

When disinformation campaigns fuel hate and harassment

Case study: Faktograf.hr

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Introduction

During December 2022 and January 2023, Faktograf conducted the research "Harassment of Fact-checking Media in Europe" in collaboration with Tijana Cvjetičanin from the organisation "Zašto ne?" 41 fact-checking media outlets from 28 European countries participated in the research. The research results showed that 9 out of 10 surveyed fact-checking organisations were exposed to smear campaigns, and online harassment and attacks by politicians and other public figures. Almost all European fact-checking organisations suffered attacks and smear campaigns by political actors and public figures aimed at questioning their credibility and were often accused of censorship and infringement of freedom of speech. Initiatives, petitions, or legislative initiatives which would limit the work of fact-checking organisations were recorded in four countries, among which includes Croatia. Most of those attacks take place online, and mostly occur on social networks, while the second most common channels of attacks are online media and websites. More than half of the surveyed organisations experienced attacks more than once, and a worryingly high number, 7 out of 10 respondents who experienced online attacks, were exposed to long-term campaigns and/or coordinated harassment - for example, stalking, smear campaigns, hate speech, "doxing" and gender-based violence. The frequency of the attacks on fact-checking organisations increased during the COVID-19 pandemic, and more than half of the survey respondents noticed that attacks increased after joining Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program. At the same time, these organisations usually do not report these attacks to the police due to a lack of confidence that their claims will be investigated.

Looking beneath the research statistics, in this case study, we are presenting how the harassment campaigns and attacks on fact-checkers look like in real life based on the example of Faktograf.

The political and social context of the COVID-19 pandemic in Croatia

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization declared a pandemic of the COVID-19 disease. In that period, the Republic of Croatia (in which the majority in the parliament and government has the Croatian Democratic Union¹ led by Andrej Plenković) chaired the Council of the European Union for the first time since becoming a member of the European Union and thus led the first meetings at the level of the European Union related to the emergence of the coronavirus. On 20 February 2020, the Government of the Republic of Croatia passed a decision on the members of the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia to harmonise the actions of all actors in the civil protection system regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in the Republic of Croatia, and which, in the coming period, would make the majority of operational decisions related to the prevention of the spread of the coronavirus. The legitimacy and legality of that Headquarters was going to be one of the fundamental points of political controversy that would continue until the abolition of almost all epidemiological measures in the spring of 2022².

The first case of infection with the new coronavirus in Croatia was detected on 25 February 2020, and on 11 March 2020, the Minister of Health passed the Decision on declaring an epidemic of the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus on the territory of the entire Republic of Croatia, and during March, some of the most important decisions regarding the pandemic management in Croatia are made. Until mid-May 2020, Croatia is in its most significant period of lockdown. Another significant moment is a Decision on the establishment of the Scientific Council for the suppression of the epidemic of the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus that Andrej Plenković, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia, issued on 25 March 2020, and whose members would later be at the centre of numerous public controversies related to the pandemic management.

In that first period, research on the measures of the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia shows that almost 80 percent of the respondents consider the measures to be well-selected, and that 62 percent of the respondents mostly or completely believe that the measures achieved the proper balance between health protection and reduction of economic damage.

The measure that would have the first significant opposition was adopted in October 2020, and it prescribes mandatory face masks to be used in all closed spaces. This measure expands on the previous one in July of the same year, which made the obligation to wear masks only partially in specific situations. Ahead of that, in September 2020, the first mass

¹According to political ideology, it is a centre-right party, a member of the European People's Party.

²For example, already in the relatively early phase of the pandemic and the accompanying lockdown, questions about the legitimacy and legality of the measures adopted by the Civil Protection Headquarters arose. On 30 March 2020, Constitutional judge Andrej Abramović published the article "Constitutionalism in the Age of the Virus," on the IUS-INFO page, in which he claims that the state is using the coronavirus crisis for unconstitutional actions. In a statement, the Constitutional Court dissociated itself from Judge Abramović's article, asserting that it is about his private views. In the coming period, the Constitutional Court would repeatedly evaluate the conformity of the decisions of the National Headquarters with the Constitution and the law.

protest, called the "Festival of Freedom", was organised against measures such as social distancing and the obligation to wear face masks, but also against the measures such as limiting the stay of parents with children in hospitals and other measures affecting children's lives. The organisers of the protest were the civil *rights and freedom initiative*, which would also organise several subsequent protests. According to media reports, the protest was attended by representatives of right-wing political parties such as MP's Zlatko Hasanbegović, Marin Miletić, and Karolina Vidović Krišto, as well as far-right media figures such as Velimir Bujanac. Towards the end of the protest, there was an attack on the cameraman of the Index.hr portal by one protester, who was joined by a security guard. They were insulting the cameraman and the entire Index.hr newsroom, while the attack culminated in tearing the mask from the cameraman's face and taking the mobile phone from the cameraman's hand.

The peak of public debates on the pandemic management in 2020 takes place on 6 December 2020, when part of the government's Scientific Council members published an Appeal in which they advocate for stricter approach in the scope of the pandemic management. The disagreements of scientists significantly occupy the public discourse because the entire pandemic management is based on the narrative that when it comes to epidemiological measures, it is necessary to "listen to the experts and scientists," while the political authorities are there to coordinate the process and create policies that will help the economy. From the public perspective, it seems that there are two opposing sides within the experts and scientists, although there is a majority consensus among scientists, doctors, and professional organisations and institutions regarding the various aspects of the pandemic and how to manage it, which is also evident from the aforementioned Appeal. "The other side" is mainly represented by individuals such as scientists Gordan Lauc, Miroslav Radman, Dragan Primorac, Tomislav Domazet Lošo and Srećko Sladoljev (who was known even before the COVID-19 pandemic as a spreader of disinformation about vaccination), and entrepreneur Nenad Bakić. In January 2021, Gordan Lauc and Nenad Bakić shaped their views into the principles of the so-called pandemic realism and for the entire pandemic period, would pose as the most prominent critics of the approach of the scientists who signed the Appeal. The appeal would be one of the key elements of Nenad Bakić's continuous attack on the scientists who signed it.

The end of 2020 was marked by the arrival of the first doses of the vaccine and the vaccination of the first person in Croatia. At the beginning of 2021, a public campaign for vaccination would start, which would make vaccination the main topic and the central point of social conflicts. Non-pharmacological epidemiological measures at the end of 2020 and the beginning of 2021 included the restriction and closure of the catering sector, the restriction of gatherings and an attempt to regulate private gatherings to 10 people and two households, the temporary closure of schools as well as online school in cases of self-isolation of entire classes. Through 2021, Croatia dances between strengthening and easing the measures, but never reaches the point of a full lockdown again, and has relatively short periods of stricter measures. Tensions surrounding the pandemic management continue and

are strengthened by the introduction of the digital COVID certificates as a prerequisite for participation in various social activities. State and public sector employees cannot go to their workplace without a digital COVID certificate or a negative COVID-19 test.

In November 2021, the political party MOST presented two referendum initiatives related to the pandemic management, with which they want to **strengthen the role of the Croatian Parliament in adopting anti-epidemic measures and take away the decision-making power of the Civil Protection Headquarters of the Republic of Croatia**. MOST, according to its statements, collected almost 400,000 voter signatures, but in the end, in May 2022, the Constitutional Court ruled that the proposed referendum initiatives were unconstitutional and that the referendums could not be held.

Public protests continue across the country after the spread of the use of digital COVID certificates, and **the largest protest against the measures, which according to some estimates was attended by around 15,000 people, is taking place in Zagreb on 20 November 2021**. Again, public protests were attended by representatives of right-wing political parties such as Miro Bulj, Nikola Grmoja, Marin Miletić, Nino Raspudić, and Zlatko Hasanbegović. During the protest, RTL television journalist Goran Latković was physically attacked, and according to media reports, protesters surrounded and verbally abused the Nova TV journalist team and their journalist Petra Buljan. Additionally, a group of protesters took the microphone of Al Jazeera journalist Nikolina Zavišić during a live broadcast. As **stated in the reports from the protest**, *journalists were generally not well received at the protest because the protesters, as could be heard during the protest, were convinced that the media were "mercenaries" of the National Civil Protection Headquarters*.

Social tensions will last relatively intensively until the spring of 2022 when all measures except **wearing masks in health care institutions and institutions in the social welfare system that provide accommodation for the elderly and people with disabilities would be abolished**. Although there is an occasional and temporary increase in the number of infected people, such as in the summer of 2022 or in December 2022, and still an **average of 8 people die per day**, no new measures are introduced. The public debate about the pandemic is kept alive by individuals who, throughout the pandemic period, stood out as opponents of the measures and skeptics of the effectiveness of the vaccine, such as scientist Gordan Luac and entrepreneur Nenad Bakić or MP Marin Miletić, and MEPs Mislav Kolakušić and Ivan Sinčić, followed by fringe media and disinformation websites, some local and/or smaller media houses and individuals on social networks. On 11 May 2023, the Government of the Republic of Croatia declared **the end of the epidemic of the COVID-19 disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus throughout Croatia**, but without public discussion on pandemic management in Croatia³.

³ Read more in the article by Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov: **COVID-19 killed more than 18,000 people in Croatia. How did it happen?**

Faktograf.hr during the pandemic

Faktograf published its first article on coronavirus disinformation on 27 January 2020, with the title "[Bill Gates Did Not Develop the New Coronavirus](#)". In the first intrusion of disinformation into the Croatian media and social networking space, according to the Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov, it was mostly about disinformation taken from the English-speaking parts of the world, but a significant amount of disinformation also came from Italy. This disinformation fits into pre-existing conspiracy theories about global powers taking control of the world. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, dogmatic opponents of vaccination presented vaccines as one of the means of population control and reduction, so the flare-up of virus infection and reports of a significant number of deaths fit into that narrative. In the later period, the majority of disinformation came to Croatia from Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as explained by Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov: *People who monetise disinformation mostly operate in poorer countries, and everything that is produced there is very easily shared among our users in Croatia because the language barrier does not exist.* Less frequent, but with the greatest potential for spreading, is disinformation that originates in Croatia, such as those covered in the articles [A man in Zagreb did not "die on the spot" after vaccination](#), [Disinformation about doctors from the Split hospital Križine](#) and [Death of nurse in Split is unfoundedly associated with vaccination](#).

What distinguishes Faktograf from other media that covered the pandemic development and also published scientifically based information is the cooperation with Meta within their Third-Party Fact-Checking program, which was the ground for repeated accusations of alleged censorship and limiting freedom of speech. As the Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov explains in one of [the articles in which he responds to Nenad Bakić's attacks](#): *Faktograf verifies the accuracy of information shared on social networks, while Facebook, based on our analysis, reduces the reach of disinformation posts. This limits the number of Facebook users exposed to harmful and dangerous disinformation. Fact-checkers who are Meta's partners in [the Third-Party Fact-Checking Program](#) do the same thing in other countries. Community standards are defined by Facebook independently, and fact-checkers do not influence them. Likewise, Facebook independently decides which content to remove for violating its Community Standards. Faktograf can neither block nor remove any content from Facebook. Faktograf only evaluates the accuracy of the content on Facebook, but the posts we evaluate are not removed but are accompanied by a notice that they contain inaccurate, manipulative, or decontextualised claims. In this way, the disseminators of disinformation were not deprived of their freedom of speech, i.e., they were not censored. They still have the right to post inaccurate claims on Facebook, they just don't have the right to algorithmically amplify the reach of those claims. Censorship, by its very definition, is a ban on the publication of certain content. Pointing out the factual inaccuracy or unboundedness of certain content is therefore not censorship.* Meta's program, in which Faktograf participates, is defined in detail, and all information about the way Faktograf works within it can be found on Faktograf's [website](#). Continuous misleading of the public about what Faktograf does and how the partnership with Meta works is one of the key elements of

the disinformation campaign that causes attacks and hate speech on Faktograf, about which we elaborate on further into this case study.

