



Code of Conduct on
Disinformation

Ad hoc Report

*Ceuta Enhanced Information
Exchange and Cooperation
Mechanism*

September 2026

Executive summary

In late July 2026, an unprecedented surge of irregular migration from Morocco to the Spanish autonomous city of Ceuta gave rise to an irregular border crossing and information integrity event across multiple online platforms (referred to herein as the “**Ceuta ‘crisis’**”). Meta Ireland Platforms Limited (“**Meta**”) identified content relating to the emerging ‘crisis’ on its platforms from late July 2026 and, on 31 July 2026, activated its internal Crisis Policy Protocol and established a dedicated cross-functional incident response, bringing together teams across Content Policy, Public Policy, Legal, Communications, Operational teams (including Regulatory Escalations).

Meta mounted a sustained response across its relevant platforms deploying measures to enforce where appropriate against content posted in both Spanish and Arabic, reinforcing team capacity beyond normal staffing levels, and mobilising its global network of more than 90 independent third-party fact-checking partners.

On 10 August 2026, an Enhanced Information Exchange and Cooperation Mechanism was established on an ad hoc and voluntary basis, bringing together Meta, TikTok, and fact-checkers. This mechanism facilitated the rapid surfacing of reports from fact-checkers, focusing on harmful misinformation, to a named Meta point of contact, ensuring that such reports were received and triaged appropriately.

Throughout the ‘crisis’ Meta voluntarily engaged with the European Commission, including by responding to an informal request for information ahead of the Justice and Home Affairs Council emergency session on 4 August 2026, and by submitting voluntary, confidential written reports to the Commission on 12 August, 13 August, and 18 August 2026.

This ad hoc report sits outside Meta’s transparency report for the first half of 2026 (the “H1 2026 Report”), which covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2026 in accordance with the six-monthly reporting cycle established under Measure 40.1 of the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation (the “**Code**”). The Ceuta ‘crisis’ and Meta’s response activities all occurred after 30 June 2026.

This ad hoc report is published pursuant to Measure 35.4 of the Code, which provides: “*In crisis situations, Signatories will use the Transparency Centre to publish information regarding the specific mitigation actions taken related to the crisis.*” Meta’s ad hoc reporting approach is a means of ensuring timely public disclosure of Meta’s crisis response outside the regular reporting cycle.

This ad hoc report does not aim to report on all actions and engagements undertaken by Meta in relation to the Ceuta ‘crisis’, but focuses on specific aspects deemed relevant in relation to the Code.

Where appropriate, the **Ceuta ‘crisis’** will also be covered in further detail in Meta’s next regular transparency report under the Code, covering the second half of 2026 (H2 2026, the period from 1 July to 31 December 2026).

1. Background: The Ceuta irregular border crossing situation (July–August 2026)

In late July 2026, a surge of irregular border crossings from Morocco into the Spanish autonomous city of Ceuta gave rise to an irregular border crossing and a corresponding information integrity challenge across online platforms. The Ceuta ‘crisis’ began on or around 30–31 July 2026, with large numbers of individuals attempting to cross from Moroccan territory into Ceuta.

Meta observed an increase in content related to the Ceuta ‘crisis’ across Facebook and Instagram from late July 2026 onwards. The information environment associated with the Ceuta ‘crisis’ was characterised by several distinct and overlapping categories of harmful content which violated our Community Standards on:

- a. [Misinformation](#), particularly manipulated visual media: old footage repackaged as depicting current events; inflated statistics regarding the number of border crossings; claims of excessive financial aid to irregular migrants; "invasion" framing; and manufactured anti-migrant propaganda. The dominant misinformation themes included fabricated or repurposed videos claiming to show mass migration into Ceuta, accusations that Moroccan authorities deliberately orchestrated the migration (including claims of border gates being opened and migrants being transported), and portrayals of migrants committing violence and disorder in Ceuta.
- b. [Hateful conduct](#), targeting Moroccan migrants, primarily appearing in comments on Facebook posts in the Spanish-language content stream;
- c. [Violence and incitement](#) directed at migrants and local communities, including dehumanising language and, in some instances, calls for armed civilian response;
- d. [Human exploitation](#), including smuggling facilitation via Groups, Pages, and posts offering or coordinating irregular crossings from Morocco into Ceuta, using keywords such as "harraga Ceuta".

