CEDMO Trends: Czech society in times of change (16th wave)

MEDIAN

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1 Basic parameters

Name of survey: CEDMO Trends: the Czech society in times of change (16th wave)

Timeline of data collection: 19. 7. 2024 – 25. 8. 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 behaviour in parliamentary 2021 and 2023 presidential elections

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.

This project is funded by the EU Recovery and Resilience Facility.

2 Current trends

The results of the current wave of research still hold up compared to past waves constant. The number of people who believe that they have definitely not been exposed to misinformation in the past month has increased and has reached a peak for the entire period under review. However, the number of respondents who have been, or are more likely to have been, exposed to misinformation has remained without major changes.

- Internet users who use the internet less than daily or almost daily are more likely to report being affected by misinformation. 24% of them report this, but only 18% of those who use the internet several times a day, for example, report this.
- Two thirds of respondents perceive the spread of false and manipulative information over the internet as a problem. The percentage of those who perceive misinformation as problematic increases as the education of the respondents increases. Education plays a similar role in the question concerning the threat to the Czech Republic through disinformation.
- The majority of respondents believe that it is right for the state to restrict media that spread disinformation. Students are significantly more likely than other groups of respondents to agree with this, with 82% of them agreeing with restricting disinformation media.
- Respondents' awareness of true narratives was significantly higher than false narratives in this wave. While the credibility of false narratives declined only slightly from the previous wave, the credibility of true narratives increased significantly. All true narratives in this wave were rated as credible by more than half of respondents.
- In the current wave, there has been an increase in the number of misinformation intercepts in favour of Peter Fiala and those against him. Awareness of where those involved they have encountered each piece of disinformation has increased slightly compared to the last wave.

3 Perceived exposure to disinformation

Perceived exposure to disinformation
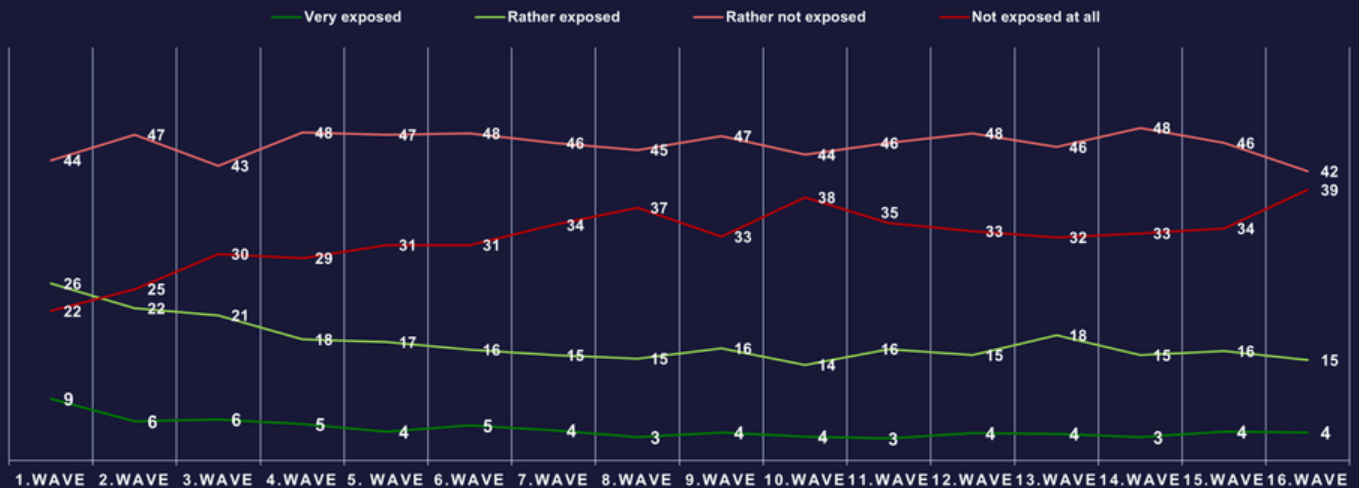
IP02. To what extent have you been or have not been exposed to purposefully disseminated false or manipulative information (sometimes also referred to as "disinformation") in the media in the past month?
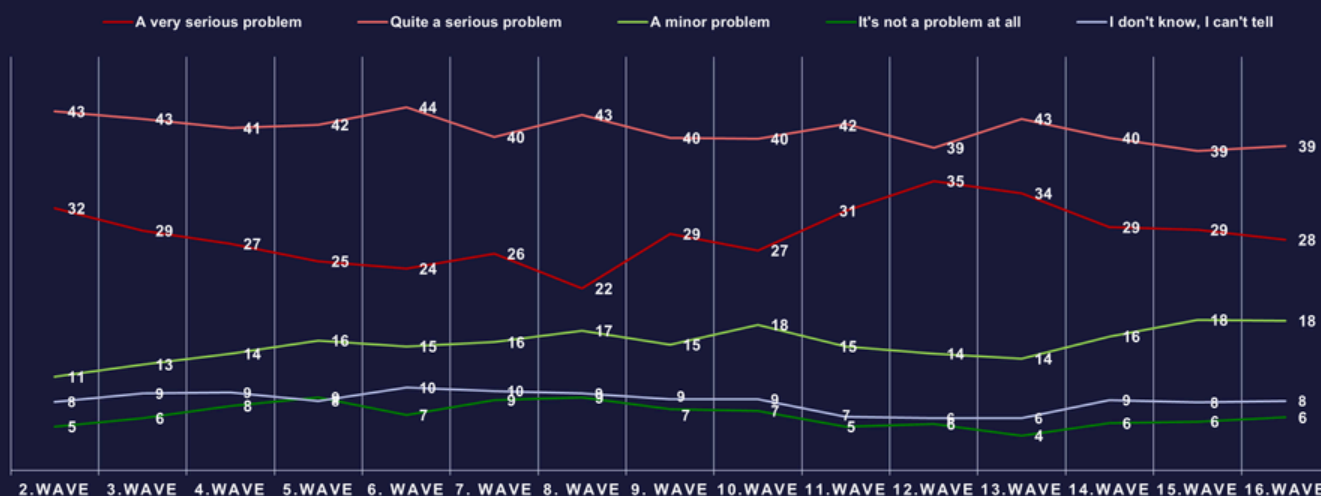N=2729