Going back to the beginning, we need to clarify what Faktograf is. Faktograf.hr is the first Croatian media specialised in fact-checking, i.e., in checking the factual accuracy of claims in the public space. Since 2017, Faktograf has been a part of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN), an international network of organisations dedicated to fact-checking, and from 2022, is a part of the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN), a newly established European network of fact-checking organisations. Faktograf is one of the co-founders of SEE Check, a network of 6 organisations from Southeast Europe. Faktograf was launched as a non-profit media in 2015, as a joint co-publishing project by the Croatian Journalists' Association and Gong. In 2018, Gong became an independent publisher of Faktograf. In November 2021, Faktograf ended its incubation period in Gong and became an independent organisation - Faktograf - Association for the Informed Public, which was founded by members of the Faktograf's newsroom to promote, develop, and improve professional and ethical journalism, fact-checking and suppressing disinformation, verifying the accuracy of claims made by digital media and users of social networks, ensuring the right of the public to be informed about issues in the fields of politics, culture, social science, civil society, and to foster independence of the journalistic profession.

At the beginning of the pandemic, Faktograf was still in the incubation period in Gong, the newsroom employs 6 editors and journalists and has been part of Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking program since April 2019. During 2020, Faktograf's newsroom started to work from home following the prescribed epidemiological measures which, due to the earthquake that hit Zagreb in March 2020 and significantly damaged the newsroom premises, would last until February 2022. During the entire pandemic period Faktograf.hr monitored disinformation about the coronavirus through the section [Live blog: Disinformation about the coronavirus](#). Faktograf.hr published a total of 818 articles (by the end of March 2023) on the COVID-19 disinformation distributed via social networks and in various media. During the first six months of the pandemic, Faktograf also published a live blog called [The State of Democracy and Civil Rights](#) to document extraordinary measures introduced by governments which can potentially threaten civil rights and democracy.

Overview of the attacks on Faktograf.hr

Faktograf was the subject of disinformation campaigns, hate speech, and other types of attacks⁴, including lawsuits, even before the start of the pandemic, but with less intensity. Attacks increase on Faktograf during the COVID-19 pandemic correspond to the development of social tensions and the greater involvement of publicly influential people in opposing epidemiological measures and the spread of disinformation. All of which is starting to become extremely intense with the measures adopted before the winter of 2020, as well as the arrival of the vaccine and the vaccination campaign that lasts the whole of 2021. It should be noted that, in that period, pandemic management by the Government of the Republic of Croatia is often non-transparent and inconsistent, making contradictory decisions and decisions that were very difficult to justify as expedient. It was especially problematic when it came to the stay of children in hospitals without parents or refusing the presence of an escort at births, while at the same time, they would allow some **politically opportune mass public gatherings**, especially during 2020. Bad communication with the public, which was often based on intimidation and emotional blackmail of citizens, also caused great damage. Citizens who have doubts about the safety of vaccines were thus **called irresponsible and unreasonable from the highest positions**; they were told **that the state had done its part**, and now it was up to them; they were accused of **ruining the tourist season due to their irresponsible behaviour**, questioning the stability of public finances and **becoming complicit in the eventual spread** of a new wave of infection in the fall, and thus a greater number of deaths that could have been avoided, as written by the Faktograf's editor-in chief Petar Vidov in the July 2021 text **"Marin Miletić conducts an anti-vaxxer campaign on the social networks."** This created a fertile ground for disinformation narratives that contributed to citizens' resistance to measures and vaccinations. In that period, entrepreneur Nenad Bakić and member of the government's Scientific Council Gordan Lauc had one of the central and most visible roles in advocating for the mild measures. At the same time, they became almost central figures in the attacks on Faktograf. Thanks to a large number of followers on their Facebook profiles, as well as the attention of the media, they have created dominant narratives of the attacks on Faktograf.

Matea Grgurinović, a Faktograf journalist, who from the beginning of March 2021 to November 2022 was in charge of monitoring social networks and collecting questions from readers, as well as keeping records of threats, explains the dynamics of attacks: *As a rule, it could be noticed that, when one of the actors like Nenad Bakić, Gordan Lauc or Mislav Kolakušić called out Faktograf, the number of messages and comments increased, which in some cases have characteristics of hate speech or threats. In these cases, you could often see that there was some kind of invitation or incentive for people to contact us because they were often copy-paste messages or very similar sentences and language constructions. What additionally affects the number of messages that we would receive either through*

⁴When we write about attacks in the context of this case study, we are referring to the defamatory, insulting, and threatening messages both about the media and journalists, calls for harassment and violence, and disinformation about aspects of Faktograf's work, such as participation in Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking program, association's finances and other.

social networks or our email, and which would then again contain hate speech or threats, is when some disinformation or new knowledge related to something we wrote about appears in the public space. Then people would start coming forward to say that we were "wrong", without taking into account the passage of time or the fact that new knowledge simply comes with time.

As Faktograf already **wrote**, during the pandemic period, the newsroom was exposed to regular hate speech and threats sent via social networks and e-mail, and during 2020 and 2021, almost 40 threats of physical violence and death were reported to the police.

Following one of the filed reports to the police, an indictment was also filed for the criminal offense of threat from Article 139, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Criminal Code/11. It was a series of threats sent by e-mail:

Sun., 29 Aug 2021 19:34

I'll fuck your mother you leprosy Chetniks⁵, I'll fuck you until you die, fuck you and that Chetnik pupovac⁶, corona and pupovac together with the Chetnik woman danka derifaj, I'll drink blood under your neck from all of you for this block on fb!!!!!!

ZA DOM SPREMNI⁷

GOD AND CROATS !!!

DEATH TO ALL ANTI-CROATS!!!

Sun., 29 Aug 2021 19:39:

I'm going to fuck everyone's bloody mother, may pupovac fuck your leprosy Chetnik mother

ZA DOM SPREMNI

GOD AND CROATS

.THICK FOG WILL DESCEND AND ERASE ALL OF YOU CHETNICS AND ANTI-CROATS !!!!!

Sun., 29 Aug 2021 19:53:

Tika taka the clock is ticking, I'll blow you up, mother fucking Chetniks

Sun., 29 Aug 2021 20:03:

If the Chetnik militia comes, they are not prepared for heavy resistance, the Ustasha⁸ will cause problems, they will have a worse time than the Krajišniks⁹!!!!

Sun., 29 Aug 2021 21:54:

⁵ For an explanation of Chetnik, please see:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chetnik_war_crimes_in_World_War_II

⁶ It is a reference to Milorad Pupovac, MP representing the Serbian minority in Croatia.

⁷ Croatian nazi salutation: For homeland ready!

⁸ For an explanation of Ustasha, please see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Usta%C5%A1e>

⁹ For an explanation of Krajišnik, please see: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kraji%C5%A1nici>

*If the police come to my door, I will find you one by one, even if this will take years. You mother fucking chetniks in the faktograf !!!!
I will drink your Chetnik's blood under your neck!!!!*

The second report, which resulted in the confirmation of the indictment of the Municipal State Attorney's Office for the criminal part of the threat from Article 139, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Criminal Code/11, was submitted following the messages received in Facebook messenger:

11.5.2021.

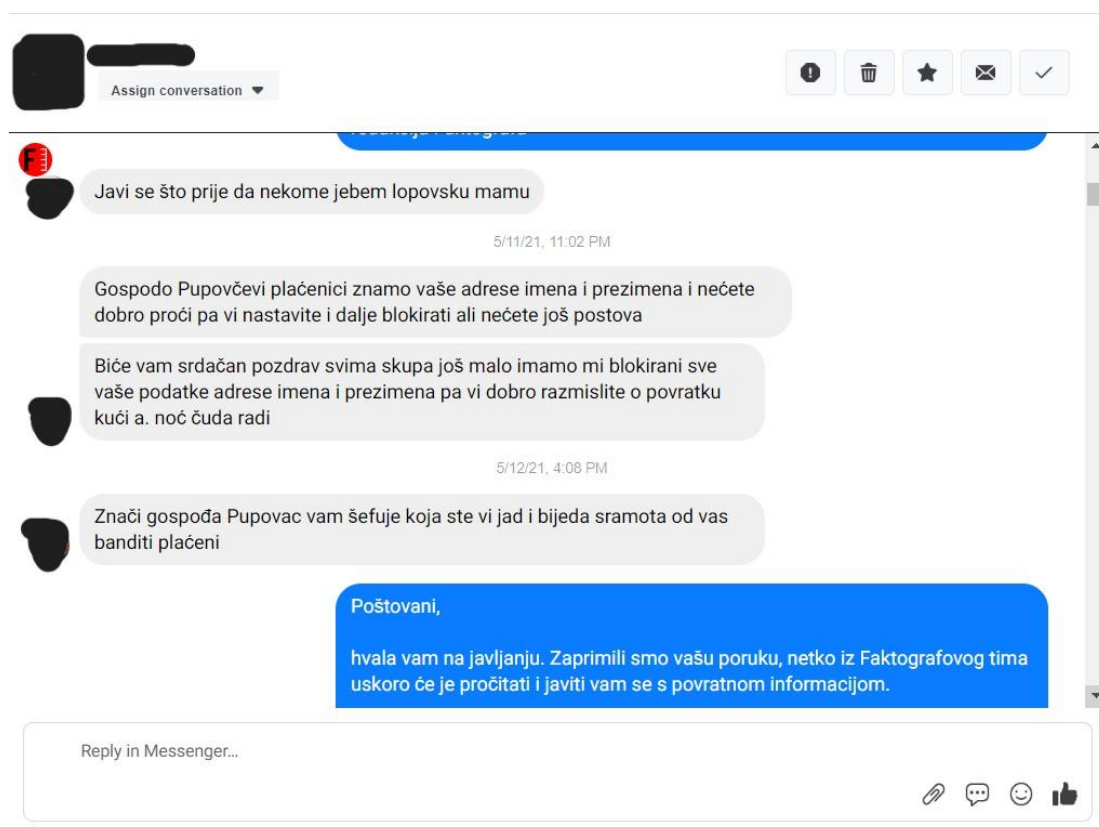
Get in touch as soon as possible so I can fuck someone's thieving mother. Gentlemen, Pupovac's mercenaries, we know your addresses, and first and last names, and you won't do well, so you keep going, but you won't have any more posts. It will be a warm greeting to all of you. We who are blocked have all your data, addresses, names, and surnames, so you should think carefully about returning home, the night will work wonders.

23.12.2021.

There are a lot of us blocked, but remember well, someone will find your lair and fuck your thieving arrogant mercenary mother, so you keep going filthy animals.

25.12.2021.

I can see you fact-checking until we visit you with canisters of gasoline, you mercenary gang of thieves.



It was after this latest case that Faktograf reconsidered its policy of reporting threats to the police because we have learned that in court decisions, persons reported for threats come into possession of the personal home addresses of Faktograf's journalists, which instead of protecting them, directly threatens their safety, especially when the person who is being prosecuted has written a comment on Faktograf's page:

I got it because of you, I'm going to the court to see those sold muzzles and faces that I will make public.

According to our knowledge, the law procedures for both cases are still ongoing.

After the public appeal of entrepreneur Nenad Bakić, who **baselessly accused Faktograf of violating the criminal law and called for the establishment of a fund to finance lawsuits and reports** against Faktograf's newsroom, verbal attacks, and threats intensified.

One of the e-mails received stated:

*Namely, I may be the brother, perhaps the cousin of Andrija Drežnjak ¹⁰, and I would like to draw your attention to the fact that there is a rumour of a large sum of money prepared for a similar scenario at Valentina Vodnika *.*

As far as I know, two people from Faktograf are being followed. You have to be careful, there are a lot of people who are sick and ready for anything.

People think that it is impossible or that the police will protect them, but no one is untouchable.

You are my favourite online media, I enjoy following you, and I would not like someone like Andrija Drežnjak to visit you.

The public hunt culminated in a cyber attack on the Faktograf.hr. website. In less than 13 hours, mostly from the evening of 13 December until 11 a.m. on 14 December 2021, more than 27 million attempts were made to access the Faktograf.hr website. This organised DDoS attack was dominated by attempts to enter the site from Russia and Indonesia. **Nenad Bakić publicly denied any connection to the hunt of Faktograf and the DDoS attack** and then **posted a survey on his Facebook profile** asking his followers what are the chances that Faktograf staged the DDoS attack to present itself as a victim. The attack on Faktograf was condemned by professional journalistic organisations such as **the Croatian Journalist Society** and **the Safe Journalists Network**.¹¹

¹⁰Andrija Drežnjak was a long-term beneficiary of the Centre for Social Welfare in Đakovo, and in 2019, he killed two employees of the Centre, a lawyer and a social worker, with shots to the head. More information about the case is available at [this link](#).

