



State of the **Fact-Checkers** **2021**

Introduction

This report was drafted from the survey responses of 86 fact-checking organizations from around the world.

After years of steady growth, the number of new fact-checking initiatives appears to be slowing down, according to the June 2021 [census by the Duke Reporters' Lab](#). The report found 341 active fact-checking projects, up 51 from the previous year, operating in 102 countries.

As stated previously, this snapshot, now in its 4th edition, focuses on the verified signatories of the [International Fact-Checking Network's Code of Principles](#), and is meant to complement the annual report from the Reporters' Lab.

The main takeaway from this survey is that for-profit fact-checkers reduced, allowing the nonprofit organizations to become a driving force in the community again, making up 50% of the respondents.

Previous reports –for [2018](#), [2019](#) and [2020](#)– are available.

Methodology

The data points below were collected from a Google survey to IFCN verified signatories between July and August 2021. The data covers the latest full year (January - December 2020).

A total of 86 fact-checking organizations responded to the survey questions. This, therefore, means that the information in this report is based on the participating organizations, and not the entire list of IFCN verified signatories.

An up-to-date list of IFCN's verified signatories to its Code of Principles can be found [here](#).

Organizational form

After a slight drop in 2020, for-profit fact-checkers once again make up the majority of the verified signatories of IFCN. Academic fact-checking initiatives continued to go up, with the group now making up 5.8%.

What is the best description for your fact-checking initiative?



Distribution

While all fact-checkers surveyed continue to share their work online, there was a slight improvement in the use of TV and print media to distribute fact-checks.

As we've noted in past reports, a number of fact-checking organizations have running partnerships with television, radio and print media, which help further amplify fact-checking and increase public awareness.

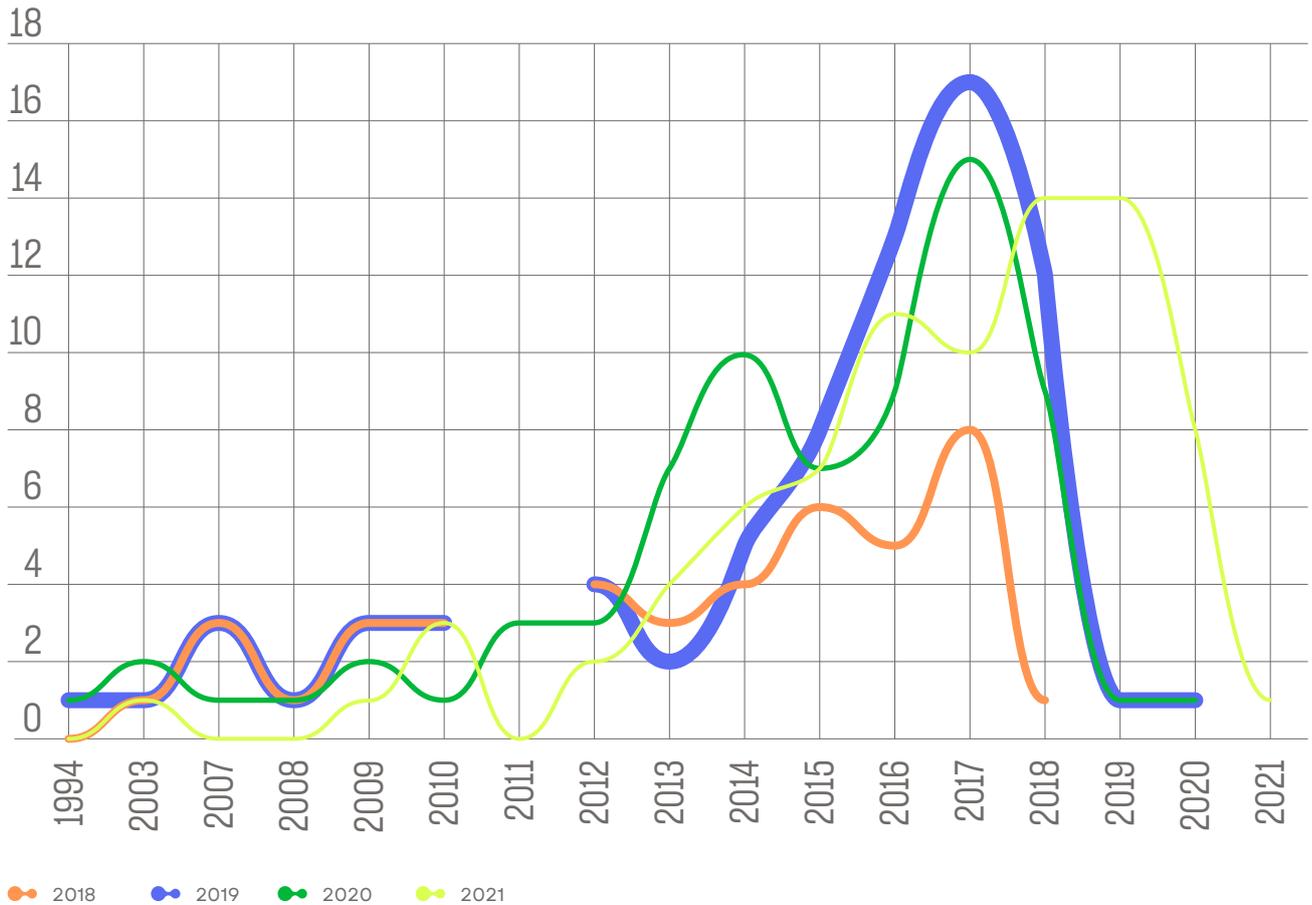
Where do you publish your fact checks primarily?



