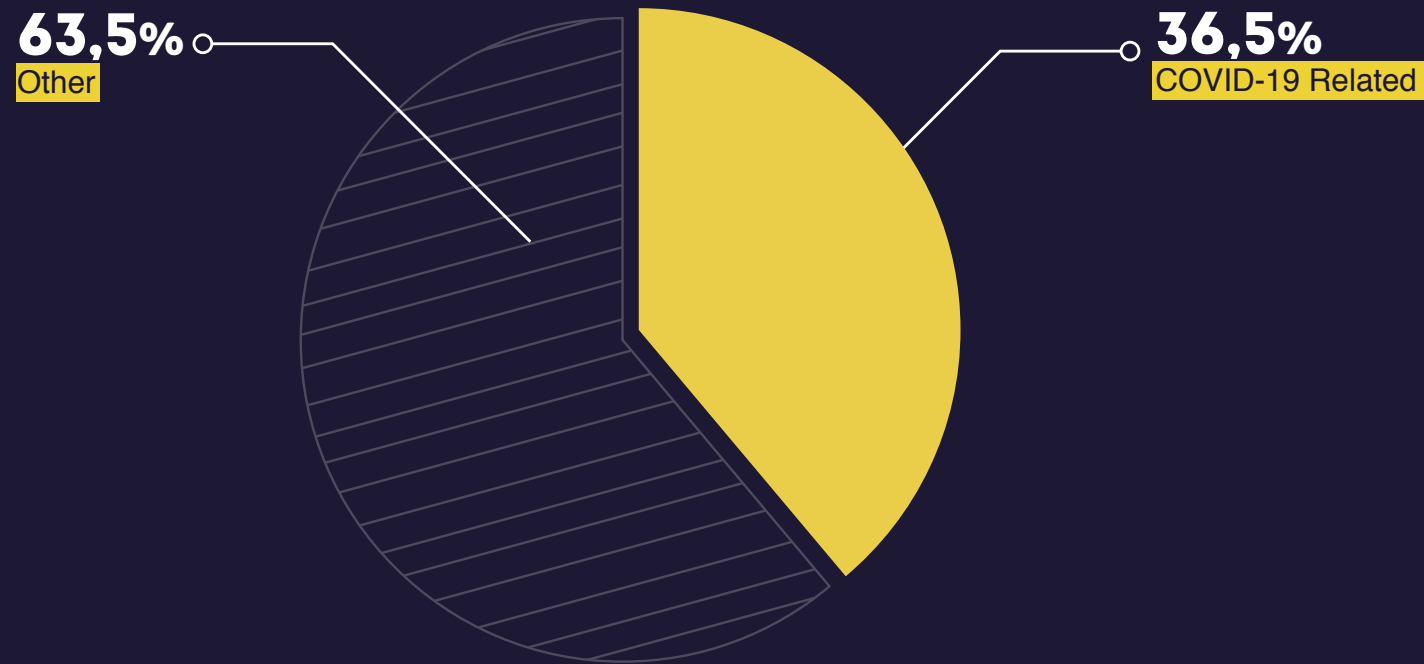# EDMO
European Digital Media Observatory