¹¹ In November 2022, the Union of Croatian Journalists (SNH) and the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) organised a panel on the topic of the safety of journalists in Croatia, where editor-in-chief Petar Vidov spoke about the attacks on Faktograf. More: <https://faktograf.hr/2022/11/23/koliko-su-sigurni-novinari-u-hrvatskoj/>



And while most of the threats, attacks, and hate speech were sent via social networks, most often Facebook, to the profile of Faktograf or the personal profiles of journalists and via e-mail, in January 2022, the Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov received a threat to his mobile phone number via SMS message:

I will personally beat you up and tear off your fingers on both hands, motherfucker.

At the same time in 2022, the hip-hop group **Tram 11** released the album "**Jedan i jedan**", on which the authors pour hate speech through songs, including towards the media. In the song "PŠK" they mention the multiple award-winning investigative journalist Danka Derifaj, while in the song "Upad u klub" they mention Faktograf:

I'm not your dad, don't pretend to be my brother, I'm a veteran's portal, and you're a whore from Faktograf.

Although the record company Menart withdrew the album from sale shortly after a series of public criticisms, in 2023 **Tram 11** was nominated for the Porin national music award in the category of best hip hop music album. They did not win the award.

In parallel with the threats and hate speech, Faktograf is also facing a series of lawsuits for compensation of damages filed by Nenad Bakić, due to journalistic articles dealing with determining the accuracy of his public claims on the pandemic, vaccination, and scientists who gave their opinion on the same topic. At the same time, Nenad Bakić submits a criminal complaint accusing Faktograf of violating Article 127 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Croatia, which prohibits denying or restricting freedom of speech or public performance, and for which there is a one-year prison sentence. Faktograf has received threats and even announcements of such criminal reports earlier from Mislav Kolakušić, a member of the European Parliament, who spoke about them publicly, and from Gordan Lauc, who

contacted Faktograf via email and threatened it with a criminal report on his [Facebook profile](#).

In the lawsuits for damages, Nenad Bakić claims that there was a serious violation of his dignity, reputation, and honour, and that because of this, he suffered considerable mental pain related to a series of inconveniences in his personal and business life. Faktograf's lawyer Vanja Jurić points out that in the texts: [Is omicron dangerous for children? It is not true that omicron attacks more vaccinated than unvaccinated people](#) and [The accusations that Igor Rudan is falsely presenting himself as an academic are meaningless](#), which are the subject of the lawsuit, not about Nenad Bakić personally, but about the factual basis of his posts on social networks, specifically those he made through his Facebook profile, where he has tens of thousands of followers.

His statements had a strong resonance with the public and certainly partly created public opinion, and checking the factual accuracy of those claims was a matter of absolute public interest, considering the impact of the pandemic on society and citizens, Vanja Jurić points out . Given that the texts for which Nenad Bakić filed lawsuits do not objectively represent an attack on his honour and reputation, lawyer Vanja Jurić believes that these are lawsuits that have significant SLAPP elements: First, Mr. Bakić, in addition to the criminal complaint¹², filed as many as four different lawsuits against the publisher of the Faktograf.hr – a non-profit organisation, for damages; secondly, these are lawsuits that are obviously excessive and unfounded, and thirdly, with said lawsuits, he is demanding a total of 220,000 HRK from Faktograf, which are excessive claims, compared to the practice of our courts. These are all school SLAPP elements. An additional dimension is certainly given by the criminal complaint that was filed against the director of the publisher and the editor-in-chief of Faktograf. Finally, I think it is also indicative that all lawsuits and criminal charges were filed within one month, as well as that Mr. Bakić systematically, via social networks, invited the public to file lawsuits and file criminal charges against journalists and editors of Faktograf. Altogether, this points to an attempt to punish and intimidate Faktograf, which is the main goal of SLAPP proceedings.

Regarding the criminal complaint filed by Nenad Bakić against Faktograf, lawyer Vanja Jurić points out: *In a legal sense, the seriousness of the filed criminal complaint was not significant because it was clear from the beginning that neither the subjective nor the objective elements of the criminal offense that was the subject of that complaint were fulfilled. On the other hand, I believe that it is an attempt to put pressure on the editorial staff and responsible persons of Faktograf, especially considering Mr. Bakić's repeated public appeals to his followers on social networks, to whom he also invited everyone else to initiate proceedings against them. And any attempt to put pressure on the media, especially non-profit ones, should be understood and treated seriously.* Vanja Jurić further emphasises: *For the criminal*

¹²A strategic lawsuit against public participation (SLAPP) is a lawsuit aimed at censoring, intimidating, and silencing critics by burdening them with the cost of a legal defence until they give up their criticism or opposition. More: <https://www.iusinfo.hr/aktualno/u-sredistu/49066>

offence that was the subject of a criminal report, a prison sentence of up to one year is prescribed. It is certain that the very invitation of the police to Faktograf, that is, to the persons responsible, to come and give statements as suspects, was a means of pressure and an attempt at intimidation. However, the institutions acted correctly and in accordance with the law. The criminal complaint was indeed dismissed very quickly and I don't think the outcome could have been different.

Regarding the criminal complaint, the executive director of Faktograf, Ana Brakus, says that although the lawsuit was dismissed on 27 April 2022, Faktograf only received information about it at its request on 11 November 2022, that is, almost seven months later. This is also a consequence of how these procedures are regulated by law, where the notification is sent only to the applicant, and not to the person against whom it was filed, even though that person was questioned by the police. At the same time, Nenad Bakić is conducting a kind of campaign related to the criminal complaint, starting with **the announcement that he has filed it** and then highlighting the criminal complaint as an option for all those who are dissatisfied with the work of Faktograf. Ana Brakus points out: *All this time during which the process allegedly lasts allows Nenad Bakić to continue accusing Faktograf of censorship, even though it is clear that the whole story has no legal basis.* Faktograf has no information about when the State Attorney's Office informed Nenad Bakić that the criminal complaint was dismissed.

At the time of writing this study, three lawsuits for damages are pending in the first-instance proceedings, i.e., in the stage of the preliminary proceedings, while earlier, the Municipal Criminal State Attorney's Office in Zagreb **dismissed the criminal complaint with the explanation that the characteristics of the reported criminal offence had not been established, nor of another criminal offence that is being prosecuted ex officio**, and one of the lawsuits for damages was also dismissed.

In November 2022, the Faktograf editorial office learned from the media that a 53-year-old man from Šibenik had been indicted for preparing terrorist attacks against a large number of people: politicians, judges, doctors, scientists, journalists, as well as various institutions, and among others on the "list for the shooting" was also the editor-in-chief of Faktograf Petar Vidov. The competent institutions did not inform the journalists about this case, but **the daily Jutarnji list published the names of the journalists against whom, according to the indictment, terrorist attacks were being prepared.** Along with the editor-in-chief of Faktograf, his list also included 24 sata columnist Tomislav Klauški, Jutarnji list columnist Ante Tomić and the editorial staff of television N1, as well as the general director of HRT Robert Šveb.

During this entire period, Faktograf strengthens its policies on the security of online communications, protection against future cyber attacks, and the security of newsrooms. In March 2022, journalist Matea Grgurinović participated in the "Together Against Hate" seminar organised at the Journalist House. At the seminar led by Javier Luque from IPI, the

situation in the newsrooms of the journalists who participated in the seminar was discussed, in which there are generally no systems nor mechanisms for dealing with hate speech and online campaigns against journalists, and IPI's Protocol for newsrooms was presented to them to support journalists who are the target of online harassment. Matea Grgurinović, who also monitored hate speech and attacks on social networks, points out the consequences of the continuous campaign against Faktograf for journalists: *Maybe not all colleagues would agree with that, but I think that exposure to online threats, as well as the moderation of content on social networks, especially in times of more intense threats, attacks, and even hacker attacks, greatly affects the mental/psychic health of journalists. Stress also increases the feeling of powerlessness that often occurs in such situations, especially in situations such as doxing (or something resembling doxing), public denouncing, and sharing names and photos on social networks, especially if it is a more withdrawn person. In such situations, this feeling of helplessness is even stronger and more pronounced, because once things are online, it is impossible to control them, and they remain on the Internet forever.* As a response to the whole situation, Faktograf decided at the beginning of 2022 to create assistance measures for journalists that contribute to the protection of mental well-being. Executive Director Ana Brakus says the following about this: *It is actually frightening to what extent it is possible to normalise the number of attacks and threats to which journalists are exposed. In the two-year period in which threats were almost daily, the newsroom developed a series of mechanisms with the help of which we coped with the pressures we were exposed to, and to some extent, we even got used to them. Developing resilience in this job is extremely important, but it has its price and we must not allow ourselves to end up thinking that working in such conditions is normal.*

Actors and channels of the attacks

In the context of the pandemic, from its beginning in 2020, we can talk about several key actors and channels of disinformation campaigns, attacks, and hate speech against Faktograf. It has been noticed that the number of received direct messages of hate speech and/or threats increase when one of the political actors, publicly influential persons, as well as the media outlets and websites publish an article or post related to the work of Faktograf. Faktograf keeps internal records related to articles in the media, as well as attacks, sent directly through electronic communication channels, and everything stated in this case study is based on the internal monitoring system and media monitoring. This case study is bringing an overview of the most common actors and channels of the attacks on Faktograf, profiles of key actors and their disinformation narratives about Faktograf.

Political actors

Faktograf.hr, as part of its "Accuracy Check" section, continuously monitors and checks the accuracy of information presented to the public by political actors from the entire political spectrum. The fact is that certain political actors more often resort to presenting inaccurate or non-contextualised information about Faktograf and they are the leaders of disinformation campaigns or direct attacks and threats. Although Faktograf was attacked in different periods by several different political actors, most often ideologically self-determined from the centre to the right (for example [Zlatko Hasanbegović](#), [Nikola Grmoja](#), [Nino Raspudić](#), [Miroslav Škoro](#)), in the context of the pandemic and related to fact-checking the information about the coronavirus, the most prominent political actors that attacked Faktograf.hr were MEP Mislav Kolakušić and MP's Marin Miletić and Stephen (Stjepo) Nikola Bartulica. It should be noted that, although the aforementioned continuously call out Faktograf for censorship and, for example, [Mislav Kolakušić explicitly states that he is censored on the social network Facebook, or that the reach of his posts has been reduced](#), this is not true. It is well known that statements by politicians are excluded from Facebook's Third-Party Fact-Checking programme, in which Faktograf also participates. Faktograf cannot in any way mark Mislav Kolakušić's posts on Facebook or influence their reach. Possible limitation of the reach of politicians' posts is exclusively within the jurisdiction of Meta, i.e., Facebook, in accordance with their Community Standards.

Mislav Kolakušić

[Mislav Kolakušić became a member of the European Parliament in 2019](#) as a front runner of the independent voter's list – KOLAKUŠIĆ MISLAV, winning 7.89% or 84,765 votes. Before those elections, Mislav Kolakušić was a judge at the Commercial Court in Zagreb and publicly known as a critic of corruption processes in Croatia, which earned him the public's support. In the European Parliament, Mislav Kolakušić has not joined any political group but acts as an independent MEP. Mislav Kolakušić is exceptionally active on social networks. The Facebook group Citizens for Mislav Kolakušić has more than 192,000 followers, his YouTube channel has more than 35,000 subscribers, more than 103,000 followers on Twitter,

and slightly more than 3,000 followers on TikTok. He also has a WhatsApp and Viber group. Additionally, he has an Instagram profile, but has not been active since 2020.

On several occasions, Faktograf has written about disinformation he was saying in the European Parliament. On **6 October 2021**, **Mislav Kolakušić** announced in the European Parliament that he would file a criminal complaint against Faktograf, accusing it for restricting freedom of speech, saying:

Limiting freedom of speech is a criminal offence both in the Republic of Croatia and other European Union countries. The right to establish the truth in modern and democratic states is exclusively in the hands of the courts. Today, determining the truth on social networks is in the hands of dubious organisations. By filing a criminal complaint against Gong, Faktograf, Facebook and the responsible persons for the criminal offence of restricting freedom of speech and public appearances from Article 127 of the Criminal Code of the Republic of Croatia, I fulfil my civic duty. I promise that all those who implemented censorship will be criminally prosecuted. I have kept every one of my promises, so I will keep this promise as well, even if it takes 20 years or more.



