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Building Resilience Against Disinformation: Czech Perspective and Experience¹

Introduction

The concept of a resilient society resonates significantly in the strategic documents of the EU and NATO. Both organizations have identified resilience as a primary policy objective, especially in the last decade. Both organizations emphasize societal resilience primarily because they must respond to the changing security environment and the increasing importance of military and non-military threats.

Even if both institutions recognized these threats before 2014, discussions and specific measures significantly intensified over the past decade, with Russia's annexation of Crimea serving as the primary catalyst for concrete actions. Both organizations had to address emerging security challenges, including disinformation campaigns, cyber-attacks, terrorism, the Middle East crisis, poverty, and global financial instability. In this context, NATO has focused on enhancing defense capabilities, civil preparedness, and resilience in seven key areas essential for collective defense. Meanwhile, the EU has

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adopted a strategy to counter hybrid threats by building societal resilience, reinforcing cybersecurity, and improving strategic communication².

In its document “NATO 2030: United for a New Era”, NATO emphasizes increasing society’s resilience. It sees the spread of disinformation as a danger, especially in connection with new technologies. In this context, it emphasizes monitoring disinformation narratives and taking measures to eliminate them³. The latest NATO Strategic Concept from 2022 also mentions the need to build resilience against military and non-military threats⁴.

The European Union has been intensifying concrete steps in this regard in recent years. In 2022, it adopted a Strategic Compass for security and defense. Subsequently, especially after Russia invaded Ukraine, it began to create tools that individual countries can use to address foreign information manipulation and interference, specifically the Hybrid Toolbox and a FIMI Toolbox⁵.

This contribution presents the current situation in the Czech Republic regarding building a resilient society, confronting hybrid threats, and eliminating disinformation in society. Czechs have long perceived disinformation as a significant security risk⁶. This issue has come to the forefront, especially after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In this context, most Czech citizens declare that the government is not fighting disinformation sufficiently⁷. On the other hand, it is challenging to adopt various measures and institutionalize them. Czech society is called a society of distrust; in international comparison, Czechs distrust state institutions, which significantly limits the creation of

² A. Jacuch (2020). *Countering Hybrid Threats: Resilience in the EU and NATO’s Strategies*. „The Copernicus Journal of Political Studies”, 1 (2020), 5–26.

³ NATO 2030: *United for a New Era* (2020). https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2020/12/pdf/201201-reflection-group-final-report-uni.pdf? [accessed: 15 February 2025].

⁴ NATO 2022. *Strategic Concept*. <https://www.nato.int/strategic-concept/index.html> [accessed: 15 February 2025].

⁵ J. Daniel, E. Jakobsen, P. Rieker (2023, June 1). *Czech and Norwegian Perspectives on Resilience in a Post-invasion-of Ukraine Context*. IRR. <https://www.iir.cz/czech-and-norwegian-perspectives-on-resilience-in-a-post-invasion-of-ukraine-context> [accessed: 1 June 2025].

⁶ O. Filipec (2019). *Towards a Disinformation Resilient Society? The Experience of the Czech Republic*. „Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: an Interdisciplinary Journal”. Vol. 11, No. 1 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v11i1.6065>.

⁷ PRŮZKUM: Vláda podle většiny Čechů nedostatečně bojuje s dezinformacemi a konspiračními teoriemi (2025a). iRozhlas. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/oecd-duvera-stat-verejna-sprava-politika-vlada_2407220627_ank? [accessed: 22 March 2025].

any system⁸. Both factors significantly impact building resilience in society, especially in terms of the fight against disinformation.

Building resilience against disinformation is a complex and extensive issue. The article does not aim to provide an exhaustive analysis but rather to describe the Czech Republic's current situation. At the same time, it also points out the pitfalls it faces in eliminating disinformation narratives and building a resilient society. The aim is mainly to present the current situation in the Czech Republic regarding strategic documents, organizational and institutional arrangements, and then analyze the government's steps in this area. The study deals with the assessment of the situation in the Czech Republic and proposals for the direction the Czech Republic should take in the area of building resilience to disinformation. It is primarily based on secondary sources such as strategic documents and policies of the Czech government and the EU, and relies on expert studies by Czech and foreign authors.