A notable feature of the Ceuta ‘crisis’ was the divergence between the Spanish-language and Arabic-language content streams. Arabic-language content was dominated by human smuggling facilitation. Spanish-language content was dominated by hostile reaction against migrants, principally hateful conduct through the use of slurs, appearing overwhelmingly in comments rather than posts.

Out-of-context video content was a persistent feature of the information environment, including older footage (such as footage from the FIFA World Cup) recirculated with false claims that it depicted events in Ceuta. Conspiracy theories also gained traction, including false claims alleging foreign state orchestration of the migration surge.

2. Meta's Early Detection and Internal Crisis Response

2.1 Early Detection

Meta identified content relating to the emerging Ceuta 'crisis' on its platforms from late July 2026. Through its existing monitoring systems and the observations of market-based specialists, Meta detected rising volumes of crisis-related content across Facebook and Instagram.

2.2 Cross-Functional Incident Response

On 31 July 2026, Meta established a dedicated cross-functional incident response, bringing together teams across multiple functions, which notably included "Content Policy", with members of Meta's "Core Policy" team (responsible for policy guidance on human smuggling, hateful conduct, and violence and incitement), "Strategic Response Policy" team (coordinating the overall crisis response), and "Misinformation Policy" teams (coordinating the third-party fact-checking programme).

2.3 Crisis Policy Protocol Activation

On the same date, 31 July 2026, Meta also activated – in accordance with its own internal processes – its "Crisis Policy Protocol" (i.e. the internal framework for responding to real-world crisis events on Meta's platforms). The Protocol enables continuous assessment of trends and risks during periods of heightened concern and facilitates specific policy and product actions in response. The Crisis Policy Protocol remained active throughout August 2026.

These measures are grounded in Meta's standard business practices, designed to operate in periods of heightened risk. These are also consistent with Meta's broader commitments under the Code, including Commitment 38 (to dedicate adequate resources and internal processes to the implementation of the Code's commitments and measures).

3. Fact-Checking Mobilisation

Meta's third-party fact-checking partners across Europe (and Spanish factcheckers Maldita.es, Newtral, Efe & AFP Espana) were actively rating and debunking crisis-related misinformation throughout the period of the Ceuta 'crisis'. The European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN) played an active coordination role.

Meta partners with more than 90 independent third-party fact-checkers globally, including partners covering Spain, Morocco, and the wider region. Meta encourages its third-party fact-checkers to focus on provably false claims, in particular those that are trending, timely, and consequential.

In the context of the Ceuta 'crisis', Meta took specific steps to enable fact-checkers to rapidly identify false claims made on its platforms and relating to the Ceuta 'crisis'. In particular, Meta established a feature using keyword detection to gather related content in one place, allowing fact-checkers to find, prioritise, and focus their debunking efforts more efficiently. While Meta facilitates this focus, the independent decision of these fact-checkers to determine which content to review is respected at all times.

Meta's teams observed that fact-checkers in Europe increased their fact-checking output in response to this Ceuta 'crisis'. The misinformation narratives rated by fact-checkers during the Ceuta 'crisis' period included fabricated or repurposed videos falsely depicting mass migration, claims that authorities deliberately orchestrated the Ceuta 'crisis', and false portrayals of migrants committing violence and disorder.

4. The Enhanced Information Exchange and Cooperation Mechanism

4.1 Establishment and Scope

On 10 August 2026, an Enhanced Information Exchange and Cooperation Mechanism was established in connection with the Ceuta 'crisis'. The mechanism was formally titled: *'EU Code of Conduct on Disinformation – Enhanced Information Exchange and Cooperation Mechanism for Reducing the Impact of Disinformation on the Ceuta Crisis'*.

The mechanism was:

- Ad hoc: established specifically in response to the Ceuta 'crisis';
- Voluntary: entered into by all participants on a voluntary basis; and
- Time-limited: active until the end of August 2026.

The parties involved were Meta, TikTok, and fact-checkers operating through a dedicated contact point established by the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN).