YouTube HR Search

i Facebooka te odgovornih osoba radi kaznenog djela

Kolakušić: Faktograf i Facebook moraju kazнено odgovarati zbog provođenja cenzure

Mislav Kolakušić, ...
35.5K subscribers

Subscribe 4.1K Share

This information was mostly reported by online media that have been repeatedly found to be spreading disinformation ([Narod.hr](#), [Startnews.hr](#), [Maxportal](#), [Logično](#), [Paraf](#), [Crodex.net](#), [Provjeri.hr](#)), and the fact that this is said by a former judge who is expected to know the law, gave legitimacy to the accusations. On this topic, he recorded **a video that was published on YouTube** in which he makes accusations against Faktograf regarding the limiting of the freedom of speech and censorship, but also Gong, the publisher of Faktograf at the time, which he accuses of being a secret agent and harming Croatian citizens. In the description

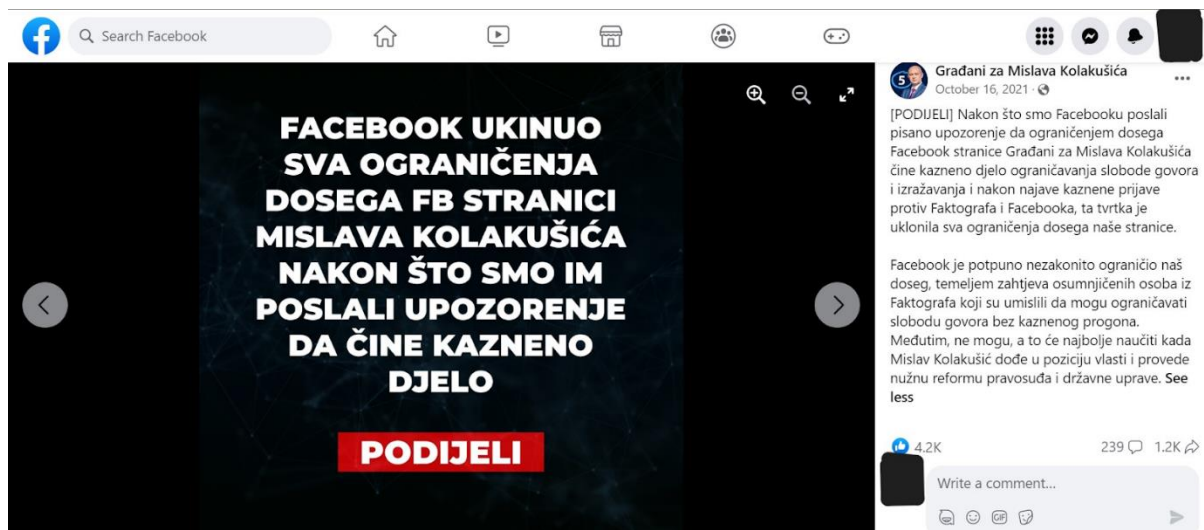
of the video, he states: *Restricting freedom of speech and enforcing censorship is a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment. After the establishment of the legal order and the rule of law, all those who think they are protected today will be prosecuted and sentenced to prison following the current laws. The fact that the trial of a 100-year-old Nazi for crimes from the Second World War began yesterday should be the best indication to them that justice cannot be escaped in an orderly society.* The video has more than 135,000 views and 870 comments.

Ten days after the speech in the European Parliament, on 16 October 2021, a post was published on the Facebook page Citizens for Mislav Kolakušić, stating:

[SHARE] After we have sent a written warning to Facebook that by restricting the reach of the Citizens for Mislav Kolakušić Facebook page, they were committing a criminal offence of restricting freedom of speech and expression, and after announcing the criminal charges against Faktograf and Facebook, that company removed all restrictions on the reach of our page.

Facebook has completely illegally limited our reach, based on the request of suspects from Faktograf who thought they could limit freedom of speech without prosecution. However, they cannot, and they will learn this best when Mislav Kolakušić comes to power and implements the necessary reform of the judiciary and state administration.

Faktograf has not received any information from official institutions that Mislav Kolakušić has filed a criminal complaint against Faktograf.



Marin Miletić

Marin Miletić has been an MP of the political party Most since 2020. Before his election to the Croatian Parliament, he worked for 14 years as a religious teacher and part-time in several media outlets, and he is also the founder of the Association of Catholic Scouts. He

became known to the wider public thanks to his active use of social networks, especially producing video material. He has more than 122 thousand followers on Facebook, more than 43 thousand on YouTube, and more than 22 thousand on Instagram, while his Telegram channel is followed by 10,775 people.

On several occasions in the Croatian Parliament and on Facebook, Marin Miletić called out Faktograf for censorship and stated that Faktograf “plays for the globalist power centres” which, in his opinion, generously finance it, while ad hominem attacking Faktograf's editor-in-chief. In this case study, we are presenting some examples of his speeches and posts on Facebook.

On 25 March 2022, in the Croatian Parliament, during a speech about the World Health Organization, Marin Miletić spoke about Faktograf:

And then the Ministry of Truth, the so-called Faktograf, which apparently consists of interest groups gathered in one non-governmental association, receives a considerable amount of funds for this, to be the main authority and assess what is true and what is not true. So, Christians, reject the Bible, reject common sense, reject conscience, Muslims reject the Koran, whatever gods you worship – reject everything because only Faktograf will tell what is true and what is not. Come on, please, let them skulk and get away from our citizens and our homeland. So, first that. Power comes from the people and belongs to the people according to the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia, and we, the representatives of Most, as well as many other colleagues, will not allow the paw of any organisation to interfere with our decisions regarding the fundamental human rights of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia. You won't get away with this, so tag whoever you want and do what you want. You won't get away with this.

The video of that speech is titled: *Sharply in the Croatian Parliament !! Share the video - let it break through the censorship of the Ministry of Truth called Faktograf.*

Miletić Marin
March 25, 2022

Overview **Comments**

Oštro u Hrvatskom saboru !!
Podijeli video - neka probije cenzuru Ministarstva istine zvanog Faktograf
Svjetska zdravstvena organizacija i pokušaj upravljanja Hrvatskom?
Faktograf ...

Most relevant

Snježana Valentić
Prekrasan govor Marine što se tako grčevito borite za nas i za našu djecu, za slobodu izbora. Samo dokle... Što je vjera bez djela, svaka vam čast, a oni koji vas vrijeđaju neka im Bog oprosti u ovoj Lijepoj našoj...

Write a comment...

Like Comment Share

2.7K · 213 comments · 42K views

Marin Miletić continues to use the parliamentary speaker for disinformation about Faktograf, and on 5 July 2022, he again accuses Faktograf of censorship on Facebook. In the description of the video of the speech he shares, he states:

Today, in the Croatian Parliament, I warned about the so-called Ministry of Truth Faktograf, their eternal student editor-in-chief, on censorship... At the same time, it's wonderful to know that everything that doesn't work - fails. Already here, in this life ❤️ Just in a little bit more time, so please be patient.

Marin Miletić attacks Faktograf outside of the parliament, thus continuously creating a narrative of himself as a victim and in his publication dated **29 April 2022**, announces:

EXCLUSIVE!!

Pfizer is hiding the truth. Please share this post, you won't read about it in the media.

Follow me on my Telegram channel, where the Ministry of Truth Faktograf has no influence:

https://t.me/+Gv_epd_QCGw5N2Q0



Then, for example, **on 28 December 2022**, he publishes on his Facebook profile, among other things:

In Croatia, the Ministry of Truth called Faktograf led by Petar Vidov, a man of almost 40 years who is still unsuccessfully studying at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences - censors scientists and all of us who exposed their lies and deceptions. Bakić, Lauc, and many others sued this man, and I believe that when the trail of money will be visible, we will see how many of them were bribed to deceive people.

Don't forget what this bunch has done to you for more than two years! They robbed you of your freedom, lied to you, and destroyed the health of thousands and thousands of gullible people.

It is quite clear that Marin Miletić is actively creating a disinformation narrative about Faktograf as a censor and at the same time falsely portrays himself as a victim because, as already stated, even though Faktograf fact-checked the claims made by Marin Miletić and published articles in the Accuracy Check section, these fact-checks are not part of Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program, and Faktograf cannot mark Marin Miletić's posts on Facebook in any way, nor influence its reach.

Stephen (Stjepo) Nikola Bartulica

Stephen (Stjepo) Nikola Bartulica has been an MP of the political party *Domovinski pokret* since 2020, and before that, he was a special advisor for religious issues to the former president of the Republic of Croatia, Ivo Josipović, who even awarded him the Order of the Croatian Braid for his special contribution for the reputation and development of the Republic of Croatia and the demonstrated self-consecration and special merits in the work of the Council and other bodies of the President of the Republic of Croatia. Stjepo Bartulica is also an associate professor at the Croatian Catholic University, where he teaches political philosophy, and is the president of the conservative association **Center for the Renewal of Culture**. Unlike the previously described politicians, Stjepo Bartulica does not have a significant presence on social networks. His Facebook page has slightly more than 9 thousand followers, his Twitter profile has 918 followers, his Instagram page has 1003, and his YouTube channel has 140 subscribers.

Teleskop.hr announced in December 2021 that Stjepo Bartulica called out Faktograf in the Croatian Parliament for *censoring content and different opinions on social networks*, and that said that Faktograf is a group of *obscure people who are unknown to the general public and as such are a kind of internet police that decides what is allowed and what is not allowed to be read* and he *asked what gave Faktograf such power and what is the possibility of its abuse*.

In February 2022, Stjepo Bartulica also spoke in the Croatian Parliament about Faktograf and its alleged censorship on social networks announcing the drafting of a bill to regulate it:

Today I would like to talk about another very dangerous phenomenon, which is mass censorship on social networks. For people and parents to make the right decisions, they must have objective information. That is getting very difficult lately. Lawsuits have even been filed against Faktograf, which unfortunately abuses its power in Croatia to decide what we can see and what information, what opinion, on Facebook. So, the lawsuits started, it's not by chance. It is enough for them to say that the context is missing and they can reduce the reach of a particular post or even remove it. We know that freedom of speech is the foundation of democracy, and we know what role social networks play today. This is a big topic that is becoming more and more relevant in Croatia. I think that our fundamental rights, which are guaranteed by the Constitution, also apply to Facebook. Domovinski Pokret will insist on this and we are preparing a law that will regulate that area.



He clarified this initiative even earlier, in January 2022, on [the ZOOM Zagreb Z1 television show](#), which was dedicated to alleged censorship on the Internet while dealing with the work of Faktograf¹³, presenting a series of disinformation about the functioning of Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program and the type of work that Faktograf and other fact-checking organisations perform within the framework of that programme, while baselessly claiming that fact-checking organisations censor opinions. In the aforementioned show, Sjepo Bartulica referred specifically to Faktograf:

It would be good if someone spoke in front of Faktograf because these are obscure people who are completely unknown to the Croatian public. At the same time, they have great powers in deciding which opinions and which information Facebook users can see and read! This is a serious problem and a possible threat to democracy.

He also spoke about this initiative for [the Studio 4 show on HRT](#), and it was discussed in the media, including those that have been repeatedly found to be spreading disinformation ([Narod.hr](#), [Crodex.net](#)).

Since the aforementioned announcements, at the time of writing this case study, over a year has passed and the Domovinski pokret still has not submitted this bill proposal into the legislative procedure.

Influential actors

Although they are not the only ones, the most prominent actors who publicly attacked Faktograf during the pandemic period and/or spread disinformation about it are Nenad Bakić and Gordan Lauc, who have already been mentioned several times in this case study.

¹³The editor-in-chief of Faktograf, Petar Vidov, was invited to participate in that show, but he refused to take part in the discussion that deals with the legal prohibition of someone's journalistic work.

