

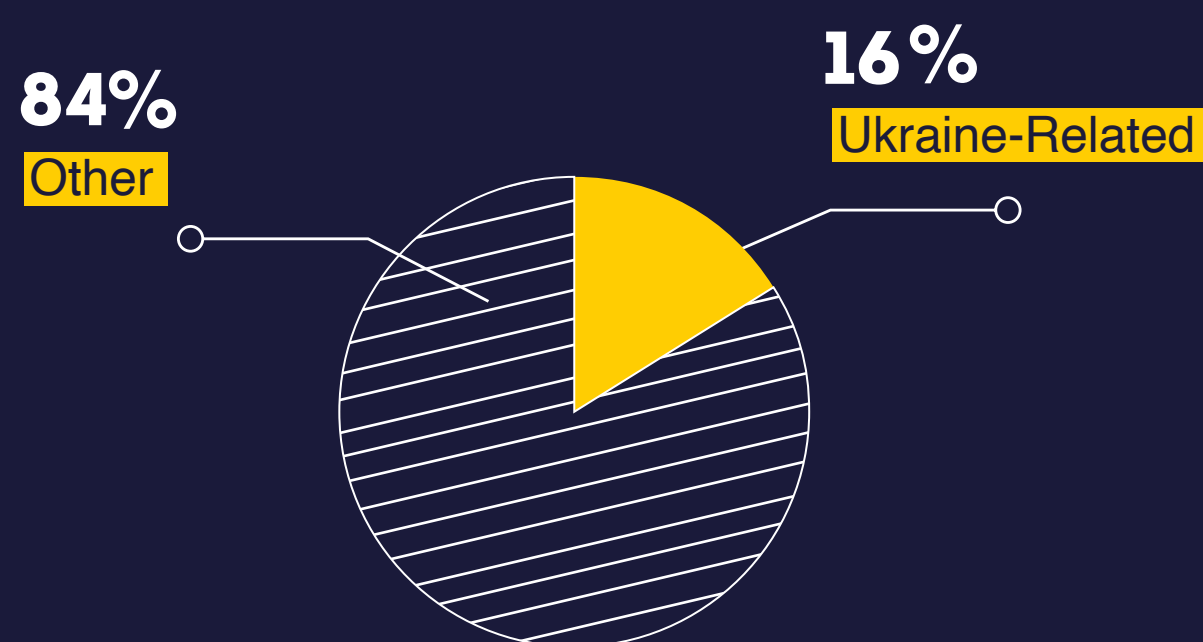


European Digital Media Observatory

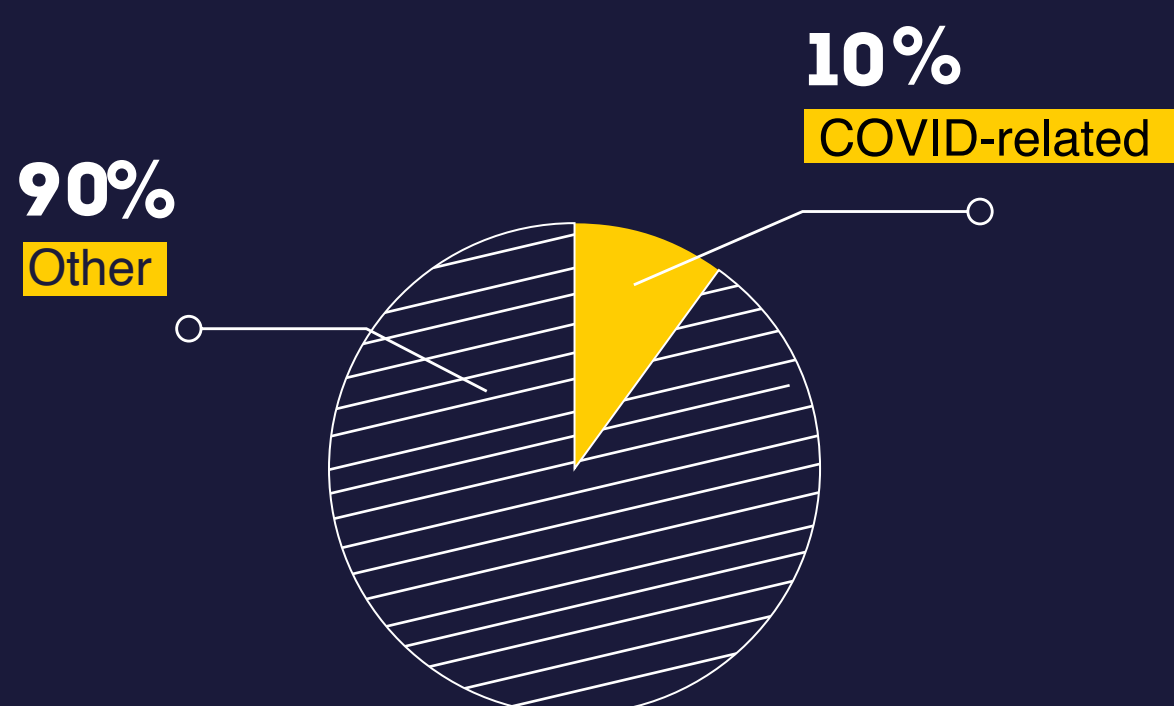
DISINFORMATION ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE AND FARMERS' PROTESTS IN THE NETHERLANDS SPREADS IN JULY ACROSS THE EU