AFTER FRANCE AND ITALY, AUSTRIA: HOAX CREATORS CHANGE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION, NOT THEIR ARGUMENTS
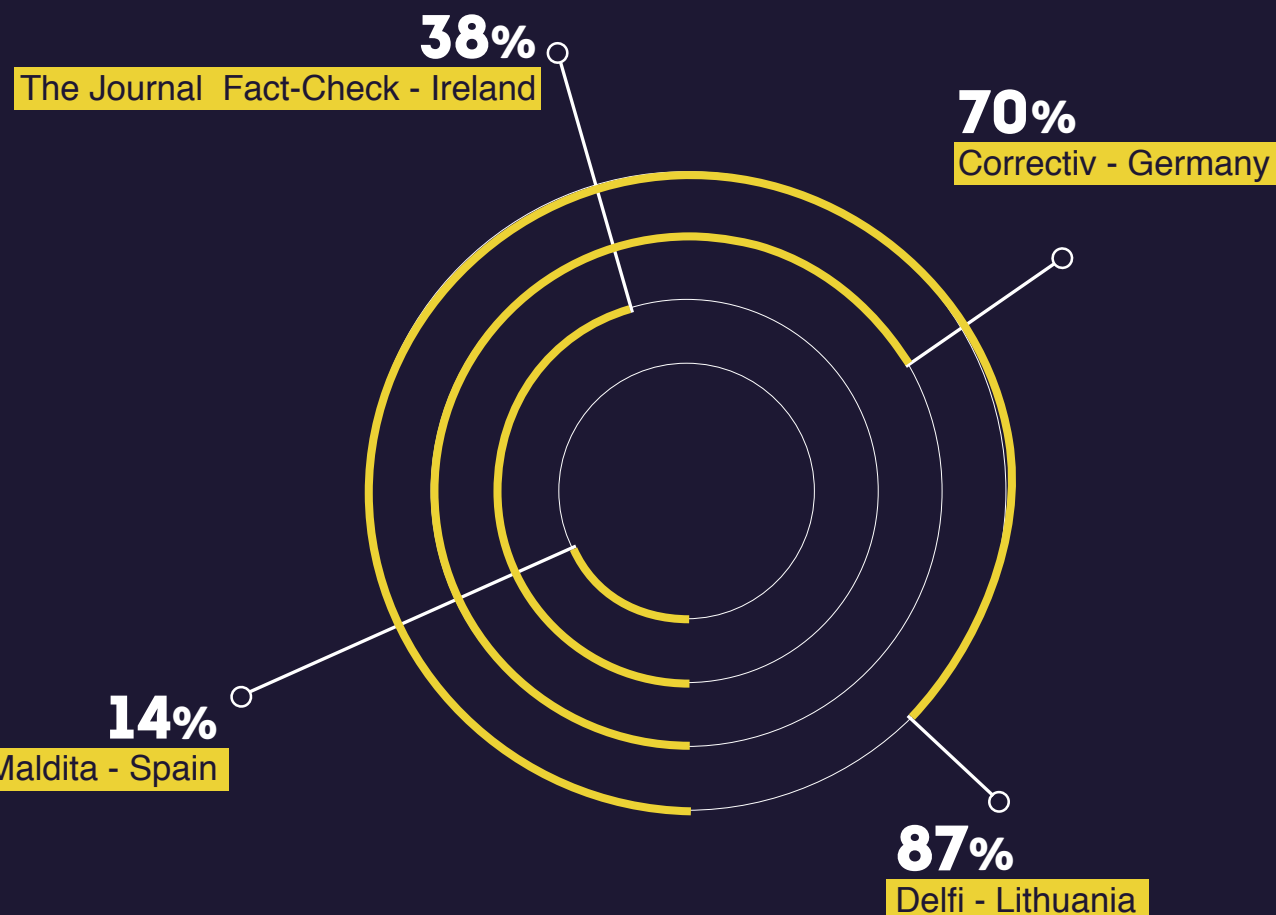
Monthly brief no. 6 – EDMO fact-checking network

63,5%
Other

36,5%
COVID-19 Related

MORE THAN ONE THIRD OF THE ITEMS VERIFIED IN OCTOBER WAS COVID-19 RELATED

The 12 organizations* part of the EDMO fact-checking network that contributed to this brief published a total of 1.173 fact-checking articles in November 2021. Out of these articles, 428 (36,5%) focused on COVID-19 related disinformation.

Significant variations exist among those organizations. For example, out of their total verifications, Maldita (Spain) reported that 14% were related to COVID-19, a number that rises to 38% for The Journal Fact-Check (Ireland), 70% for Correctiv (Germany) and 87% for Delfi (Lithuania).

* Organizations that contributed to this brief: AFP, Correctiv, Delfi, Demagog (PI), Ellinika Hoaxes, France tv, Knack Magazine, Maldita, PagellaPolitica/Facta, Polígrafo, The Journal Fact-Check, VerificaRTVE