Nenad Bakić

Nenad Bakić is a mathematician by profession, he is known to the public as an entrepreneur, investor, and **initiator of the Croatian Makers programme**, which is implemented in Croatian schools. For a time, he ran the blog *Eclectica*, which is no longer available online, where he published comments and tried to influence public discourse on various social and economic issues, and was a special advisor for digital transformation and STEM to the President of the Republic of Croatia, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović. During the pandemic, through his **Facebook profile, he published the so-called mathematical models with which he analysed trends in the number of infections, patients, and deaths and often gave forecasts about the further development of the pandemic**. Part of the mainstream media outlets published information about his models. With the growth of public debates on introduction and effectiveness of epidemiological measures, Nenad Bakić became a strong proponent of milder measures and, together with Gordan Lauc, published the "Principles of Pandemic Realism" in which their proposals for pandemic management are explained.

A lot has already been said about Nenad Bakić's attacks on Faktograf, especially regarding the SLAPP lawsuits and the hacker attack on Faktograf.hr. On social networks, the main channel for attacking Faktograf was his **personal Facebook profile**, from which numerous media outlets mentioned in this case study took content for their articles against Faktograf and shared it through their social networks. **The narratives of Bakić's posts** are mostly based on accusations of censorship and restriction of freedom of speech. He further points out the alleged lack of expertise of Faktograf's journalists to write about the pandemic. In particular, he points out the editor-in-chief of Faktograf, for whom he continuously emphasises that he did not graduate from university. On several occasions, he writes that the articles for Faktograf are certainly written by **some scientists**, while Faktograf's journalists only sign them. **He also states that no one wants to write articles for Faktograf, so the editor-in-chief has to write them himself**. From time to time, through his publications, he also questions why Faktograf checks the accuracy of his claims, and not, for example, the accuracy of the claims of some other scientists, insinuating that he is being targeted solely because he advocates certain solutions and opinions, which are in contradiction with what the mainstream media and the powerful people want the public to hear.

 **Nenad Bakic** ✓
December 16, 2021 · 🌐

Jeste li se ikad zapitali zašto Faktograf nije nikad (ili skoro nikad, ako mi je koja takva promakla) kao lažne, obmanjujuće ili 'nedostaje kontekst' postove ili objave medija koji su prenosili promašene ili potpuno lažne izjave oštromjeraša? Nikoga od Apelista?

Rudan nije zaslužio factcheck za one gadarije o ubijanju staraca u prijateljskoj Švedskoj, čak niti kao 'nedostaje kontekst'? Ceci da je cijepljenje sigurno kao pijenje vode? Apelisti za traženje najoštrijih mjera da se zaustavi val kad je val već počeo padati? Trampuž o mogućih milijardu mrtvih?

Nevjerojatno ali istinito, nisam nikad vidio sporenje izjava Rudana (štoviše, nisu lažnim označili ni kad ga lažno predstavljaju kao 'redovnog člana Britanske akademije znanosti', što je jako važno jer mu daje lažni autoritet), Malog Rudana, Đikića, Lockdown Luke, Štagljara, Cece, Trobonjače, Jonjića, Trampuža (štoviše nisu čak ni lažno označili kad ga lažno predstavljaju kao epidemiologa), Sriće, Kolarića, Ambriović Ristov... kako je to moguće? A koliko materijala ima, pogledajte u prvom komentaru. Rade li oni dobro svoj posao factcheckinga ili je nešto drugo po srijedi?

Prošlu kritiku mog rada su označili kao lažnu vijest, pa molim podijelite što prije za slučaj da i ovo lažno označe kao lažnu vijest. Što bi naravno jako dobro došlo na sudu 😊

P.s. Imam za vas molbu. U svrhu točnog informiranja javnosti, molim da prođete kroz link u prvom komentaru i pošaljete Faktografu na ocjenu istinitosti linkove za koje smatrate da bi trebalo. Ovo nije nikakvo ometanje ili omalovažavanje njihova rada, štoviše oni sami aktivno traže da se to radi, a ovo im je možda promaklo. Zabilježite da ste slali da poslije možete dokumentirati kako ste bili uspješni u pomaganju njima, ili da su odbili factcheckati.

  Nenad Borošak and 940 others 62 comments 29 shares

 Like  Comment  Share

It is interesting that while at the same time, he is building his position as Don Quijote who, together with Gordan Lauc, attacks the advocates of lockdowns, he continuously claims that in fact, Croatia had some of the mildest epidemiological measures in Europe **thanks to Gordan Lauc and him** and that the two of them had a significant influence on the Government and their politics and thus saved the citizens from the "draconian" measures and lockdowns that some other countries had, and were advocated in Croatia by some experts. Thus, he is both a lone rider against unjust policies and an extremely influential individual who shapes the Government's policies. Regarding Faktograf, Bakić occasionally questions Faktograf's sources of funding and calls Faktograf pandemic profiteers or "the rich and powerful", insinuating that Faktograf is part of a clique whose interest was that the pandemic lasts as long as possible to make as much money as possible while publishing information selectively, and without context. **For example, he states that according to the financial reports of Faktograf for 2021 and 2022, a significant increase in income can be seen**, which is correct. But at the same time, he does not mention that Faktograf operated for most of 2021 within previous publisher GONG, and that the Faktograf association was founded only at the end of the same year, so the financial report for 2021 covers only two months of operations. Although Faktograf also wrote critically about human rights issues during the pandemic, especially in the first months of the globally spread lockdown, as well as about problematic aspects of the pharmaceutical industry's operations, Nenad Bakić consciously creates a conspiracy theory narrative in which the media, and especially Faktograf, under the influence of "pandemic profiteers" have the key role in hiding real information and enforcing censorship over "dissidents", thereby endangering society and individuals. In one

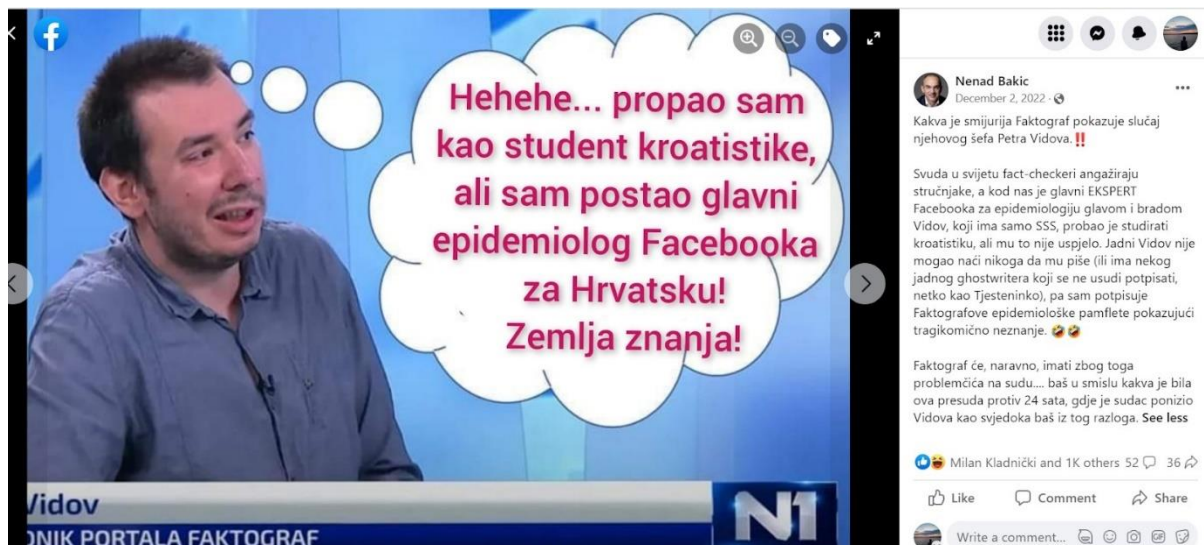
of his posts, he even invites people to sue Faktograf if someone from their family died in hospital due to COVID-19¹⁴:

So, the claims of Gordan Lauc and myself were 100% correct. Faktograf declared our claims to be false, reduced their reach, defamed us - and thereby prevented critical and accurate information from reaching citizens.

Whether our Pero¹⁵ is really unlucky in thinking or has some reason to manipulate so brutally, think for yourself. In any case, it is terrible and against the very principles of fact-checking that he signed.

If someone in your family died in hospital because they picked up Covid there, and if you intend to sue the hospital, add the Faktograf. The rich and powerful Faktograf has a lot of money and will be able to pay compensation for all lawsuits (of one kind or another). Don't forget: they're just pretending to be journalists, they're actually censors, and lawsuits against these scumbags aren't 'restriction of freedom of speech', but quite the opposite.

On his personal profile, Nenad Bakić communicates using insulting and humiliating terms, both for many scientists he writes about, and for Faktograf's editor-in-chief, whom he calls "Perica", "little Perica" or "failed student Perica", and regularly publishes his photos, and occasionally also montages in which he imputes claims about him that have never been made. He also promotes terms such as "pandemic marketers", "lockdowners" and "appealists" to label certain groups of scientists and experts. More than 50,000 people follow Nenad Bakić's Facebook profile.



¹⁴The original post is no longer available on Nenad Bakić's Facebook profile. In addition to Narod.hr, this announcement was also transmitted by the [Epoha portal](#).

¹⁵ Derogatory nickname for Faktograf's editor-in-chief whose full name is Petar.

Gordan Lauc

Gordan Lauc is a molecular biologist, employed as a full professor in a permanent position at the Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry, at the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He is also the owner of the biotechnology company Genos, which he founded in 2007. As stated earlier, at the beginning of the pandemic, Lauc was appointed to the government's Scientific Council and was extensively present in the media.

On the eve of **the largest protest against epidemiological measures, in which, according to some estimates, around 15,000 people participated, and which took place in Zagreb on 20 November 2021**, Gordan Lauc published a post on his **Facebook profile** on 16 November, in which he wrote, among others things:

If we want these measures to be repealed, the silent majority that does not support them must say so loud and clear. Share this post, or write one yourself, that you want to take responsibility for your health and that you don't want the Government to "play Tito" and prescribe how you should protect your health (if they want that, they better ban excessive body weight by law), convince someone who is afraid (be it a virus, be it a vaccine) that is panicking for no reason, go out to a peaceful protest, send a letter to the Government, write to the media, call them and tell them your opinion.

Only after this post, **the Minister of Health Vili Beroš** stated that he believes that the Government would "thank Lauc for his activities and actions so far in the Scientific Council", which was confirmed by Prime Minister Andrej Plenković¹⁶. It should be noted that **professional medical organisations have already demanded the Prime Minister to remove Lauc from the scientific council, precisely because of his frequent unfounded claims.**

In his attacks on Faktograf, Gordan Lauc mostly follows Nenad Bakić's narrative with accusations of censorship and incompetence. Gordan Lauc directly addressed Faktograf's Executive Director Ana Brakus via e-mail on 24 December 2021, and threatened to file a criminal report if Faktograf did not stop writing about him and referred to *unofficial information he received from the top of the State Attorney's Office*, which told him that *complaint for criminal acts will certainly not be dismissed without detailed consideration and investigation.*

Also, in the email from 27 December 2021, he again refers to sources from the State Attorney's Office and states:

¹⁶It should be noted here that this statement in the Croatian context means that the Government is behaving like the former Yugoslav President Josip Broz Tito and implies the accusation of using communist methods of government, which in a certain part of the Croatian public has extremely negative connotations, especially in the context of the ruling Croatian Democratic Union, which since the beginning of Croatian independence, has positioned itself as an anti-communist political party.

I know that at least two criminal charges against Faktograf have already been written and should soon be forwarded to the State Attorney's Office. I personally have not yet agreed to stand behind any of them.

I believe in your sincere intentions and unless the false and unwarranted misrepresentation of my posts is repeated, I will not join those who file criminal charges against you.

Executive Director Ana Brakus answered Gordan Lauc, stating that: *since Faktograf is completely sure of the correctness and legality of everything it does, we invite you to take all actions that you personally consider necessary.*

Later, through his Facebook profile, Lauc threatened to file criminal charges on several occasions, **which was also reported by some media**, but Faktograf has no information from the competent authorities that any of those lawsuits have been filed.

The most severe post related to Faktograf that Gordan Lauc published was **on 21 January 2022**. The post is accompanied by 4 photographs of the Faktograf's editor-in-chief with a text:

If you run into him once he gathers the courage to go into the public, tell him to his face everything you think about his role in promoting evil in this pandemic. Do not use physical force. That would also make you go over to the dark side, and you don't want that. Being himself is enough of a punishment for him. Just tell him that you recognise him and that you know that he was one of the aggressive suppressors of truth and promoters of evil. If you work in the hospitality industry, maybe you can tell him that people like him are not welcome at your place.