Timeline of launches

Compared to the previous four years, the number of new fact-checking organizations (8) reduced, indicating that the rapid growth rate may be slowing down.

When did your fact-checking initiative launch?



Employees

Full-time

The number of organizations with 5 or more full-time employees went up by 3%, while those with 1-4 workers remained constant.

How many full-time employees work for your fact-checking initiative?



Part-time

While the number of fact-checking initiatives relying on 1-4 part-time employees declined by 9.7%, those working with 5 or more increased by a similar margin.

How many part-time employees work for your fact-checking initiative?



Volunteers

For this year, the number of organizations working with one or more volunteers on a continuous basis was 11.6%, a declining trend witnessed in the previous three years. Meanwhile, 76.7% of the respondents did not report relying on volunteers on a long-term basis.

How many volunteers work for for your fact-checking initiative on a continuous basis?

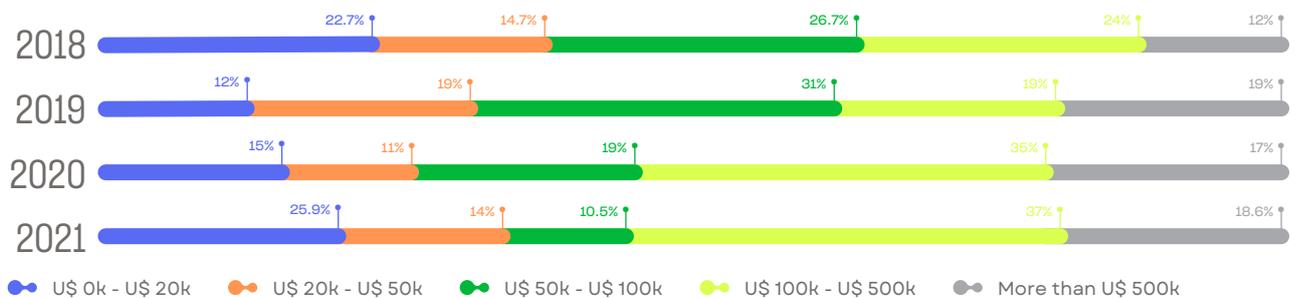


Funding

The notable highlight here is fact-checking organizations with an annual budget of between \$50,000 and \$100,000 went down by 8.5%, continuing with a similar drop witnessed in the previous year. At the same time, those operating on a \$100,000 to \$500,000 budget continued with the steady growth.

It should be noted that this snapshot neither captures the fact that the sample is composed of countries with very different purchasing powers, nor any indirect budgetary support fact-checking projects might receive.