Conceptual and institutional foundations for eliminating disinformation in the Czech Republic

Building social resilience against disinformation – through a system of government and strategic communication – began in the Czech Republic at the beginning of the millennium. However, the entire process has intensified in recent years⁹. The Czech Republic adopted several conceptual and strategic documents that elaborate on countering hybrid threats and building a resilient society. In 2021, the Czech Republic adopted a National Strategy for Countering Hybrid Interference. The approach was based on the conceptual documents of NATO and the EU and the National Security Audit from 2016. A resilient society was one of the key objectives. “Resilience is understood as the ability of a state and society to cope with a sustained and intensive hybrid interference without a significant negative impact, and to redress immediately and restore a full functionality in case damage occurs”. It subsequently adopted the Action Plan for the National Strategy for Countering Hybrid Interference. One of the Action Plan's key tasks was to elaborate a draft of

⁸ J. Cibulka, P. Tabery (2023, June 19). *Podcast Vinohradská 12. Dezinformace, společnost nedůvěry*. iRozhlas. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/podcast-vinohradska-12dezinformace-spolecnost-neduvery-jan-cibulka-paulina_2306190600_cen [accessed: 15 March 2025].

⁹ D. Hejlová (2022). *Transitioning from Communist Propaganda to Government Communication in the Czech Republic*. In: *Communication Theory and Application in Post-Socialist Contexts*. Lexington Books. Lanham, Maryland.

the state's strategic communication system, including a mechanism for the systematic coordination of relevant actors¹⁰.

Parliamentary elections took place in the Czech Republic in October 2021, after which the newly formed government began implementing various measures. In March 2022, the government appointed a commissioner for media and disinformation to lead efforts against disinformation. The commissioner coordinated the fight against disinformation, liaised with relevant ministers and senior state officials, and supported strategic communication within the Government Office. Additionally, his role included preparing state media content and advising on selecting media channels for government communication¹¹.

Nevertheless, less than a year later, the government representative position was abolished, and the agenda was transferred to the national security adviser. The abolition of this position was primarily based on negative feedback from the media, journalists, and professional unions. There was concern that the newly prepared legislation would regulate the media market and significantly limit freedom of speech. Everything culminated in an open letter from publishers to Prime Minister Fiala, in which they criticized the prepared legislation¹². After a year, the Czech government decided to renew this position and appointed a new coordinator of strategic communication in May 2024¹³. The government was aware of the criticism directed at the previous coordinator, and to avoid this, the position was called "Government Coordinator of Strategic Communication". However, the new coordinator's work has drawn criticism. On the one hand, critics object to his being a soldier and criticize some of his statements. Above all, he is criticized for his approach to public communication, and his actions are perceived as an effort to "re-educate" society. Critics also point out that Foltýn's approach may be counterproductive and lead to further polarization of society¹⁴.

¹⁰ *České strategické dokumenty* (2024). Ministerstvo obrany ČR. <https://mocr.army.cz/dokumenty-a-legislativa/ceske-dokumenty-46088/> [accessed: 15 February 2025].

¹¹ *Novým vládním zmocněncem pro oblast médií a dezinformací se stal Michal Klíma* (2022, March 24). Úřad vlády ČR. <https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/media-centrum/aktualne/novym-vladnim-zmocnencem-pro-oblast-medii-a-dezinformaci-se-stal-michal-klima-195260/> [accessed: 15 February 2025].

¹² *Klíma končí jako vládní zmocněnec pro dezinformace. Část jeho agendy přebere Pojar* (2023, February 15). Echo 24. <https://www.echo24.cz/a/HYd6F/zpravy-domov-klima-konec-zmocnenec-dezinformace-agenda-prebere-pojar> [accessed: 23 March 2025].

¹³ *Tisková konference po jednání vlády, 29. května 2024* (2024, May 29). Úřad vlády ČR. <https://vlada.gov.cz/cz/media-centrum/tiskove-konference/tiskova-konference-po-jednani-vlady--29--kvetna-2024-213723/> [accessed: 15 March 2025].