This Facebook post had more than 3,300 reactions with emoticons, 610 comments, and as many as 192 shares, and it was also reported on by some fringe media such as online media outlet **Paraf.hr**.

Facebook interface showing a post by Gordan Lauc on January 21, 2022. The post text discusses Petar Vidov, editor of Faktograf.hr, and his views on journalism and censorship. The post includes four images of Petar Vidov in different settings. Engagement statistics show 3.3K likes, 610 comments, and 192 shares.

Gordan Lauc January 21, 2022 · 🌐

Više puta sam si obećao da ću se suzdržati od osobnih komentara, no neke stvari i osobe ipak treba istaknuti.

Petar Vidov, glavni urednik [Faktograf.hr](https://faktograf.hr) (na slici u četiri verzije - prigrvorili su mi da namjerno biram ružne slike pa sam sada uzeo prve četiri s Googla) je jedna od rijetkih osoba koje ću doista zapamtiti i nakon ove pandemije. Najnovijim autorskim uratkom (poveznica dolje) je četiri moje objave i/ili komentara označio lažnim vijestima. Tragično je što je takva osoba na poziciji da može samostalno odlučivati što je istina, a što nije, no nažalost iz nekog nejasnog razloga on ima tu moć...

Gospodin Vidov je veliki obožavatelj mog lika i djela. Redovito čita ne samo objave, već i komentare koje pišem ispod tuđih objava. Mislim da je ovo peti uradak o mojim izjavama koje je dotični osobno potpisao.

Dao sam si truda i pročitao njegovu pisariju. Nije lako, no pokušajte izdržati. Jedino što sam iz toga zaključio je da čovjek krši temeljna načela međunarodne udruge Factcheckera i zbog vlastite agende ugrožava prihode svih zaposlenika. Zbog cenzure koju kao glavni urednik pokušava provesti, njegova direktorica bi kao odgovorna osoba mogla završiti i u zatvoru...

Ako naletite na njega kad jednom skupi hrabrost izaći u javnost, kažite mu u lice sve što mislite o njegovoj ulozi u promociji zla u ovoj pandemiji. Nemojte koristiti fizičku silu. Time biste i vi prešli na mračnu stranu, a to ne želite. On je sam sebi dovoljna kazna. Samo mu kažite da ste ga prepoznali i da znate da je bio jedan od agresivnih gušitelja istine i promicatelj zla. Ako radite u ugostiteljstvu, možda mu možete reći i da takvi kao on nisu poželjni kod vas.

<https://faktograf.hr/.../ne-europska-komisija-ne.../>

👍😂 3.3K 610 192

👍 Like Comment Share

After this post, on 3 June 2022, for example, Gordan Lauc commenting on information about the mental health of young people in Croatia writes:

In our country, the increase in the number of suicides has taken more children's lives than the virus itself...

Those lives are on the conscience of those who advocated for the "epidemiological measures", and censored us who warned about the harmful consequences of those measures. Faktograf is right there at the very top...

Facebook interface showing a post by Gordan Lauc on June 3, 2022. The post text discusses the increase in suicides in Croatia and the role of Faktograf. The post includes a warning message: "This content isn't available right now". Engagement statistics show 973 likes, 24 comments, and 43 shares.

Gordan Lauc June 3, 2022 · 🌐

Kod nas je samo porast broja samoubojstava odnio više dječjih života od samog virusa...

Ti životi su na duši onih koji su zagovarali "mjere", a cenzurirali nas koji smo upozoravali na štetne posljedice mjera. Faktograf je tu pri samom vrhu...

This content isn't available right now
When this happens, it's usually because the owner only shared it with a small group of people, changed who can see it or it's been deleted.

👍😂 973 24 comments 43 shares

👍 Like Comment Share

Gordan Lauc's [profile on Facebook](#) is followed by just over 46,000 people. As in the case of Nenad Bakić, Gordan Lauc's Facebook posts are the foundation for numerous articles published on fringe online media, which expands their reach.

In 2023, Nenad Bakić and Gordan Lauc continued to conduct harassment campaigns against scientists, experts, and doctors who advocated the so-called tougher approach to pandemic management. The situation culminated with the launch of the website [Pandemija.hr](#), which, through print screens of media headlines or comments on social networks, completely taken out of context, creates a *de facto* warrant on scientists and doctors who advocated the introduction of epidemiological measures and vaccination, as well as with [the Facebook post, in which Gordan Lauc implicitly compared all those who advocated epidemiological measures and vaccination to the people in charge of the Nazi camps Auschwitz-Birkenau](#), which followed Nenad Bakić's continuous months-long *ad hominem* insults of many scientists through his own Facebook profile. In January 2023, the Croatian Association of Hospital Doctors (HUBOL) reacted to this [with a public statement](#), while the Croatian Medical Chamber (HLK) filed [criminal charges against Gordan Lauc and Nenad Bakić](#).



Media

Most of the media that carried out disinformation campaigns against Faktograf are *online* media. According to internal monitoring of publications about Faktograf, as well as media overview, the media outlet that stands out in terms of the number of publications about Faktograf's work is online media Narod.hr (<https://narod.hr/>) published by the Association "In the name of the family". Since the beginning of 2020, under the tag Faktograf, they have published more than 80 articles, and in a significant number of articles, Faktograf is accused of censorship and political and ideological bias even in the very title.

The articles on the Narod.hr website have repeatedly been the subject of Faktograf's fact-checking, and it has also been repeatedly determined that they spread disinformation or information that lacks context. **The publisher of the Narod.hr website is the association "In the name of the family", whose leader is Željka Markić**, a conservative activist who became known to the public as the organiser of the referendum on marriage, which included in the Constitution of the Republic of Croatia the provision that marriage is exclusively the union between a man and a woman. She is a participant and supporter of manifestations opposing the right to abortion, such as the "March for Life", and she was also a candidate in the 2015 Croatian Parliamentary elections as part of the "Projekt domovina" political party, whose website states that the party was created *as a political project of the association "In the name of the family" which, through its activities in civil society, recognised the need for a political platform that will ensure the supporters and sympathisers of the Association to get their authentic representatives in state, regional and local government bodies.*

Epoha - the portal for the culture of communication (<https://epoha.com.hr>) published by Epoha, obrt za usluge, owned by Branko Pagon Pekica, stands out according to the number of articles with the aim to attack Faktograf.

Epoha, for example, spreads disinformation about Faktograf in the following way: *They do what they are paid for, they do evil to people, openly preventing them from doing their normal business, while their money literally falls from the sky. Only people who have experienced all their wickedness know what they do and what powers they have. To say it's unbelievable is an understatement. Their breaking into people's Facebook profiles belongs to the area of cybercrime, and they regularly do this from various addresses, Facebook then locks those people's accounts, and after each unlocking, you are disabled from doing anything on Facebook. They obfuscate posts, obfuscate pages, obfuscate the visibility of groups, disable the visibility of shared content, prevent people from using various options on Facebook, and so on, and so on. Not to mention their funny fact-checking stickers. Those stickers are the best guide to the truth for people today, as many wrote in their comments. They diligently try to shut down every free voice that is not a prisoner of the system, which translates to not being in line with the mainstream.*

The narrative promoted by Epoha is that Faktograf is an untrustworthy media in the service of the global financial powers that give it a large amount of money, and that it is a **censor which specifically targets the Epoha portal**. Faktograf's work in the scope of the Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program is completely inaccurately described with the powers that Faktograf does not have and with accusations that are not true. All of the details about the TFCP programme are transparently published and easily verifiable on Faktograf's page, as well as on the page of Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program.

Epoha is repeatedly subject to fact-checking of the articles it publishes, and it was determined on many occasions that it publishes disinformation.

Among the online media which, during the pandemic period, published articles in which they follow the above-mentioned narratives of the disinformation campaign, but with a slightly lower frequency (up to about 20 articles in the previous two years), there is Paraf (<https://www.paraf.hr>) published by the non-profit association ABC WEB, Priznajem.hr (<https://priznajem.hr/>) published by the Priznajem Association, Liberal.hr (<https://www.liberal.hr/>) published by the Association for the Promotion of Personal and Economic Freedom "Liberal.hr". More articles were published by Teleskop.hr (<https://teleskop.hr/>) published by Teleskop media - Association for the Protection of Freedom of Speech and Opinion, but as a rule, these are almost identical texts as published in other mentioned media and are very often just publications of Nenad Bakić's and Gordan Lauc's Facebook posts, not original journalistic work.

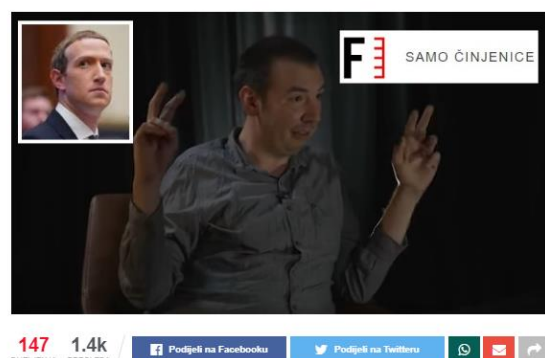
The narratives of these media outlets are almost always the same. According to these narratives, Faktograf is a censor which limits freedom of speech, the expertise of journalists is questionable, as are Faktograf's sources of funding. Quite interesting is the narrative that appeared in the fall of 2022, which tried to connect the news about the layoffs at Meta with Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program. The narrative was saying that the TPFC program was responsible for the company's financial difficulties. For example, in November 2022, Paraf.hr published a photo of the Faktograf's editor-in-chief along with the article stating:

CENSORS ARE DESTROYING FACEBOOK! Mass layoffs for the first time in the network's 18-year history
The once-largest social network is rapidly declining. Due to censorship, users leave it en masse, followed by advertisers.

CENZORI UNIŠTAVAJU FACEBOOK! Masovni otkazi po prvi puta u 18 godišnjoj povijesti mreže

Nekad najveća društvena mreža ubrzano propada. Zbog cenzure korisnici je masovno napuštaju a njih slijede i oglašivači.

Piše: PARAF



Self-declared media that are not registered in the Register of Electronic Publication Providers according to the Law on Electronic Media¹⁷ and the Law on Media¹⁸

Crodex.net (<https://crodex.net>) stands out among websites that are not registered in the Register of Electronic Publication Providers according to the Law on Electronic Media and the Law on Media.

During the pandemic period, Crodex.net published more than 60 articles about Faktograf, often conveying the views about Faktograf expressed by Nenad Bakić and Gordan Lauc on their Facebook profiles. The articles are often illustrated with a photo of the Faktograf's editor-in-chief. Continuously, they accuse Faktograf of censorship and ideological bias (for example, that Faktograf supports the political party Možemo! or that it never checks the accuracy of the information presented by certain scientists) and questions the expertise of journalists. One of the examples of how they create **a narrative related to Faktograf** is the following:

Faktograf is the propagandistic machinery of the globalist left, which tries to impose dogmatic unanimity and destroy the little freedom that is still left in the modern world. Faktograf's work brings us one step closer to the introduction of the Ministry of Truth from Orwell's 1984. This narrative is repeated throughout various articles. The outlet has slightly more than 4,700 followers on Facebook.

In February 2023, Crodex.net published a **"Public appeal to parliamentarians regarding Faktograf and its illegal activity"**, calling on state institutions to *deal with the work and financing of Faktograf and to investigate whose interests and lobbies Faktograf works for*. In

¹⁷Electronic Media Act, Article 94, paragraph 4. A natural and legal person must submit an application for registration in the Register of Providers of Electronic Publications maintained by the Agency and paragraph 6. The Register of Providers of Electronic Publications shall be entered in the Register of Providers of Electronic Publications that meet the conditions prescribed by the law governing the area of media and the conditions prescribed by the Council by the rulebook.

¹⁸Media Act, 3. Information about the publisher and media of interest to the public

Article 13, paragraph 1. The public has the right to information about the publisher's operations.

Article 14, paragraph 2. The publisher is obliged to inform the public through the media at least once in each calendar year about the ownership structure, business results, average circulation, or average audience or viewership.