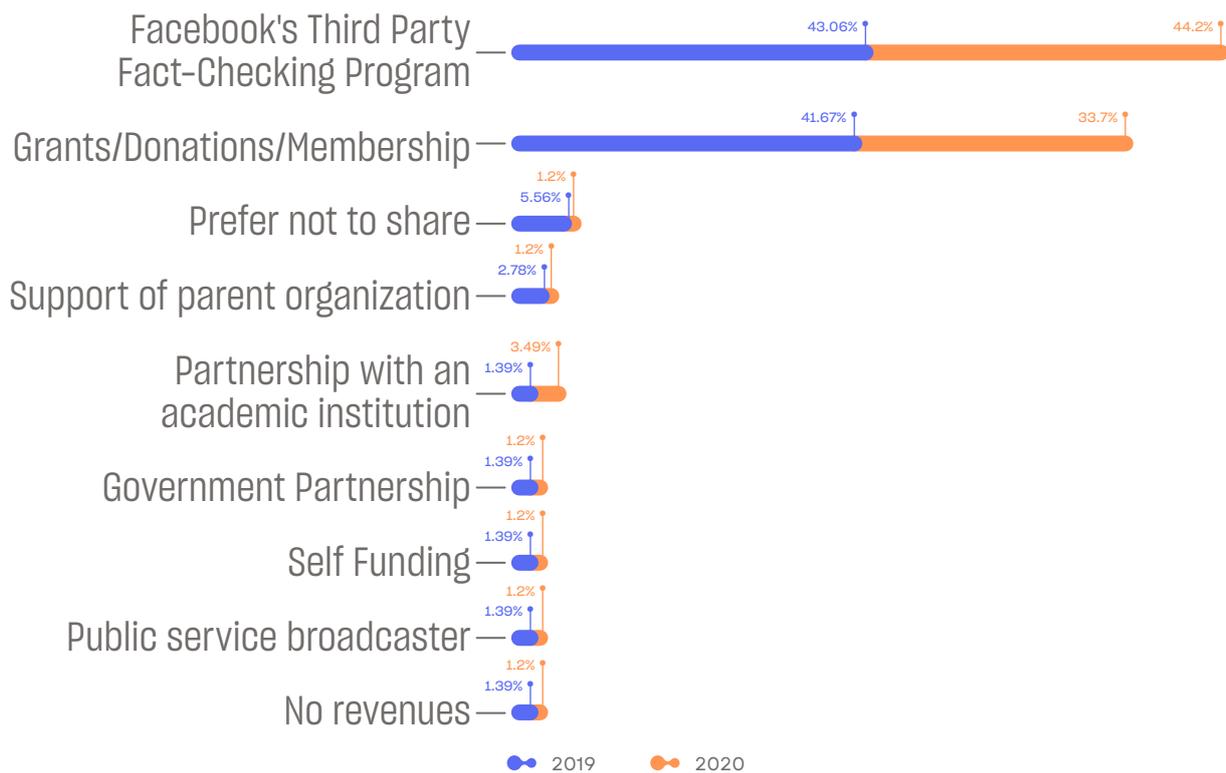
What was the budget of your fact-checking initiative (not the entire organization) in 2019?



Revenue sources

At 44.2%, Meta’s Third Party Fact-Checking Program remains the main revenue source for many organizations, at least since we started asking this question. Income from donations, grants or membership, though it declined by about 8% from the previous year, come in second.

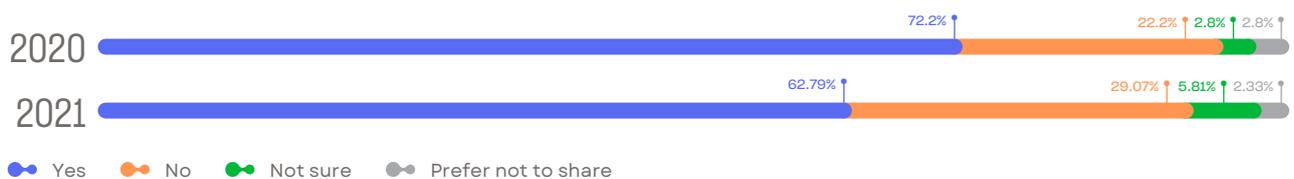
What was your largest source of revenue?