¹⁴ Z. Petráček (2024, September 13). *Má vláda vychovávat společnost? Otakar Foltýn to myslí dobře, ale dopadá to jako vždycky*. Lidovky.cz. <https://www.lidovky.cz/nazory/>

Another institutions that deal with the impact of disinformation is the specialized department of the Ministry of the Interior and the Centre for Countering Hybrid Threats (CTHH). This center is an analytical workplace that, among other activities, monitors disinformation narratives. In 2020, this workplace published a manual on building resilience to information influences at universities, and in 2022, it published a translation of the British RESIST handbook for combating disinformation. The handbook is intended for the general public and aims to introduce the functioning of disinformation and the principles of navigating the media environment and the Internet.

In addition to state institutions, the non-profit sector is very active in this area. These institutions include, for example, the Association for International Affairs (AMO) and the Prague Security Studies Institute (PSSI). Both organizations publish policy papers, analyze the topic, organize conferences, and have experts express their opinions on various topics. Another group is the Czech Elves. The group was established in 2018, following the example of similar groups in the Baltics. In the Czech Republic, various educational activities are also conducted within the framework of media education, in which “People in Need” is involved. The Czech Republic has become the leading country of the Central European Digital Media Observatory. The Czech Republic has several institutions in this regard, both governmental and non-governmental. However, the main problem is their lack of coordination. In many cases, they work individually, which reduces the effectiveness of the entire system¹⁵.

Tools and measures to eliminate disinformation narratives: their advantages and limitations

The key question remains how to eliminate disinformation in the public space. Eliminating disinformation is a very complex matter; several tools exist to do so. Each of these tools has its advantages, but also its limitations. At the same time, individual tools cannot be used in isolation. There should be a certain synergy between them, reflecting the specific situation.

Individual tools can be divided into several areas. The first area represents restrictive and regulatory measures in the form of laws, directives, and regulations. These are mainly interventions by the state. The second area is long-term activities, which can include, for example, education or

vlada-cenzura-valka-rusko-foltyn-koordinátor-kolaborant-cina.A240913_155129_in_nazory_lgs? [accessed: 15 March 2025].

¹⁵ T. Kolomazník, Z. Rod, S. Sarvaš (2024). *Proč věříme dezinformacím? Strategická komunikace jako možná cesta z bludného kruhu*. Kniha Zlín.

awareness-raising activities. This area is not only the domain of the state but also of non-governmental organizations and educational centers. The last area could be called “active interventions” in the public information space. These are mainly communication activities, including strategic communication or behavioral nudging.

Based on the analysis of individual tools, it can be concluded that each of them has its advantages and limitations. Regulatory measures undoubtedly include the Digital Services Act (DSA) of the European Union. This legal regulation has a relatively wide range of modifications, one of which is the restriction of the spread of hate speech and disinformation on social networks. However, the restriction should be entirely by the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms; in other words, it is not possible to restrict freedom of speech. The 17 online platforms identified by the EU must implement transparent rules and label fake news, propaganda, and hate speech¹⁶. The DSA should be seen in conjunction with the Code of Conduct on Disinformation, which was introduced in 2018 and gradually revised in the following years. This document specifies individual measures, such as demonetization or reduction of financial incentives for providers of disinformation, for example, by limiting advertising revenue. Furthermore, it addresses transparency of political advertising, media literacy, and other measures. Both of these documents are intended to strengthen resilience in EU member states against disinformation narratives¹⁷. However, the key question remains: What can we imagine under disinformation content since the DSA does not define it in any way? Articles 34 and 35 of the DSA only refer to the obligation of online platforms to take measures against systemic risks that could adversely impact fundamental rights and civil discourse¹⁸. The Czech Republic is preparing the Adaptation Act to the DSA Regulation in the Czech legal system. The Ministry of Industry and Trade is responsible for the act. According to the statement, this office’s role is only supervisory and coordinating. The office will not decide what is and is not disinformation¹⁹. However, there are also critical voices in the Czech Republic regarding the implementation of the DSA, especially from experts and NGOs. The criticism is focused on the CTU’s lack of capacities and, in particular, on the low involvement of

¹⁶ *Digital Services Act* (2024, May 16). <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/cs/policies/digital-services-act/> [accessed: 20 March 2025].

¹⁷ *Codes of conduct under the Digital Services Act*. <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/dsa-codes-conduct> [accessed: 19 March 2025].