38%
The Journal Fact-Check - Ireland

70%
Correctiv - Germany

14%
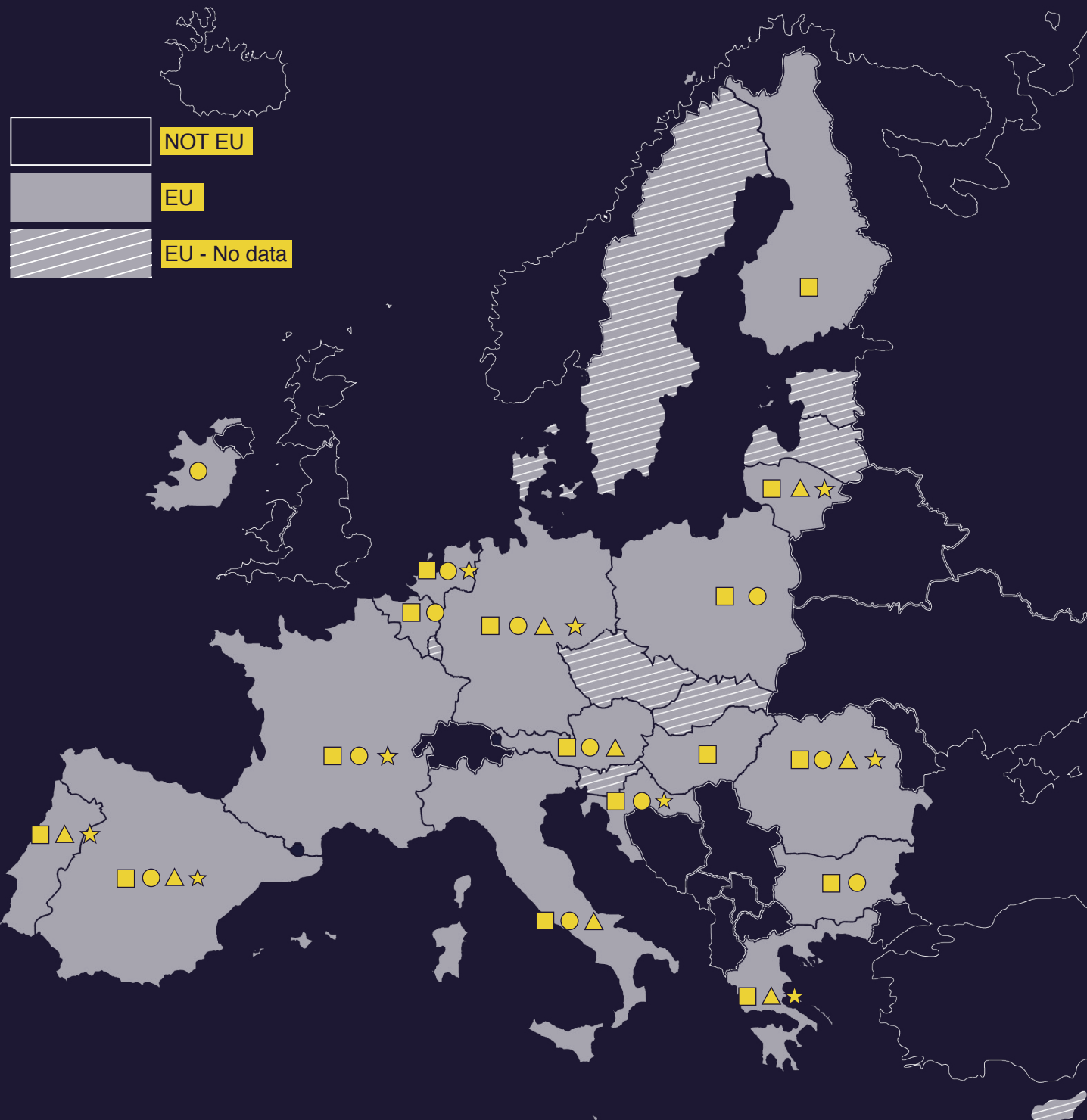Maldita - Spain

87%
Delfi - Lithuania

IN NOVEMBER, AUSTRIA SUPERSEDED ITALY AND FRANCE AS THE NEW EPICENTER OF MANY FALSE NEWS ABOUT THE PANDEMIC

In November, according to the information gathered by the 12 organizations part of EDMO fact-checking network that contributed to this brief, Austria was the origin of much false content about supposedly huge protests against COVID-related measures.

In particular, the most viral false news originated in Austria were:

- A video allegedly showing a protest in Austria against the new lockdown measures for unvaccinated people (the video was actually filmed in 2019 and shows a parade of supporters of a German soccer club)

- A photo allegedly showing a protest in Austria against the new lockdown measures for unvaccinated people (the photo was actually taken in 1991 in Russia and shows a protest against Gorbachev)

- Stories on Facebook claiming that the entire Austrian army and police would join a demonstration against state anti-epidemic restrictions and/or would refuse to control certificates of COVID-19 vaccination (false)

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Legend:
- NOT EU
- EU
- EU - No data

THE FOUR FALSE STORIES WITH THE WIDEST CIRCULATION IN THE EU IN NOVEMBER, BASED ON THE EU FACT-CHECKERS REPORTS, WERE:

■ Old videos and photos of demonstrations/celebrations decontextualized and miscaptioned to portrait huge demonstrations in Austria against the lockdown and other COVID-related measures

● The pandemic was planned, and a document that shows a timeline for the new COVID-19 variants with logos of WHO, Gates Foundation, Johns Hopkins and WEF proves it

▲ Thomas Jendges, CEO of Chemnitz Clinic, committed suicide and left a letter talking about vaccines being a "genocide"

★ The Italian Higher Institute of Health made a downwards adjustment of its estimate of the number of people who died from COVID-19, from over 130,000 to under 4,000

PANDEMIC ASIDE, DISINFORMATION IN NOVEMBER CONCERNED ALSO:

- Migrant crisis at the Polish-Belarus border

- Black Friday offers

- Surge of gas prices

- Climate change

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT VERIFIED DISINFORMATION STORIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL:

POLAND:
22 Polish soldiers killed at the Belarus border

NETHERLANDS:
The police killed anti-lockdown protesters in The Hague

BULGARIA:
Chief Health Inspector Angel Kunchev died after receiving a third dose of the vaccine

FRANCE:
The number of fatal heart ailments on football fields increased fivefolds in 2021 compared to previous years, because of the COVID-19 vaccine

IRELAND:
Letters that give unvaccinated people a legal right to visit friends and relatives in hospitals

METHODOLOGY

The information contained in this brief was collected via a questionnaire sent to the fact-checking organizations that are part of the EDMO fact-checking network (https://edmo.eu/fact-checking-community/).

Reference period: 1-30 November 2021. Number of respondents: 12.
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