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In the current wave, the majority of respondents are still of the opinion that they have not been exposed to misinformation in the media in the past month (up to 81% with the sum of "rather not exposed" + "not exposed at all"). At the same time, the number of those who declare that they feel "not exposed at all" to misinformation has increased at the expense of those who feel "rather not exposed".

Men (21% "very" + "rather exposed") feel more exposed to disinformation than women (17%). Voters of Andrej Babiš from the last presidential election (24%) also feel more exposed to disinformation than voters of Petro Pavlo (14%). Respondents who did not vote in the presidential election are in between these two camps (20%).

Perceived severity of the spread of disinformation

— A very serious problem — Quite a serious problem — A minor problem — It's not a problem at all — I don't know, I can't tell

Quite a serious problem: 43, 43, 41, 42, 44, 40, 43, 40, 40, 42, 39, 43, 40, 39, 39

A very serious problem: 32, 29, 27, 25, 24, 26, 22, 29, 27, 31, 35, 34, 29, 29, 28

A minor problem: 11, 13, 14, 16, 15, 16, 17, 15, 18, 15, 14, 14, 16, 18, 18

I don't know, I can't tell: 8, 9, 9, 8, 10, 10, 8, 9, 9, 7, 8, 6, 9, 8, 8

It's not a problem at all: 5, 6, 8, 8, 7, 9, 8, 7, 7, 5, 6, 4, 6, 6, 6

2.WAVE 3.WAVE 4.WAVE 5.WAVE 6. WAVE 7. WAVE 8. WAVE 9. WAVE 10.WAVE 11.WAVE 12.WAVE 13.WAVE 14.WAVE 15.WAVE 16.WAVE

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?
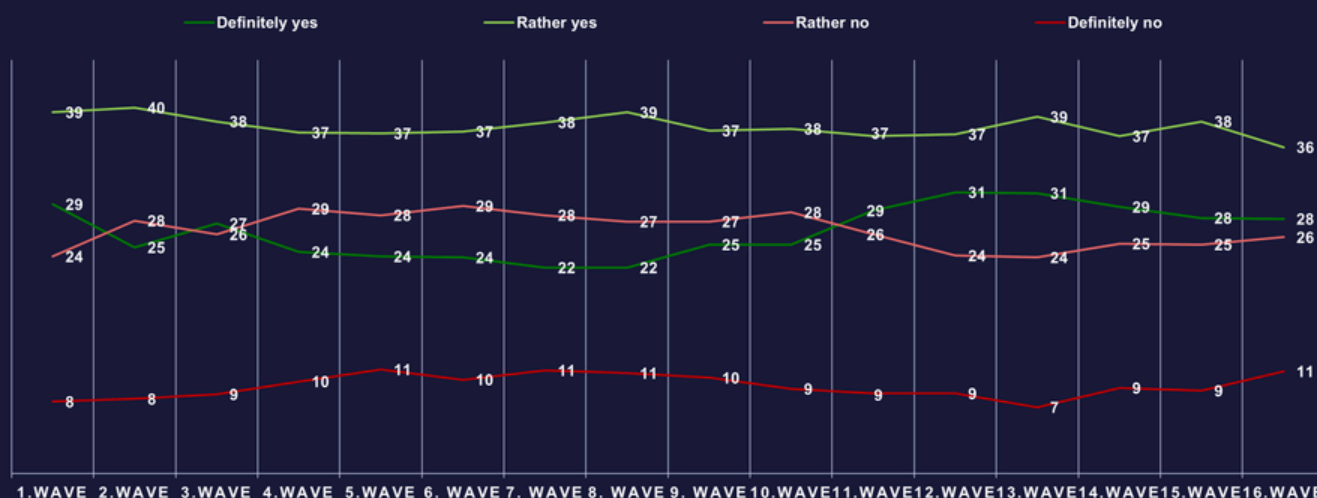N=2729

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The perceived severity of the problem of misinformation on the Internet remains constant in the current wave. The majority of respondents still perceive the spread of misinformation on the internet as problematic (67% with the sum of "very serious problem" + "somewhat serious problem").

Disinformation is perceived as a serious problem more often by respondents under the age of 35 (up to 77%), people with higher education (72%) and students (78%). Voters of Petr Pavel (82%) in the second round of the presidential election also consider disinformation spread via the internet to be a problem more often than voters of Andrej Babiš (56%).

Does the spread of disinformation threaten the security of the Czech Republic?

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

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Even in this wave, the majority of respondents believe that the spread of disinformation threatens the security of the Czech Republic (64% in the sum of "definitely yes" + "rather yes"). More than a third of respondents believe that the security of the Czech Republic is not threatened by this (37% in the sum of "definitely no" + "rather no"). Compared to the last wave, there was a slight increase in "definitely not" answers and a slight decrease in "rather yes" answers.

Women (66%) are more likely to consider disinformation a threat than men (60%), younger people under 24 (77%), students (76%) and people who use the internet several times a day (66%). Also respondents who voted for Peter Paul in the second round of the presidential election (75%).