¹⁸ F. Doupal (2024, February 21). *Jaké novinky, změny a povinnosti přináší Akt o digitálních službách (DSA)?* RMOL.CZ. <https://www.rmol.cz/novinky/jake-novinky-zmeny-povinnosti-prinasi-akt-o-digitalnich-sluzbach-dsa> [accessed: 21 February 2025].

¹⁹ *Český telekomunikační úřad* (2025). <https://ctu.gov.cz/nejcastejsi-dotazy-digitalni-sluzby> [accessed: 15 March 2025].

experts, including civil society and the professional public, in this process. In this context, several experts and NGOs have prepared recommendations for state authorities on how to implement DSA²⁰.

While the DSA represents a significant step towards regulating disinformation narratives, hate speech, and misleading advertising on social platforms, the regulation does not define what is and what is not disinformation. The deletion of posts will therefore be at the discretion of the specific platform, which may provoke negative reactions in connection with the suppression of freedom of speech, etc. Harsh words were spoken at the Munich conference. U.S. Vice President JD Vance criticized EU regulatory measures for restricting freedom of speech. At the same time, he mentioned the annulment of the results of the presidential elections in Romania. JD Vance sees this step as unprecedented²¹.

Regulatory measures are undoubtedly important, and the DSA, in particular, is the right step. However, these measures do not guarantee that disinformation narratives will not find other ways and methods. At the same time, we can expect a number of critical reactions. In this context, it is important to note that it is very difficult at certain moments to clearly define what a disinformation narrative is and what it is not.

Regulatory measures can also include restrictions such as “shutting down websites” and making platforms inaccessible based on decisions by state authorities. These measures can be applied mainly in crises. The Czech Republic took this step, for example, in connection with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022. This step had a specific symbolism: problematic platforms were referred to as platforms with disinformation content. However, this step triggered a wave of criticism and litigation between the state and the platforms. The effect of blocking problematic websites was only short-lived. The platforms switched to other channels and continued their activities²². It is quite evident that this is a marginal solution and can be applied mainly in times of crisis, and there must be legal support for it.

The second group of measures is “long-term and comprehensive activities”. Among those often mentioned is the development of critical thinking. In this context, it is important to note that this is a long-term process involving

²⁰ *Fungování Národního koordinátora digitálních služeb v ČR* (2025). AMO. <https://www.amo.cz/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/DOPORUCENI-DSA-CTU-MPO.pdf> [accessed: 25 March 2025].

²¹ A. Marquardt, C. Edwards, S. Contorno, M. Williams (2025, February 14). *Vance turns on European allies in blistering speech that downplayed threats from Russia and China*. CNN World. <https://edition.cnn.com/2025/02/14/europe/jd-vance-munich-speech-europe-voters-intl/index.html> [accessed: 25 March 2025].

²² „Znepřístupňování” webů (2022, September 1). Advokátní deník. <https://advokat-nidenik.cz/2022/09/01/zneprestupnovani-webu/> [accessed: 20 February 2025].

systematically analyzing information, recognizing its validity, evaluating arguments, and avoiding misleading content. It involves logical reasoning, integrating evidence, and cross-referencing with other sources. In addition, critical thinking requires introspection, where individuals examine their beliefs, acknowledge errors, and demonstrate a willingness to correct them²³.

The development of critical thinking within the population can be achieved through educational initiatives. However, the implementation of educational activities that include information and digital skills requires a significant amount of time, and the results will only be visible after a long time. At the same time, this method is very often criticized; some see it as a tool of ideological indoctrination, particularly when it focuses on detecting disinformation and fake news. They fear that teaching media literacy could be biased and serve to suppress uncomfortable opinions. Supporting and developing critical thinking is important for society, but it does not ensure a decrease in the “consumption” of disinformation. The reason is that disinformation appeals more to emotions than to rationality, and emotions are central to people’s everyday decision-making. For this reason, critical thinking undoubtedly has its justification, but it does not guarantee that an educated person will not believe disinformation²⁴.

In the Czech Republic, there are active non-governmental organizations that engage in educational activities. One of such organizations is People in Need with its “One World in Schools” program. The program offers schools documentary films, methodological materials, and interactive courses focused on media literacy²⁵. Czech Television also plays a significant role in this process, providing teachers and students with media education materials as part of the “ČT edu” platform²⁶.

