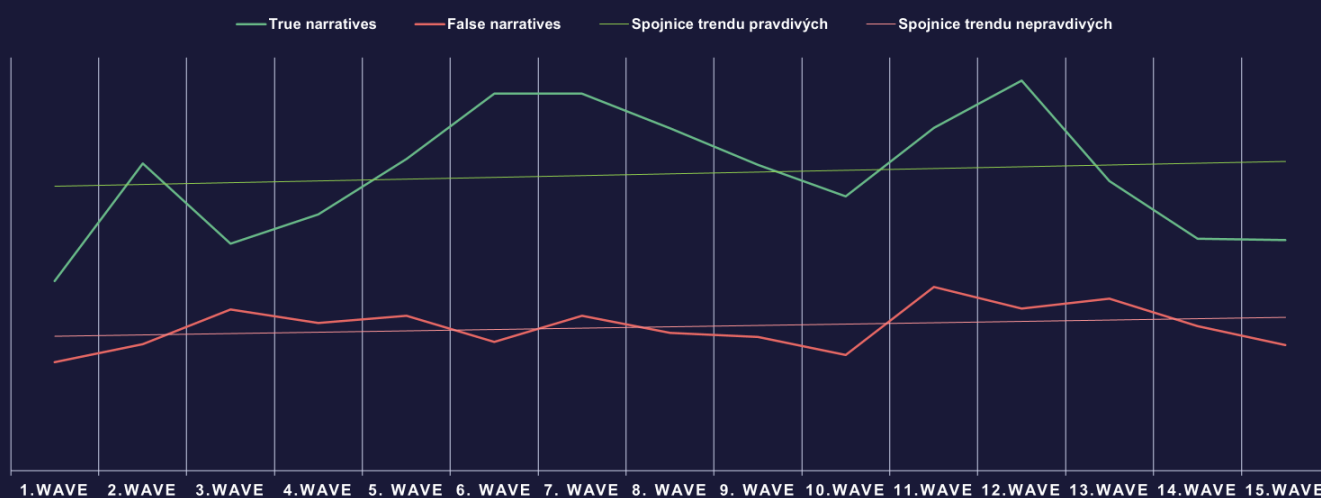
4 Perception of current narratives



After the change in the last wave, the average familiarity of true narratives was once again higher than the familiarity of the false narratives. In the long run, however, the level of awareness of both true and false narratives presented in the survey is converging among respondents.

Of the false narratives, the most famous was that *"The liberal opposition, more precisely the Progressive Slovakia (PS) and the media supported by it, is behind the assassination attempt of Prime Minister Robert Fico"* (31%). The next narrative, *"The Czech Republic has no direct evidence to accuse the Russian Federation of perpetrating the explosions in Vrbětice"*, was recorded by almost a third of respondents. The last recorded false narrative, *"The EU wants to introduce a social credit system of the same type as in China,"* was registered by only 8% of respondents.

The true narrative, that *"The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague has ordered Israel to stop its military offensive in the Rafah area"*, was recorded by the highest number of respondents compared to the other true narratives (26%), which is lower than the number of respondents recording the most successful false narrative.



DEZ. To what extent do you consider the following reports to be unreliable or, on the contrary, credible?