Article 15, paragraph 1. The publisher is obliged to ensure the publication of the following information in a visible place of each individual holder of the programme content (e.g. press copy, television show):

- the company and registered office, i.e. name and surname and residence of the publisher,
- the name and surname of the editor-in-chief, that is, the responsible editors, and the names and surnames of the editors of individual programme groups, in accordance with the internal organisation of the editorial office,
- name and surname, i.e. company and headquarters of the printing house and date of printing or reprinting, and number of printed copies, when it is a print medium,
- date of production (month and year) in the case of radio and television programmes.

And paragraph 2. The obligation from paragraph 1 of this article also applies to publishers of electronic media so that data is published at the beginning and end of radio and television programmes, i.e. from midnight to one o'clock if the programme is published continuously, and in an appropriate manner by the editorial formatted electronic publications.

the appeal, they present the usual disinformation narratives about censorship and ideological bias of Faktograf, stating that:

So, from now on and in the future, if you don't represent hard-line views, if you doubt the effectiveness of vaccines, if you don't go to Srb to celebrate the "anti-fascist uprising", if you don't recognize that LGBTIQ people are the healthiest part of society, if you don't advocate abortion, if you doubt the influence of mankind on global warming, if you don't bend your neck in front of "progressive" norms and unwritten rules and if you don't bow to established communist and Great Serbian myths, you will be ostracised from Facebook.

izbor uredništva

Javni apel saborskim zastupnicima zbog Faktografa i njegovog protustavnog djelovanja



20/02/2023

0

249

2 minutes read



Upućujemo javni apel saborskim zastupnicima u Republici Hrvatskoj za zaštitu sloboda neovisnih medija. Apel je posljedica cenzure koju sustavno izvršava takozvani portal za provjeru činjenica, Faktograf.hr.

"Poštovani zastupnici, vi koji poštujete Ustav i zakone naše zemlje, i dio ste zakonodavne vlasti u Hrvatskoj,

Želimo vam skrenuti pažnju na užas koji se događa oko cenzure medija u RH i nasilja koje nad nama provodi **Petar Vidov** i Ana Brakus, preko udruge Faktograf.

NAJČITANJE

EKSKLUZIVNO! Zviždačica s Rebra objavila istinu o cjevivu
07/11/2021



Raskrinkavanje: Tko je Zoran Šprajc ex Jovanović?
28/08/2021



Australija u ratu: Dramatični vapaji i suze iz te zemlje pozivaju na borbu za slobodu (Video)
04/11/2021



Cijepljeni šestogodišnji dječak preminuo nakon srčanog udara
25/01/2022



Učitaj više

vida

Besplatna dostava



Trapezna Gabionska Gredica Od Pocijanos Celika 150...

75,65 €

Kupi sada

Faktograf has repeatedly asserted that Crodex.net publishes incorrect information on which Crodex.net reports on, unduly calling out Faktograf.hr for censorship.

In this section, we also detect three online media outlets which, during the pandemic period, published up to twenty articles about Faktograf, each with the narrative that Faktograf implements censorship and that its work is directed by the interests of global powers. No imprint has been published on any of these media outlets and it is not possible to find them in the Register of Electronic Publications maintained by AEM and **published on their pages**. These are HOP, an independent news outlet (<https://www.hop.com.hr>), Provjeri.hr (<https://provjeri.hr>), and Croativ online (<https://croativ.net>). Of the above, Croativ online

has the largest number of followers on Facebook, with more than 52 thousand of them, while Provjeri.hr has around 17 thousand followers.

Other media actors

As a separate case in relation to the previously mentioned media and self-declared media, we can highlight news media outlet [Logično.com](#). Logično.com is owned by the company Trieko d.o.o from Brčko District in Bosnia and Herzegovina and **states** that it is made for the audience in the countries of the former Yugoslavia. The content published on Logično.com shows that they are primarily focused on readers from Croatia. Outlet doesn't have a publicly available imprint. Faktograf.hr has established on several occasions that the outlet publishes disinformation and spreads conspiracy theories. Analysis of its content indicates that before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, a significant number of articles on Logično.com promoted the interests of the Russian state in a certain way, while after the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Logično.com becomes one of the central places of gathering dogmatic opponents of vaccination (so-called anti-vaxxers).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, outlet published almost 100 articles in which it mentions Faktograf.hr following narratives about alleged censorship and cover-up of the "truth" and Faktograf's networking with the so-called global powers that supposedly generously finance it, and Faktograf, in turn, implements their ideas. Some examples of such a narrative are:

Are you really journalists (are you journalists at all?) of Faktograf? It is incomprehensible and rude to mislead readers. To dispute something, you have to have the arguments, but not those from "your sources", since they are, just like you, babbling in the service of globalist political game shows and the new world order. Where the money runs the game, there are neither facts nor truth, even though the meanings are the same. You have been given homework and are well paid for it. You know, you have to have the stomach to prostitute yourself for the elite and against the state and the people ¹⁹.

***Faktograf.hr** is a classic censorship whose basic organisation is financed by multi-billionaires who seek to implement their private interests, and which enables them to more easily mislead the public and achieve a certain global construct. Unfortunately, media manipulation with articles has no limits, but it has a purpose ²⁰.*

In the articles, it calls Faktograf a "**criminal organisation**", "**criminal scumbag association**", and "**traitors and servants of the dictatorial regime**", and in some articles, it also uses the term **Fuctograf**.

Logično.com has more than 70 thousand followers on Facebook.

¹⁹The full text is available [here](#).

²⁰The full text is available [here](#).

LOGIČNO VIJESTI POLITIKA POSAO I NOVAC HRANA I ZDRAVLJE ŽIVOTNI STIL

Faktograf, izdajnici i sluge diktatorskog režima



Silva Čikos
11 poste
10.11.20

Locirati, identificirati, uhititi, transferirati, koga? Pa njih, Faktograf!

POVEZANE VIJESTI

- Ekskluzivno – Prema Faktografu, portal Logično više nije "rubni portal", a evo i zašto...
prije 2 mjeseca 194
- Američki FBI se popišao po Indexu i Faktografu
prije 3 mjeseca 105
- Prof. Pavelić dobio nepravomoćnu presudu protiv 24sata: Moraju mu platiti 30.000 kuna
prije 6 mjeseci 48
- Panika u redakciji Faktografa – U Hrvatsku stigle majmunske boginje
prije 11 mjeseci 92
- Upit Faktografu: "Ima li kod vas majmunskih boginja?"
prije 1 godina 116
- EU zahtjeva od Hrvatske izgradnju vlastite mreže "facthekera"!
prije 1 godina 104
- Manipulatori iz Faktografa postaju očajni – pogledajte kakvim metodama se služe
prije 1 godina 154
- Nekakava Ana Tuškan žali što zdravstvene potvrde nisu uvedene kafićima, umjesto da se bori protiv njih.
prije 2 godine 44
- Kolakušić priprema kaznenu prijavu protiv Faktografa, Gongga i Facebooka – Cenzori uplašeni i u šoku.
prije 2 godine 206
- Ako nije cenzura onda je Fact Checking – Fuck off Faktograf, Soroseve krtice
prije 2 godine 81
- CENZURA PREKO ORWELLOVSKIH "KONTROLORA ISTINE" – Od Faktografa.hr, Raskrinkavanje.ba do

Social networks

Attacks on Faktograf are most often carried out through personal Facebook profiles. For Nenad Bakić and Gordan Lauc, it is, as a rule, the primary form of communication with the public, and their publications serve the aforementioned media to create media content. As already stated, Marin Miletić also uses his Facebook page intensively, while Mislav Kolakušić's statements are published on the [Citizens for Mislav Kolakušić Facebook page](#), which has more than 190,000 followers. The media previously mentioned also use Facebook, but significant use of the Telegram application is also noticeable. For example, the Epoha portal continuously invites its readers to follow their Telegram channel because, as they say:

Follow the Epoha portal on Telegram and take a break from the single-mindedness served up by the controlled mainstream media. Epoha does not recognise single-mindedness and censorship. Everyone has the right to think for themselves and experience the world in their own way. We have the right to access information about the world we live in. We have a right to the truth. Join us in our fight for a better and fairer world!



Epoha

portal za kulturu komuniciranja

Zapratite portal Epoha na Telegramu i predahnite od jednoumlja koje vam serviraju kontrolirani mainstream mediji. Zapratite portal Epoha na Telegramu i predahnite od jednoumlja koje vam serviraju kontrolirani mainstream mediji. Epoha ne priznaje jednoumlje i cenzuru. Svatko ima pravo misliti svojom glavom i doživjeti svijet na svoj način. Imamo pravo na dostupnost informacija o svijetu u kojem živimo. Imamo pravo na istinu. Pridružite nam se u našoj borbi za bolji i pravedniji svijet!

<https://t.me/epohaportal>

t.me/epohaportal/3398 153.8K 👁 edited Nov 11, 2022 at 22:18

There are also some similar publications by Marin Miletić, who **states in one of them** :

Guys, install Telegram for FREE! And come to my channel. Only there is no censorship and I can tell you the truth!



<https://t.me/+UFPhane2uqtINDk0>

Miletic Marin
February 5 · 🌐

[Follow](#) ⋮

[Overview](#) [Comments](#)

pogrešno, nego nešto što oni mogu prikazati pogrešnim. Fejkeri jedni. Fejk news teški.

Dakle, nije predugo. Pogledajte molim vas ovaj moj govor u Hrvatskom saboru. A onda pročitate tekst žutila <https://www.24sata.hr/.../drele-i-miletic-man-in-black...>

I dobro zapamtite da sve što pročitate kod takvih fejk novina i portala je gotovo sigurno - obmana. Površni ljudi koji za par stotina eura lažu, kleveču i iskrivljuju istinu. Nažalost, veliki postotak je baš takvih.

Ljudi, instalirajte si Telegram BESPLATNU aplikaciju! I dođite mi na moj kanal. Tu jedino sada nema nikakve cenzure i mogu vam normalno prenositi istinu!

<https://t.me/+UFPhane2uqtINDk0>
See less

FEJK NEWS NOVINARI ne kuže: istina će pobijediti, vi ne možete zato dobiti ovu bitku ma što god činili 🍌 Molim vas, pogledajte ovaj moj...

Mislav Kolakušić and Marin Miletić are also active on YouTube, and among the other channels on YouTube, we can highlight **the Podcast Incubator**, which has more than 250 thousand subscribers and has on several occasions dealt with Faktograf through conversations with its guests, already imputing common narratives about censorship carried out by Faktograf on social networks, namely Facebook. For example, the two published videos have the titles: **Robert Valdec exposes Faktograf** and **Marija Selak Raspudić - "This is the real truth about political party Možemo and Faktograf"**. In the first video, the host of the show declares that Faktograf "lies like a dog" and that they are "experts for the truth", while in the second video, he imputes Faktograf's ideological and political bias. In the show **Podcast Incubator #865 - Ratko and Mirjana Hrga**, the host explains to his guest that Faktograf is "a censorship media that blocks if something is not in line with their truth, then limits the reach or blocks the account."

Robert Valdec raskrinkava Faktograf
8.8K views · 2 years ago

Podcast Inkubator ✓

Postanite naš patron i podržite Podcast Inkubator! PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/podcastinkubator> PODCASTERI: Marko ...

Marija Selak Raspudić - "Ovo je prava istina o Možemo i Faktografu"
6.5K views · 1 year ago

Podcast Inkubator ✓

Postanite naš patron i podržite Podcast Inkubator! PATREON: <https://www.patreon.com/podcastinkubator> PODCASTERI: Marko ...

Disinformation narratives and elements of the attacks

As it shown in this case study, the attacks on Faktograf take place through several basic narratives that aim to undermine the trust of readers in the articles published by Faktograf, and to undermine the distinction between accurate information and disinformation:

- Faktograf implements censorship and restricts freedom of speech, thereby causing immeasurable damage to society and democracy, and should be prosecuted for this. An integral part of this is disinformation about the nature of Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program and Faktograf's work within it.
- Faktograf is financed by global powers (Gates, Soros, and the like) and acts in their interest and ensures the expansion of their power. Additionally, it is imputed that Faktograf is a "corona profiteer", i.e. that it has made money thanks to the pandemic.
- Faktograf is ideologically and politically biased and represents extreme left-wing political ideas.
- Faktograf checks the accuracy of the information in a targeted manner only in cases where it does not fit into the specific agenda it is implementing and ignores all allegedly incorrect information from scientists, experts, political parties, and the media close to it.
- Faktograf is not an expert in checking the factual accuracy of information in public space.