On the contrary, disinformation is not considered a threat by respondents aged 55 and over (43% in the 55-65 category; 40% in the 65+ category), as well as by Andrej Babiš voters (46%) and people who did not vote in the second round of the presidential election (46%).
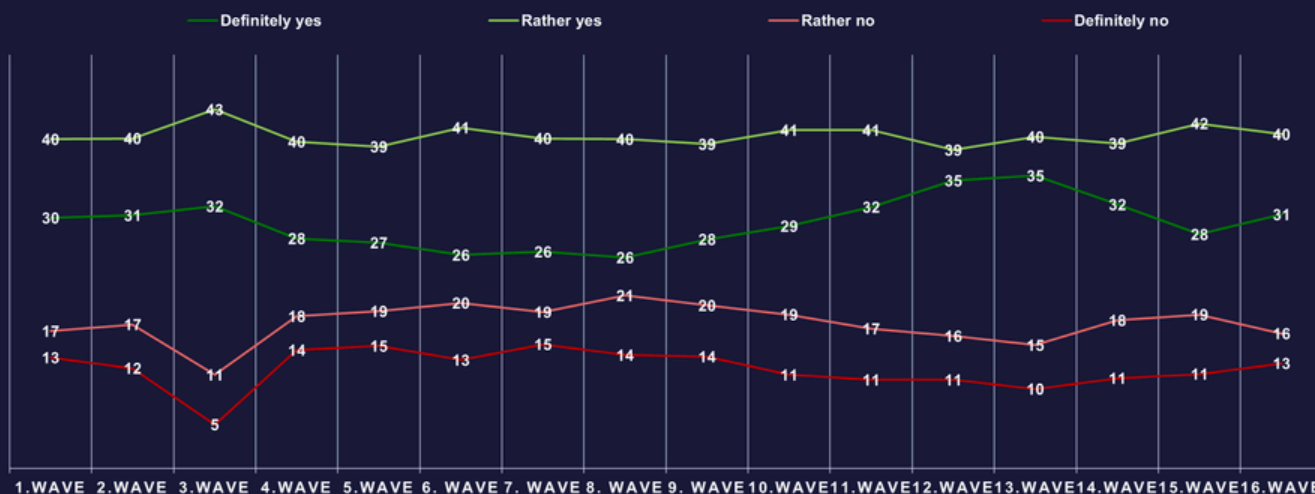
The majority of respondents continue to believe that it is right for the state to restrict the activities of the media that disseminate manipulative or false information. Almost three quarters of respondents think so (71% with the sum of "definitely yes" + "rather yes"). Women (75%) are more likely to