Monthly brief no. 14 – EDMO fact-checking network

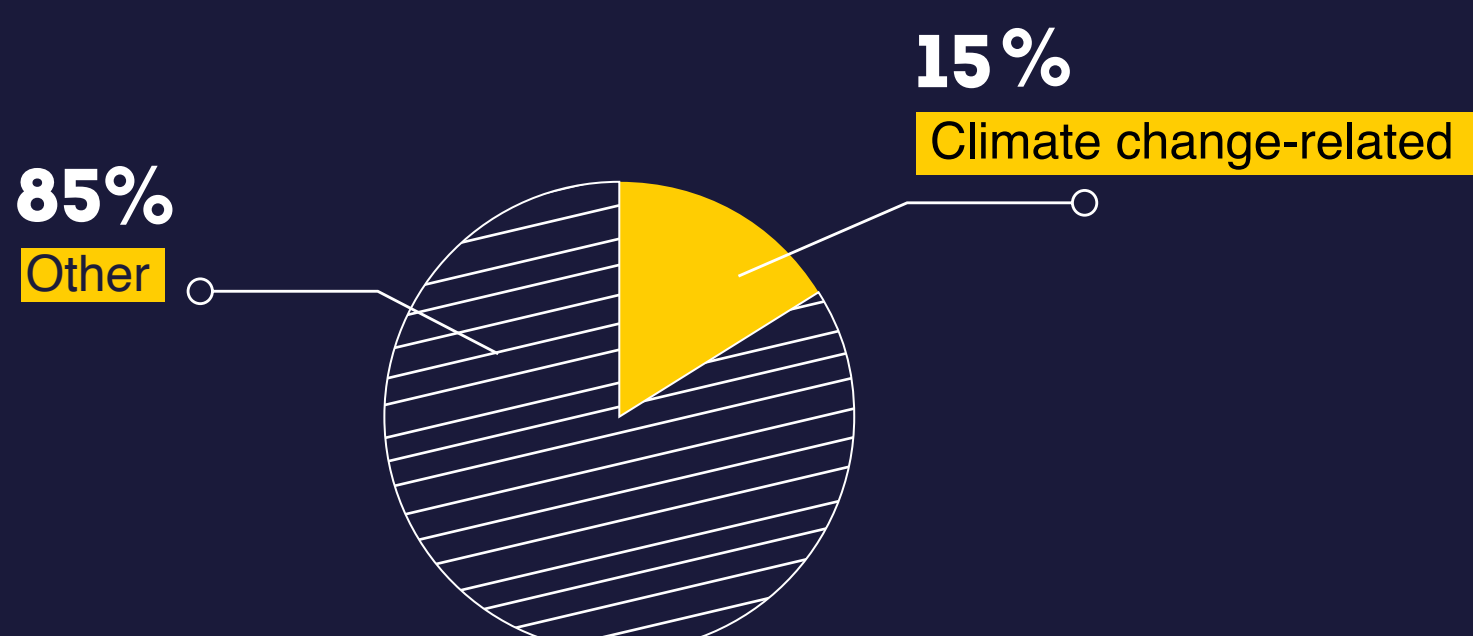
CLIMATE CHANGE, UKRAINE AND COVID-19 ARE STILL THE MAIN TOPICS OF DETECTED DISINFORMATION IN JULY, BUT THE MAJORITY OF DETECTED DISINFORMATION IS MISCELLANEOUS



The 23 organizations* part of the EDMO fact-checking network that contributed to this brief published a total of 1.235 fact-checking articles in July 2022.