Another method is fact-checking. Fact-checking is usually the domain of journalists, politicians, and academics; it is unrealistic to expect the average reader to verify the accuracy of every article they read. However, this tool plays a key role in analyzing disinformation narratives²⁷. The Czech Republic is very active in this regard. There are a number of institutions, think tanks,

²³ Babii A.N. (2020). *The Use of Critical Thinking against Fake News*. NORDSCI. Sofia.

²⁴ T. Feřtek (2023, June 28). *Mediální výchova a kritické myšlení problém silicích dezinformací nevyřeší*. EDUin. <https://www.eduin.cz/clanky/tomas-fertek-medialni-vychova-a-kriticke-mysleni-problem-silicich-dezinformaci-nevyresi/> [accessed:15 March 2025].

²⁵ *Jeden svět na školách* (2025). *Člověk v tísni*. <https://www.clovekvtsni.cz/co-delame/vzdelavaci-program-jsns> [accessed: 15 March 2025].

²⁶ *Česká televize* (2025). <https://edu.ceskatelevize.cz/> [accessed: 15 March 2025].

²⁷ J. Bateman, D. Jackson (2024). *Countering Disinformation Effectively: An Evidence-Based Policy Guide*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Washington, D.C. <https://library.csi.cuny.edu/c.php?g=619342&p=4310783> [accessed: 25 March 2025].

and NGOs operating in the Czech Republic, such as Demagog.cz, Manipulátoři.cz, or the Czech Elves platform. The Central European Digital Media Observatory (CEDMO), which was established in Prague, plays a significant role in this process. It is an independent hub designed to monitor the information space in Central Europe²⁸. Monitoring various disinformation campaigns is inherently important, especially for devising strategies to counter disinformation narratives. Understanding the information environment and its dynamics is essential for developing an effective strategy. Fake-checking has several limitations. There are a number of studies on this topic in the Czech Republic. For example, Miloš Gregor and Petra Mlejnková study manipulative techniques used by so-called alternative websites spreading disinformation narratives. The study analyzes that it is very difficult to determine what is disinformation and what is not. The websites selectively select information, take it out of the original context, and insert it into a different context. Combining facts and purposeful selection leads to a manipulative interpretation of individual events²⁹. A certain limitation of fact-checking is the difficulty of verifying some information. One of the CEDMO studies mentions in this context that it is very difficult for respondents to verify the truth of news, especially in connection with the war in Ukraine. Specifically, 39% of Poles and 48% of Czechs confirmed the difficulty mentioned³⁰.

The third area of tools is “active interventions” in the information and media space. These methods include, for example, prebunking. Google started this technique and called it a “vaccination against disinformation”. The process is based on the “preemptive refutation” of disinformation narratives. Internet users are introduced to truthful information or disinformation techniques before they are exposed to manipulative content online. By warning them in advance of possible errors and shortcomings in false claims, prebunking increases the likelihood that they will not believe media manipulations³¹. However, this is a rather risky technique based on some manipulation and can become the subject of criticism. At the same time, this method closely corresponds to fact-checking.

²⁸ Central European Digital Media Observatory (CEDMO). (2024). <https://cedmohub.eu/> [accessed: 15 March 2025].

²⁹ M. Gregor, P. Mlejnková (2021). *Facing Disinformation: Narratives and Manipulative Techniques Deployed in the Czech Republic*. „Politics in Central Europe”. Vol. 17, No. 3. DOI: 10.2478/pce-2021-0023.

³⁰ Central European Digital Media Observatory (CEDMO) (2024). <https://cedmohub.eu/cs/ohlednuti-za-poslednim-ctvrtletim-roku-2024-z-perspektivy-dezinformacniho-pusobeni/> [accessed: 24 January 2025].

³¹ *Prebunking is a technique to preempt manipulation online* (2024). <https://prebunking.withgoogle.com/how-to-prebunk/> [accessed: 15 February 2025].