agree with restricting the media than men (67%), respondents aged 16-24 (84%) and people who voted for Petr Pavel in the second round of the presidential election (83%) compared to Andrej Babiš voters (60%).
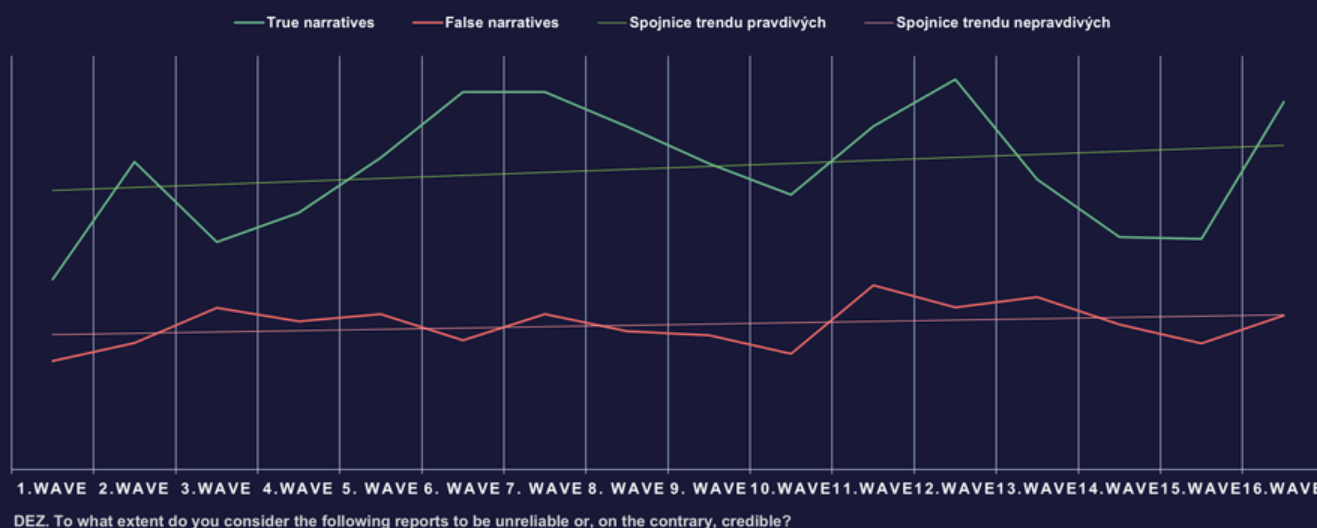
4 Perception of current narratives
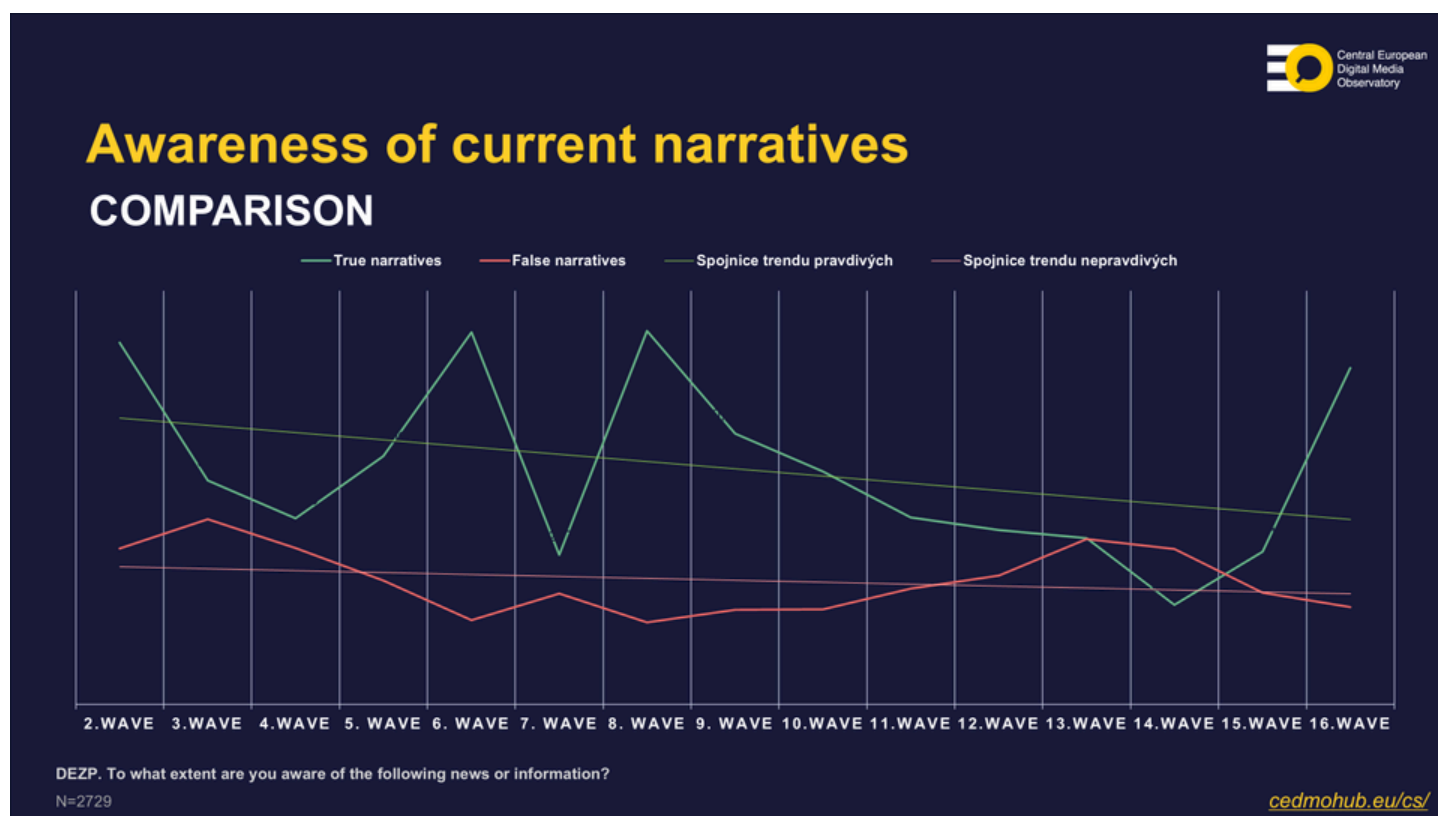
The average familiarity of the selected true narratives is one of the highest for the periods studied. In the last two waves, the observed true and false narratives are no longer close in terms of familiarity. Since the last measurement, the gap between them has widened substantially.