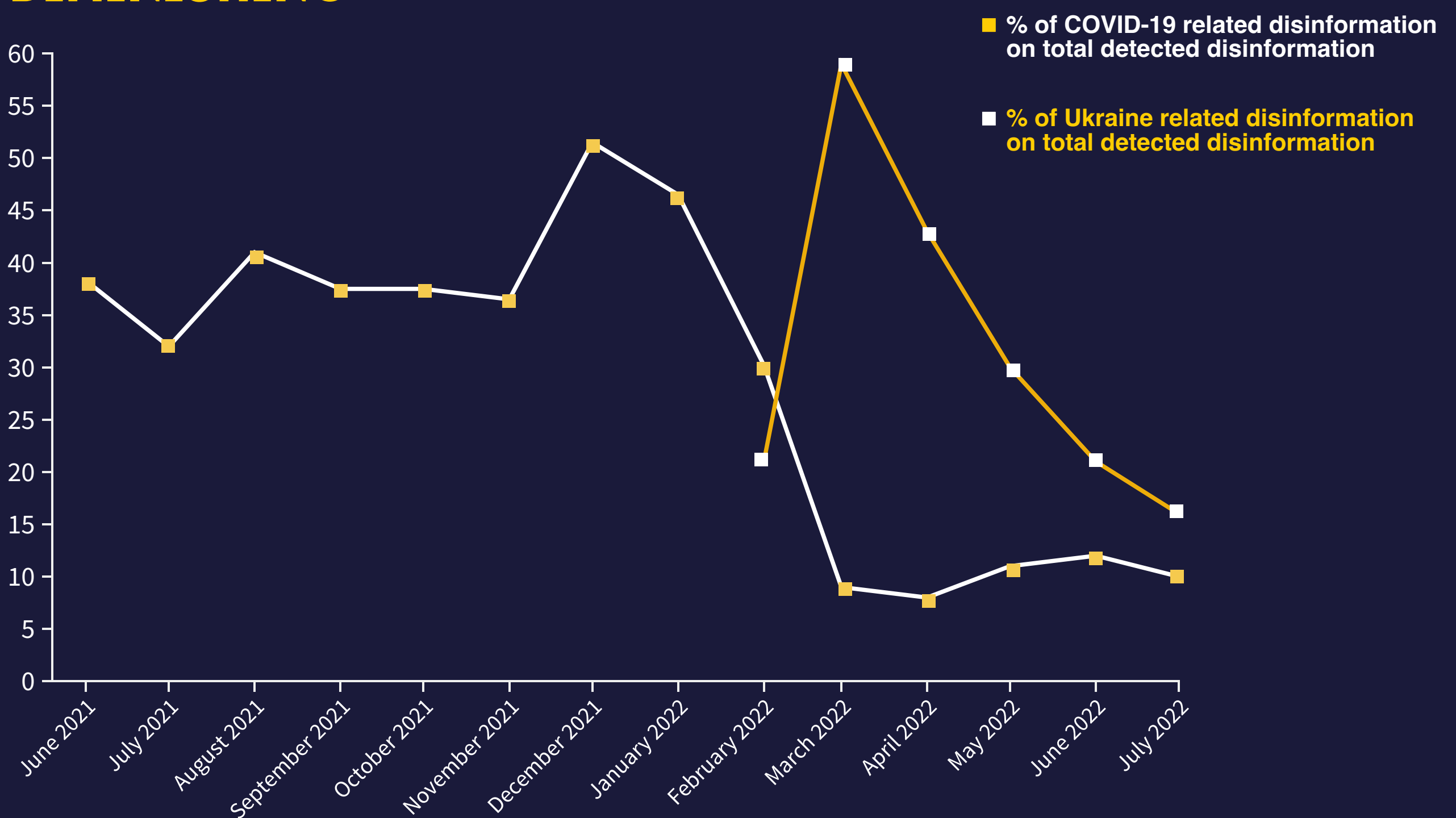
Out of these articles, 198 (16%) focused on Ukraine-related disinformation; 128 (10%) focused on COVID-19-related disinformation; and 188 (15%) focused on climate change-related disinformation.