4.2 Purpose and Functioning

The sole and defined purpose of the mechanism was to ensure that fact-checkers could surface reports of harmful misinformation directly to a named point of contact in the relevant platform, and to confirm that such reports were received and triaged appropriately. The mechanism established a dedicated reporting channel through which the EFCSN could communicate directly with platforms regarding emerging misinformation narratives related to the Ceuta 'crisis'.

Through this mechanism, Meta received inbound communications from the EFCSN through the dedicated contact point. These reports concerned a range of misinformation narratives, including:

- Unsubstantiated conspiracy theories, including allegations of foreign state orchestration of the migration surge, which had been amplified by far-right commentators and had provoked secondary harmful narratives;
- Out-of-context video content falsely presented as depicting events related to the Ceuta 'crisis';
- Content encouraging irregular crossings into Ceuta, including false claims regarding government support for crossings; and
- Deepfakes and impersonation accounts promoting false narratives designed to encourage further migration.

All reports received through the mechanism were reviewed as part of Meta's normal processes in the context of its crisis response protocol, with appropriate enforcement action taken where content violated Meta's Community Standards.

The mechanism was limited in scope. It was not a content moderation decision-making body, nor did it create any obligation beyond the establishment of a dedicated reporting channel. Meta retained full discretion over all enforcement decisions. The mechanism did not alter or override Meta's existing policies, and all content moderation actions were taken in accordance with Meta's Community Standards.

5. Policy and Commitment Basis: Measure 35.4

5.1 Measure 35.4: The Legal Basis for This Report

This ad hoc transparency report is published pursuant to Measure 35.4 of the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation (2022, as revised). Measure 35.4 sits within Commitment 35, the full text of which provides:

Signatories commit to ensure that the Transparency Centre contains all the relevant information related to the implementation of the Code's commitments and measures, and that this information is presented in an easy-to-understand manner, per service, and is easily searchable.

Measure 35.4 provides:

In crisis situations, Signatories will use the Transparency Centre to publish information regarding the specific mitigation actions taken related to the crisis.

Meta has subscribed to Measure 35.4 in respect of Facebook, Messenger, Instagram, and WhatsApp, pursuant to Meta's Subscription Form submitted in January 2025.

Meta considers that the Ceuta irregular border crossing constitutes a "crisis situation" within the meaning of Measure 35.4. This ad hoc report accordingly constitutes the publication, on the Transparency Centre, of information regarding the specific mitigation actions taken by Meta in relation to that Ceuta 'crisis'.

5.2 Cross-Reference: Commitment 42

Commitment 42 of the Code provides:

Relevant Signatories commit to provide, in special situations like elections or crisis, upon request of the European Commission, proportionate and appropriate information and data, including ad-hoc specific reports and specific chapters within the regular monitoring, in accordance with the rapid response system established by the Task-force.

Meta has subscribed to Commitment 42 in respect of Facebook and Instagram. While Commitment 42 contemplates the provision of ad hoc specific reports upon request of the European Commission, this ad hoc report is published *proactively and voluntarily* by Meta, falling outside the scope of Commitment 42.

5.3 Cross-Reference: Commitment 40 and Measure 40.1

Commitment 40 and Measure 40.1 of the Code establish the six-monthly reporting cycle for providers of very large online platforms and search engines (VLOPSEs), as defined in the DSA. Measure 40.1 provides that relevant Signatories that are providers of VLOPSEs will report every six months on the implementation of the commitments and measures they have signed up to under the Code.

Meta's H1 2026 transparency report covers the period from 1 January to 30 June 2026. The Ceuta 'crisis' took place from 30–31 July 2026 onwards, and Meta's cooperation and response activities extended through August and September 2026 – all of which fall outside the H1 2026 reporting period – Meta has decided to voluntarily publish this ad hoc report, reflecting its commitment to transparency and cooperation.

5.4 Commitment 38: Resources and Internal Processes

Commitment 38 of the Code provides that Signatories commit to dedicate adequate resources and internal processes to the implementation of the Code's commitments and measures. While Meta's crisis response is grounded in its standard business practices and was not implemented pursuant to any specific obligation under the Code, the cross-functional response described in this report (including, but not limited to, the reinforcement of teams, the activation of the Crisis Policy Protocol, and the deployment of additional measures) is consistent with the spirit and objectives of Commitment 38.