ClaimReview

Compared to 2019, there was a 9% reduction in the number of initiatives using ClaimReview to publish fact-checks. Those not using the tool at all stood at 29%, a 7% increase from the previous survey.

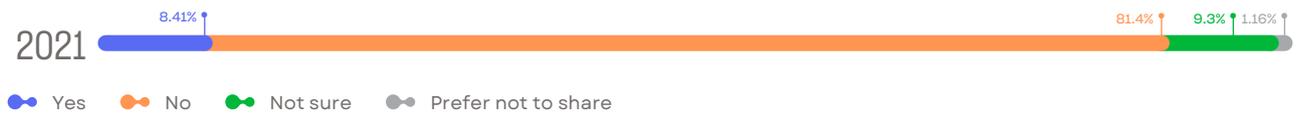
Do you use ClaimReview to publish your fact checks?



MediaReview

This is the first time we asked this question. Only 8% of the respondents said they use MediaReview to publish their debunks.

Do you use MediaReview to publish your fact checks?



List of organizations considered

Les Surligneurs | RMIT ABC Fact Check | Taiwan FactCheck Center | Logically Deutsche | Presse-Agentur (dpa) | COFACT Thailand | FactCrescendo | Raskrinkavanje | The Logical Indian | Estadão Verifica | USA TODAY fact-checking team | The Lallantop | FactCheckNI | Fact-Check Ghana | Associated Press | Raskrinkavanje.me | TjekDet.dk | Myth Detector | Observador – Fact Check | Franceinfo | BOOM | Istinomjer | T Verifica | Demagog Association | 15min | Ecuador Chequea | Bolivia Verifica | Verificat | Delfi/Eesti Päevaleht Estonia | Doğruluk Payı | La Silla Vacía | The Healthy Indian Project (THIP Media) | GhanaFact | Ferret Fact Service | FactCheck.org | Melo detektorius (Lie Detector) | Mongolian Fact-Checking Center | Agência Lupa | Rumor Scanner | The Whistle | Aos Fatos | TheJournal FactCheck | Check Your Fact | Istinomer | Dubawa | Faktoje.al | Fatabyyano | Chequeado | Full Fact | The Quint - WebQoof | Re:Check | FactWatch | Africa Check | El Sabueso de Animal Político | Facta.news | Teyit.org | Colombiacheck | India Today | Fast Check CL | First Check | CORRECTIV.Faktencheck | Factly | Fact-Checker.in | Cek Fakta Liputan6.com | Maldita.es | Pravda | Razkrinkavanje.si | Open Fact-checking | AAP FactCheck | Newtral.es | Pagella Politica | VERA Files Fact Check | NewsMobile | MediaWise | Fakenews.pl | South Asia Check | Newschecker | EFE Verifica | Poligrafo | Ellinika Hoaxes | factcheck.ge | Agence France-Presse (AFP) | Factual.ro.

About the International Fact-Checking Network

The International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) at Poynter was launched in 2015 to bring together the growing community of fact-checkers around the world and advocates of factual information in the global fight against misinformation. We enable fact-checkers through networking, capacity building and collaboration. IFCN promotes the excellence of fact-checking to more than 100 organizations worldwide through advocacy, training and global events. Our team monitors trends in the fact-checking field to offer resources to fact-checkers, contribute to public discourse and provide support for new projects and initiatives that advance accountability in journalism.

We believe truth and transparency can help people be better informed and equipped to navigate harmful misinformation.

The IFCN does not take sides in any policy discussion beyond access to information and fact-checking. Our staffers cannot be members of political parties nor publicly support candidates for elected office.

The major donors of The Poynter Institute are listed [at this link](#). Tax filings are available [here](#).

[International Fact-Checking Network Comparative Income Statement: 2019-2021](#)

For more about the IFCN transparency statement, please visit [here](#).