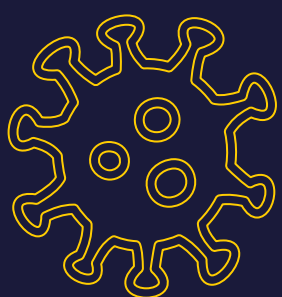
Adding up the three main topics of detected disinformation, they account for less than 50% of the total detected disinformation. The majority of the detected disinformation is about various and different other topics.

* Organizations that contributed to this brief: 15Min, AFP, Correctiv, Delfi, Demagog (PI), EFE Verifica, Ellinika Hoaxes, Eurocomunicare, Faktabaari, Faktisk, Factcheck Vlaanderen, FranceTv, Lakmusz, Les Surligneurs, Maldita, Newtral, PagellaPolitica/Facta, Poligrafo, Pravda, Re:Baltica, The Journal Fact-Check, Verificat, VerificaRTVE

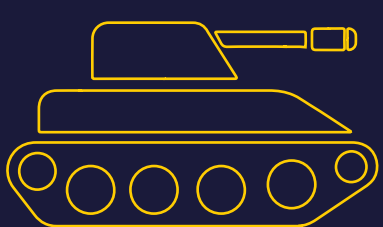
COVID-19 RELATED DISINFORMATION STAYS STABLE, WHILE UKRAINE-RELATED DISINFORMATION KEEPS DIMINISHING



MAIN NARRATIVES DETECTED:



The main narratives conveyed by false news about COVID-19 are similar to those detected in the past: vaccines are dangerous (e.g.), even lethal (e.g.), they can lead to miscarriages or infertility (e.g.), they hurt the children in particular (e.g.), and they can modify the DNA (e.g.).



The main narratives conveyed by false news about the war in Ukraine are also the same as those detected in the previous months: Ukrainians are Nazis (e.g.), Zelensky a corrupt (e.g.), Ukrainian refugees are violent and/or parasites (e.g.; e.g.), Russia is not to blame for the most notorious massacres (e.g.).



The main narratives conveyed by false news about climate change, as highlighted by an EDMO investigation published in July, are: climate change is not real and/or is not related to human activities (e.g.; e.g.); traditional media spread panic through false news and/or manipulated images (e.g.; e.g.); renewables, recycling, and electric vehicles are useless or dangerous (e.g.); climate movements are hypocritical and/or foolish (e.g.).