Among the false narratives, the most famous was that "The high incidence of whooping cough in the Czech Republic, which is the worst in 65 years, is the result of a migration wave from Ukraine. It is refugees from Ukraine who make up the majority of the more than 22,000 who have contracted whooping cough since January." (41%). In turn, another narrative "The Czech Army is experiencing a personnel crisis because no one is signing up for new recruits and people are leaving the army. Defence Minister Jana Černochová (ODS) wants the Czech Army to motivate people to join by organising a large military parade." Only 15% of respondents reported this.

The true narrative is that "The Chamber of Deputies created a commission of inquiry to investigate the tragic shooting at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University last December. The commission is primarily to evaluate the circumstances of the police crackdown on the mass shooter who killed 14 people and injured 25 others." recorded the highest number of respondents compared to all other narratives (58%).
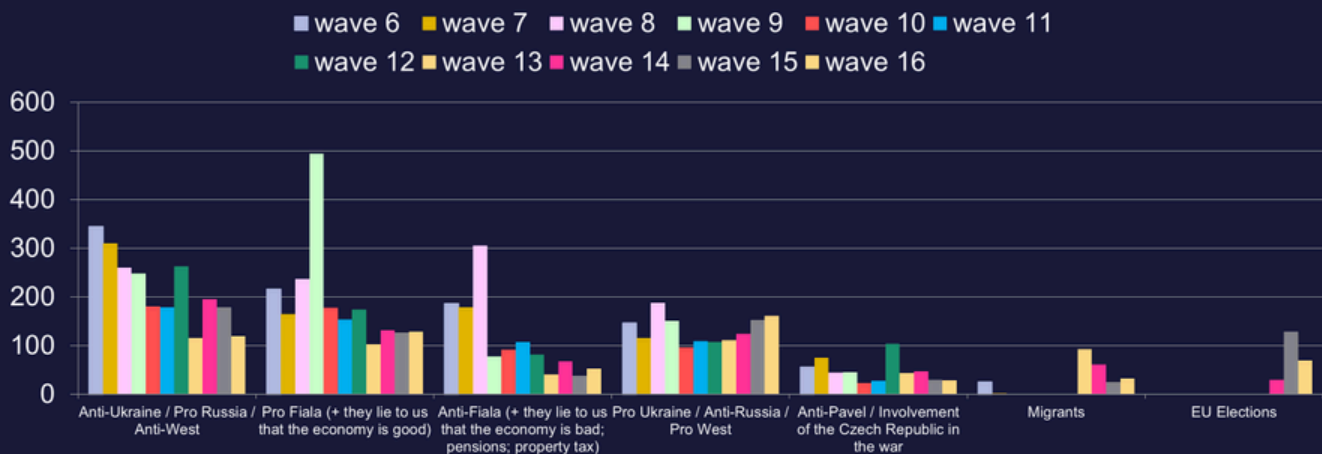
The credibility of current narratives

COMPARISON

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

N=2729

In the current wave of the survey, all true narratives were considered credible by at least half of the respondents. The least credible true narrative was: "The Chamber of Deputies created a commission of inquiry to investigate the tragic shooting at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University last December. The commission is primarily to evaluate the circumstances of the police intervention against the mass shooter who killed 14 people and injured 25 others." It was considered credible by more respondents than the most credible false narrative. The most credible true narrative was, "The high incidence of whooping cough in the Czech Republic, which is the worst in 65 years, is a result of the migration wave from Ukraine. It is refugees from Ukraine who make up the majority of the more than 22,000 who have contracted whooping cough since January." The latter seemed to be trusted by 53% of respondents.

5 Most prominent disinformation narratives

Compared to the last wave, the number of disinformation against the West has dropped, but the number of intercepted disinformation in its favour has increased. Disinformation related to the European Parliament elections was again captured, but to a much lower extent than in the last survey.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.

In the current wave, the number of respondents who do not associate the disinformation narrative with a specific information source has decreased again, while the number of those who know at least the type of media outlet where they observed the disinformation has increased again.