What is very important to emphasise is the fact that Faktograf operates completely transparently and complies with the codes of standards for fact-checking of the *International Fact-Checking Network* (IFCN), an international network of organisations dedicated to fact-checking, as well as *the European Fact-Checking Standards Network* (EFCSN), the newly founded European network of fact-checking organisations. All information about the work of Faktograf within Meta's Third-Party Fact-Checking Program is publicly available, as well as all financial statements together with the list of donors. Faktograf.hr has its own Code of Ethics and an elaborate work methodology that strictly prohibits any political or other bias, and it must regularly prove all this to maintain the status of a verified signatory of the IFCN Code of Principles, which it has had since 2017. So, regardless of all the facts and publicly available information, as well as dismissed criminal charges, certain social and political actors continued to spread disinformation, and it is obvious that they do so with an intent to harm Faktograf.

Derogatory names such as "Ministry of Truth" in reference to George Orwell's novel "1984" or its paraphrase "Ministry of Deception" are used in the attack on Faktograf, or it is simply called a censor.

Threats of criminal charges that could end in prison sentences (even after the State Attorney's Office has established that there is no basis for this) and more or less open calls for harassment, and even violence, are the methods of intimidation.

HRVATSKA

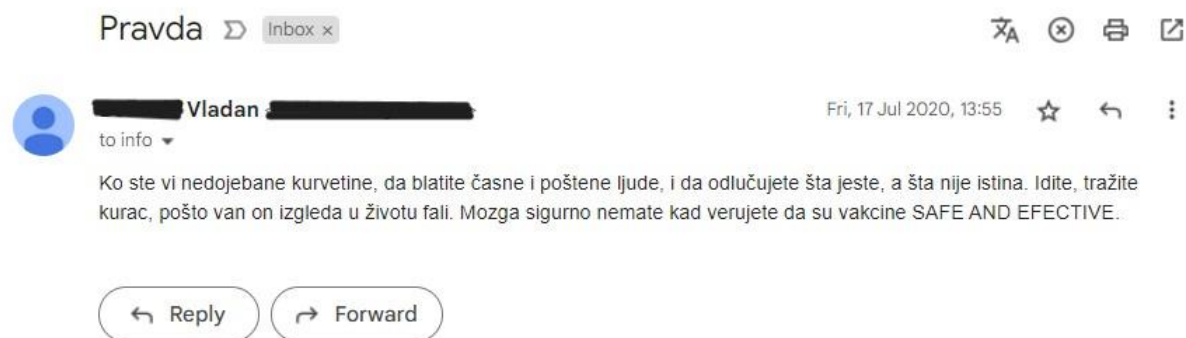
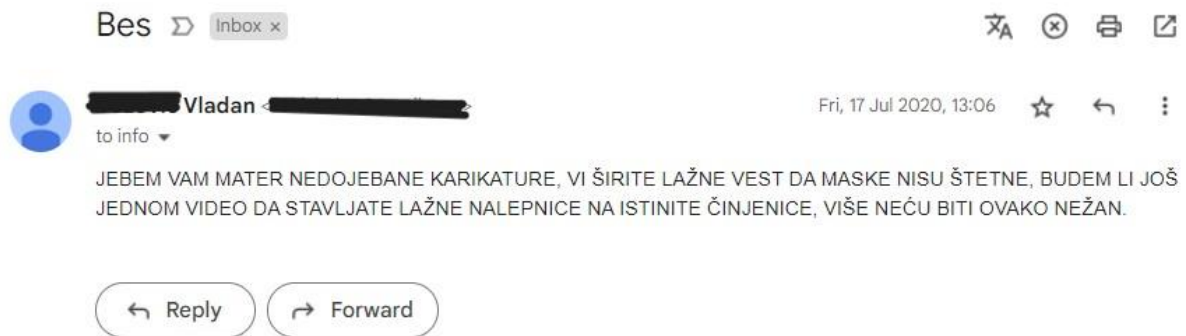
KOLAKUŠIĆ POKAZAO PUT! Sprema se masovna tužba protiv cenzora Faktografa, prijeti im zatvor

By PARAF 01/11/2021

A very frequent target of media articles and announcements on social networks is Faktograf's editor-in-chief Petar Vidov, and periodically, the deputy editor-in-chief Sanja Despot. In some cases, Faktograf's journalists are also targets of attacks, but less often, at least when we look at the actors described in this case study. The creation of the aforementioned narratives turns into fuel for insults, hate speech, and threats by citizens, which are then often spilled onto the private profiles of journalists. All fact-checks published on Faktograf.hr are signed with the specific name and surname of the journalist, and it is relatively easy for citizens to directly address journalists or share their publicly available information and photos along with insults and hate speech. Since mostly female journalists work at Faktograf, numerous insults and attacks also have a gender dimension.

In her article [Female journalists in the public space](#), Faktograf's managing editor Ivana Živković described this situation and the fact that journalists are attacked - because they are women. Ivana Živković provides some examples, chosen among hundreds of insults and threats addressed to Faktograf's female journalists during 2020.

FUCK YOU FUCKING CARICATURES, YOU ARE SPREADING FAKE NEWS THAT MASKS ARE NOT HARMFUL IF I SEE YOU PUT FAKE LABELS ON TRUE FACTS AGAIN, I WILL NOT BE THIS GENTLE ANYMORE, one reader wrote in an email entitled "Rage", which was followed by three more, titled "Anger" - in which he told the journalist of Faktograf, *you poor, poor thing, you can smoke Robert Young's dick*, then "Anger" - in which he told two journalists of Faktograf, *two rascals and moral freaks and vaccinator shit, you can kiss the ass of Jadranka Vrhovec*, and finally, in an email entitled "Justice", he said, *"Who are you unfucked whores, that you smear honourable and honest people, and that you decide what is and what is not true?" Go, look for a dick, because you seem to be lacking it in life. You certainly don't have a brain when you believe that vaccines are SAFE AND EFFECTIVE.*



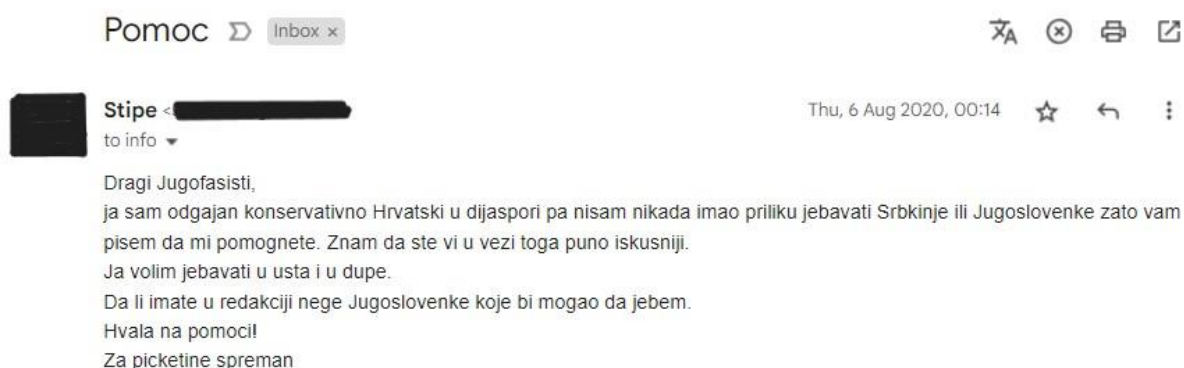
After the article ["Antivaxer fraudster Jadranka Vrhovec promotes fake medicines on Facebook and earns millions"](#) was published on Faktograf, in which Faktograf exposed false claims that her products are the solution to numerous health problems, including those caused by the coronavirus, Vrhovec posted on her Facebook profile (archived [here](#)) and filed a lawsuit for damages ²¹.

Vrhovec writes that *they have no one to fight for since they are members of the gay population and if I'm not mistaken, they have no children, and the woman cannot make a child for another woman. They don't care about other people's children, they think that there is no need to warn about the dangers of vaccines, and they use the shabby term 'anti-vaxxer' for me.* She also added that she wishes them, from the bottom of her heart, *to change their sexual orientation so that they will still have their children and that they feel all the charms of the cocktail of vaccines that they promote.*

At the beginning of August, a reader named Stipe wrote: *Dear Yugoslavian Fascists, I was raised in the diaspora as a conservative Croat, so I never had the opportunity to fuck Serbian or Yugoslav women, that's why I'm writing to you to help me. I know you are much more experienced in this regard. I like to fuck in the mouth and the ass. Do you have any*

²¹At the time of writing this case study, the court proceedings are still ongoing.

Yugoslavian women in the newsroom that I could fuck? Thanks for your help! Ready for pussies, he said and attached a link to Pornhub.



After the text **"Negative ions in the so-called The Bosnian pyramids are not being destroyed by the coronavirus"**, a reader named Jasmin addressed Faktograf with the following words: *Tell your journalist to fuck off from our pyramids so that we wouldn't go to demolish the lady in Medjugorje, so that we don't fuck her, mother fuckers.*

There were also attempts of group harassment, which were aimed at Faktograf's deputy editor: *We are sending messages to this lady at 7 p.m.! She is one of those who deletes our posts and deletes entire profiles. Today, at 7 p.m., anyone who wants can send her messages, it was published in the group 'STOP MIGRANTS!', along with a photo of Faktograf's deputy editor and additional photos from her Facebook profile.*

Conclusion

This case study about Faktograf.hr clearly shows the ways in which fact-checking organisations and media are exposed to attacks by political and other actors. Techniques, tactics and channels of the attacks, as well as disinformation campaigns experienced by Faktograf through the COVID-19 pandemic, are a reality for numerous organisations across Europe, as shown by the research "Harassment of Fact-checking Media Outlets in Europe", which Faktograf conducted in collaboration with Tijana Cvijetićanin.

The fact-checking community is aware of this situation. In 2021, announcing that it was forming a task force to address harassment of fact-checking organisations, IFCN reported that during 2020 "more than 30 organisations reported some form of harassment and/or threats from political actors or institutions, from publishers and/or from users on platforms whose posts are rated as incorrect, and within the framework of cooperation with platforms, especially Facebook." A year later, the newly established European Network (EFCSN) included in its Code of Standards as a specific provision the recommendation that fact-checking organisations "put in place measures aimed at reducing the risk of trauma or harassment experienced by staff as a result of fact-checking newsroom activities, including, but not limited to providing training to prevent and identify symptoms."

Fact-checking organisations and their journalists are often on the front line of the fight against disinformation, and the disinformation they expose is often accompanied by hate speech and anti-democratic and extreme ideologies. As stated in the conclusion of the aforementioned research, relevant stakeholders do not sufficiently recognise the exposure of fact-checking organisations to attacks arising from their work. Online platforms have long ignored the problems associated with disinformation, and most of them still do, which has opened up space for various actors to monetise disinformation, use hate speech, and conduct disinformation campaigns. In such an environment, fact-checking organisations, especially when working with very large online platforms, are recognised as almost the only obstacle to monetising disinformation or using it to mobilise support for political causes. This exposes them to particularly severe attacks aimed at discouraging and intimidating them and, in the long term, undermining trust and integrity in verified and accurate information.

We hope that the investigative research work in the scope of the project "Decoding Disinformation Playbook of European Populists" will contribute to raising awareness of the severity of the problem of attacks on journalists in fact-checking organisations, both among decision-makers and among responsible persons in tech-platforms, considering that partnership and cooperation with platforms to suppress disinformation, is one of the key triggers of attacks. Harassment and attacks on fact-checking organisations and journalists should be recognised as a systemic problem, with full awareness that the intent of the attacks is to discredit both individual fact-checking media and overall societal efforts against disinformation. In this sense, the research itself brings a series of recommendations for the actions of various stakeholders in order to approach attacks on fact-checking

organisations and media in a systematic way, and thus further strengthen their work to suppress disinformation as one of the fundamental threats to democracy and human rights.