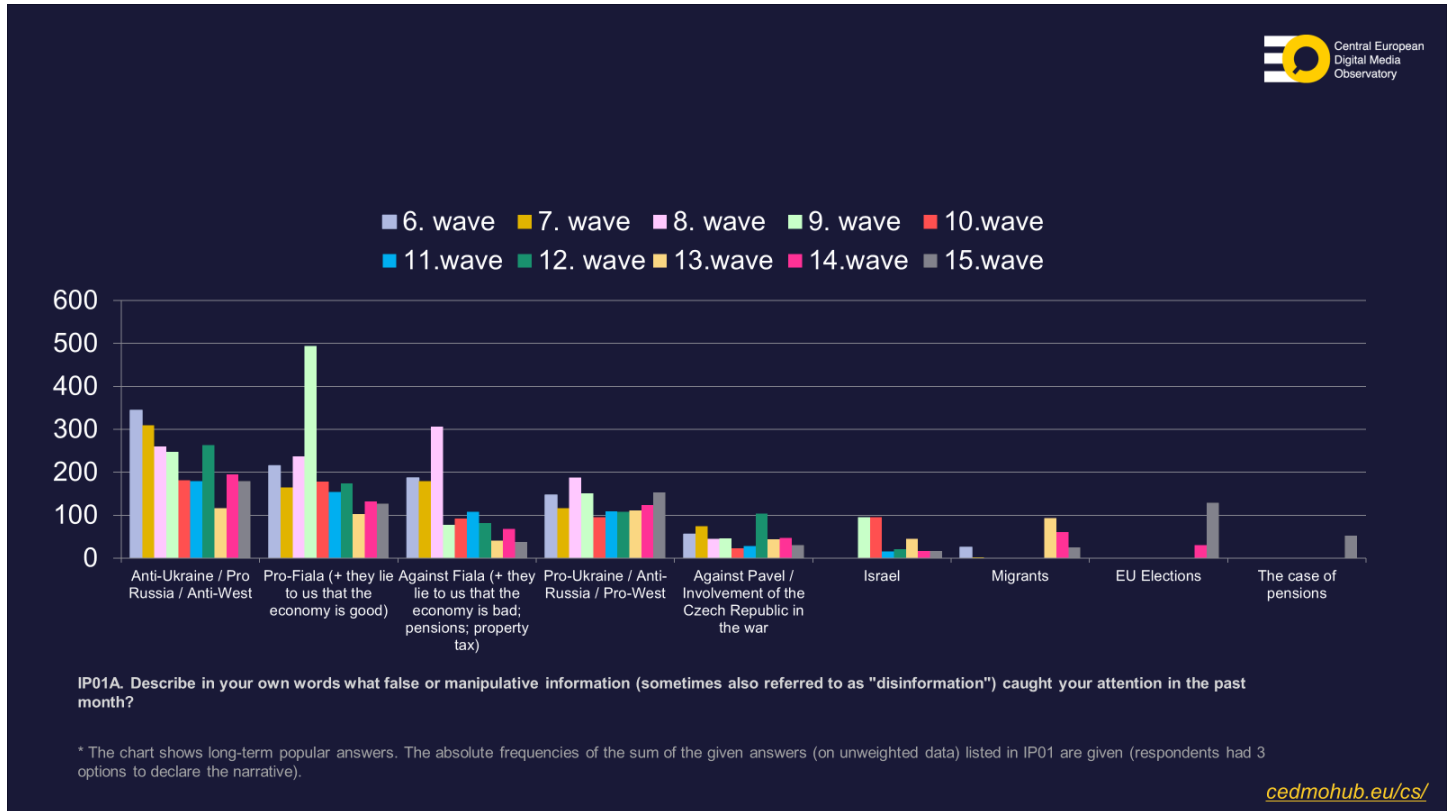
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In this wave, none of the narratives are considered credible by at least half of the respondents and the credibility of false narratives continues to decline, while the credibility of true narratives is constant. The most credible true narrative is that *"The International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague has ordered Israel to stop its military offensive in the Rafah area,"* is considered credible by 49% of respondents (with the sum of the options "completely credible" + "somewhat credible"). The remaining two true narratives are rated as credible by over 40% of respondents.

The credibility of false narratives has again slightly decreased. None of the false narratives achieved above half of the credibility, and the most credible false narrative, that *"The Czech Republic has no direct evidence to accuse the Russian Federation of perpetrating the explosions in Vrbětice,"* was perceived as credible by 42% of respondents. The least credible false narrative, that *"The assassination attempt of Slovak Prime Minister Robert Fico was a staged spectacle where the perpetrator used blanks,"* was seen as credible by only one in ten respondents.

5 Most prominent disinformation narratives



Compared to the previous wave, the number of recorded disinformation about the European elections increased significantly (129). The only disinformation narratives more frequent than ones about the European elections were those against the West/for Russia (179) and against Russia/for the West (153). The number of recorded disinformation for and against Petr Fiala decreased similarly to the number of disinformation against Petr Pavel.

In the current wave, after an increase in the previous measurement, the number of those responding who do not associate a disinformation narrative with a specific source has decreased again, while the number of those who know at least the type of media outlet where they heard disinformation has increased.