Another tool is strategic communication (STRATCOM), which can be combined with behavioral nudging. Unlike the previously mentioned methods, which focus on changing individual attitudes, strategic communication and behavioral nudging emphasize altering behaviors. This distinction is particularly important in crisis situations, when we are under time pressure and need to act very quickly. People rarely change their attitudes quickly, typically occurring over an extended period³².

The combination of communication activities and behavioral nudging is very interesting. It is not a restrictive method but a non-violent way of leading people to desired decisions without limiting their freedom of choice. This method can effectively communicate sensitive topics that may provoke a negative societal reaction. An example is COVID-19. Traditional approaches have generally explained the need for vaccination in the following way: "Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 can reduce your risk of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Vaccines can also help prevent serious illness and death. Every effort has been made to ensure that vaccines are safe and effective for people aged 5 and over". However, a behavioral approach would rephrase the above sentences as follows: "By getting vaccinated, you are protecting not only yourself but also your loved ones". The difference between the two approaches is more than obvious³³.

The Czech Republic is at the beginning of building strategic communication and finding optimal tools for communicating key topics and using them to build society's resilience against disinformation narratives. For this reason, it is necessary to briefly point out its advantages and limitations.

Advantages and limitations of strategic communication compared to other tools

The advantages of strategic communication include the selection of topics for communication. The topic selection allows us to raise the areas we need to communicate to achieve our goals. However, it is important to set these goals; every communication must begin with a defined strategy. By being able to choose topics, we are also able to gain dominance in the information

³² J. Kruger, D. Dunning (1999). *Unskilled and Unaware of It: How Difficulties in Recognizing One's Own Incompetence Lead to Inflated Self-Assessments*. „Journal of Personality and Social Psychology”, 77 (6), 1121–34. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.64.2655&rep=rep1&type=pdf> [accessed: 15 February 2025].

³³ Z. Rod (2022, April 28). *Explaining disinformation? There's a far better way to do that!* Atlantic Forum. <https://www.atlantic-forum.com/atlantica/explaining-disinformation-theres-a-far-better-way-to-do-that>. [accessed: 15 March 2025].

space³⁴. Strategic communication, in this respect, is not a reactive tool where you react retrospectively to the situation that has arisen. Reactive measures are always problematic, especially in the fight against disinformation. Compared to fact-checking methods, we avoid the “unconscious” spread of disinformation in social space. If the campaign is based on fact-checking, we would essentially have to confront disinformation narratives with the right points of view, and thus, we would actually release them into public space. The problem with fact-checking is also the difficulty of verifying some information, such as fact-checking related to the war in Ukraine, where verification options are highly limited.

The advantage of strategic communication is the long-term building of trust in the system. In the long term, this tool can help communicate the key values on which society is founded, as well as those intended for future development. Strategic communication can help build acceptance of their necessity and trust in the democratic process of political decision-making. We can communicate topics such as trust in institutions, the political system, or topics related to national security³⁵.

The limitations of strategic communication undoubtedly include its “misuse” of government propaganda. The boundaries between strategic communication, government propaganda, and government communication are very fragile. Logically, every government will try to use this tool to present its achievements, but there must be a limitation beyond which it should not go. In this regard, it should be noted that from a content point of view, strategic communication will always correspond to the government statement³⁶.

A solution is offered, namely the separation of strategic communication from politicians. In practice, this would mean strengthening institutional communication, with the institution itself responsible for communication activities rather than the prime minister, a minister, or another government official. However, this model is unfeasible in countries such as the Czech Republic, especially with regard to political tradition.

³⁴ O. Hoffjann (2024). *Tear down this wall. A theory of strategic communication that integrates both communication and organizational theory*. „Journal of Communication Management”. DOI: 10.1108/JCOM-09-2023-0103

³⁵ P.S. Brønn (2021). *Strategic Communication Requires Strategic Thinking*. BI Norwegian Business School. DOI: 10.21814/uminho.ed.46.2.

³⁶ M. Crha, P. Havlíček, V. Víchová, N. Hořejš (2022). *Strategická komunikace státu*. Policy Paper. Praha.

Conclusion

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe face widespread disinformation campaigns and influence operations, particularly from Russia. Consequently, they are actively seeking strategies to counter these efforts and mitigate their effects³⁷. The Czech Republic currently has several institutions dedicated to eliminating disinformation narratives in society, as well as a non-profit sector that focuses mainly on educational activities and also functions as a critical reflection on state institutions.