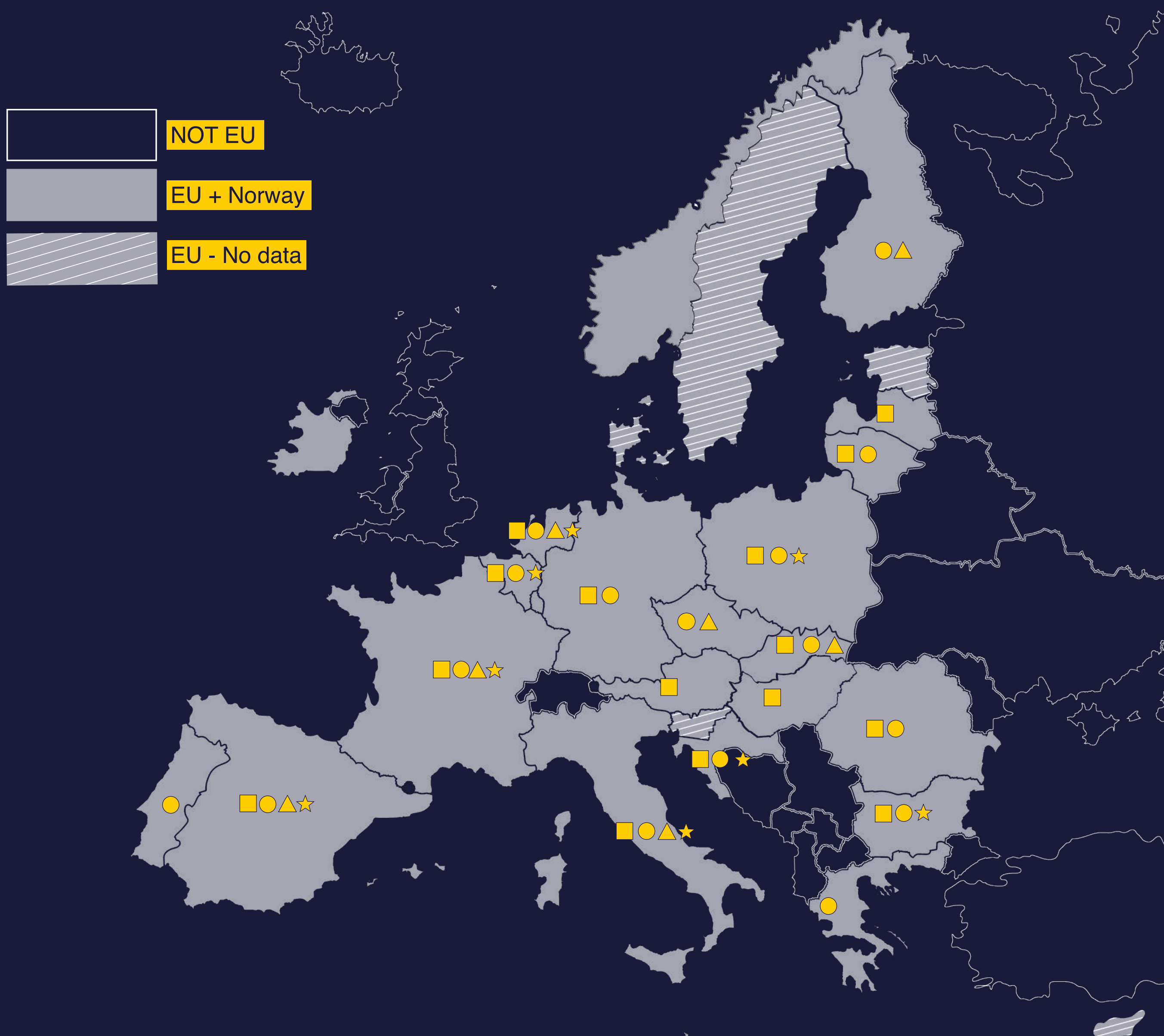
FARMERS' PROTESTS IN THE NETHERLANDS BECAME A VIRAL TOPIC OF DISINFORMATION IN MANY EU COUNTRIES, BUT WHY?

- These protests are related to the Netherlands government's plans to reduce harmful emissions. Climate change deniers and skeptics look positively at the protests and exploit them to foster their agenda ([e.g.](#)).
- The false news convey the narrative that 'the people' are revolting against a 'globalist agenda' that uses climate change as a pretext to oppress the population ([e.g.](#); [e.g.](#); [e.g.](#)).
- The clash between 'people' and 'globalist elites' ([e.g.](#)), together with the accusation against traditional media to hide the news ([e.g.](#)), and with the use of old and unrelated images and videos to portray a bigger and more popular movement ([e.g.](#)), make this disinformation phenomenon quite similar to the one analyzed in an [EDMO investigation](#) in November 2021 about COVID-19 related protests. Several aspects are in fact typical of many other conspiracy theories.



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

- Weather maps are being manipulated to exaggerate climate change ([e.g.](#); [e.g.](#); [e.g.](#)).
- Out-of-context videos and pictures associated with the protests of anti-government farmers in the Netherlands ([e.g.](#)).
- ▲ The missile attack on the Amstor shopping center in Kremenchuk was a Ukrainian set-up to falsely accuse Russia, or a mere fire in an empty facility ([e.g.](#)).
- ★ Out-of-context pictures of the festival field in Glastonbury after Greta Thunberg's performance ([e.g.](#)).



THE MOST SIGNIFICANT VERIFIED DISINFORMATION STORIES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL:



Several videos promoting ‘at-home’ abortions using unregulated methods (Vitamin C, mugwort, papaya seeds, ibuprofen etc.) have been circulating on TikTok since May, coinciding with the US Supreme Court’s decision to overturn Roe v Wade.



To support the narrative that inflation is entirely caused by the war, the Orbán cabinet introduced a new term called ‘war inflation’. But inflation is deepened by the war, not exclusively created by it.



Qatar will impose prison sentences of between ‘seven and eleven years’ for anyone displaying the LGBTQ+ rainbow flag during the 2022 World Cup.

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

Reference period: 1-31 July 2022. Number of respondents: 23.
Main editor of this brief: Tommaso Canetta, Pagella Politica/Facta.
For further information: t.canetta@pagellapolitica.it.



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