As indicated in the introduction, eliminating disinformation and building a resilient society is a complex and long-term process. Each of the tools presented has its advantages and limitations, and specific circumstances determine its effectiveness. Restrictive measures or shutting down websites are effective only in the short term and when dealing with a crisis. Education and the development of critical thinking require a longer time horizon. Both are important prerequisites for building a resilient society, but they do not help us deal with a crisis. Strategic communication (STRATCOM) appears to be an effective, efficient, and comprehensive tool. It can be used to eliminate disinformation narratives and help the government communicate with citizens. Value anchoring can also strengthen the democratic process.

However, it is necessary to create a specific system of strategic communication on its individual pillars that we have imagined. The Czech Republic is at the beginning of the process; many of the measures mentioned in the strategic documents have not yet been effectively implemented. During the initial period (2021–2022), chaotic and ill-conceived steps gave room to question the overall concept. The Czech Republic failed to implement the experience from the COVID-19 pandemic, for example. The lower trust of Czech citizens in state institutions, which is below the OECD average, does not add to optimism³⁸.

There is a possibility of implementing models from Western European countries. Each country has built its model of strategic communication over a long period, and at the same time, it reflects the specifics of its political culture. It is more effective to adopt best practices and learn from individual examples of how these countries have communicated over the long term, rather than adopting models from other countries.

³⁷ J. Eberle, J. Daniel (2023). *Politics of Hybrid Warfare: The Remaking of Security in Czechia after 2014*. Palgrave Macmillan.

³⁸ PRŮZKUM: Češi nevěří úřadům, politikům a ani sobě navzájem, říká průzkum. *Problém leží v komunikaci, říká expert* (2025). iRozhlas. https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/pruzkum-median-dezinformace-boj-z-dezinformacemi-konspiracni-teorie_2307090500_jgr [accessed: 9 June 2025].

One option is to implement the British model, which prioritizes institutional communication³⁹. This model's advantage is its separation from politicians and, therefore, long-term consistency regardless of which political party is in government. Implementing this model requires agreement across the political spectrum on its institutional arrangements and, above all, on the topics. The process of creating this model should undoubtedly involve not only politicians but also the professional community. The Czech Republic will hold parliamentary elections in October 2025, and the results will provide significant insight into the country's direction in building a resilient society and confronting disinformation narratives.

As indicated in the introduction, the contribution aimed to present the situation and outline possible developments in building resilience against disinformation. Although the article relies on secondary sources, it nevertheless provides a comprehensive overview of the situation in the Czech Republic. For a deeper investigation, especially in the area of measuring the effectiveness and impacts of specific steps taken by government institutions, it would be desirable to use primary sources, especially data from public opinion surveys, or critical reflection by experts. This approach requires a deeper investigation based on a robust study, which goes beyond the scope of this contribution. However, the basic summary of this article can be used as a basis for preparing such a study.

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Abstract

The resilience of society and the preparation of citizens for crises are among the main topics at the national and European Union levels, as evidenced by the approval, in 2024, of the Strategic Agenda 2024–2029. One of its key priorities is the fight against attempts to destabilize society through disinformation and hate speech. The Czech Republic has long been exposed to various disinformation campaigns. Disinformation campaigns are not only associated with societal issues such as security or the economy but also manifest themselves in various crisis events.

This article examines the Czech Republic's approach to building a resilient society against disinformation narratives. It aims to present the individual steps that the Czech Republic has taken in developing key strategic documents and institutions that address this issue. The contribution focuses on the evolution of responses to this issue in the Czech Republic, especially since 2021, when the National Strategy for Countering Hybrid Interference was adopted, followed by the Action Plan for the National Strategy for Countering Hybrid Interference.

The paper analyzes individual tools and their effectiveness in the fight against disinformation, such as restrictive measures, media literacy, fact-checking, and strategic communication. It focuses in more detail on strategic communication as a non-invasive tool. In the conclusion, the article offers recommendations on the direction the Czech Republic should take in this area and on which countries it should draw inspiration from.

Keywords: resilient society, disinformation, hate speech, hybrid threats, strategic communication