

# State of the Fact-Checkers 2022





## Introduction

The 2022 State of the Fact-Checkers Report provides an overview of the fact-checking landscape among verified signatories of the International Fact-Checking Network, drawing upon survey data collected from 93 organizations worldwide. This year's report highlights the following key takeaways:

First, there was a shift in the budgets of fact-checking organizations in 2022, with more groups operating with larger financial resources, suggesting an enhanced capacity for tackling misinformation effectively.

Second, fact-checking organizations are increasingly tackling misinformation across various public interest topics, demonstrating the versatility and wide-ranging approach of today's fact-checking operations.

The insights and trends presented in this report are based on the responses of organizations that participated in the February 2023 survey.

Previous reports – for [2018](#), [2019](#), [2020](#) and [2021](#) – are available for review.

## Methodology

To gather the data for this report, we circulated a Google form among signatories from January to February 2023. The collected data spans the calendar year 2022, from January to December.

We received responses from 93 fact-checking organizations, which formed the basis of the analysis and insights presented in this report. It is crucial to highlight that the information discussed here pertains to the organizations that participated in the survey and does not necessarily represent every IFCN verified signatory.

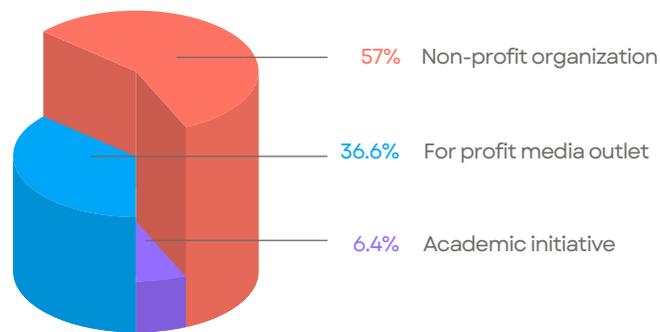
To access the most current list of IFCN's signatories adhering to its Code of Principles, please visit the following link: <https://www.ifcncodeofprinciples.poynter.org/signatories>



## Organizational form

In 2022, nonprofit fact-checking organizations represented 57% of verified signatories in the network, up 7% from the previous year. For-profit fact-checkers decreased by 7.6 percentage points to 36.6%, while fact-checkers originating from academic institutions rose to 6.5%.

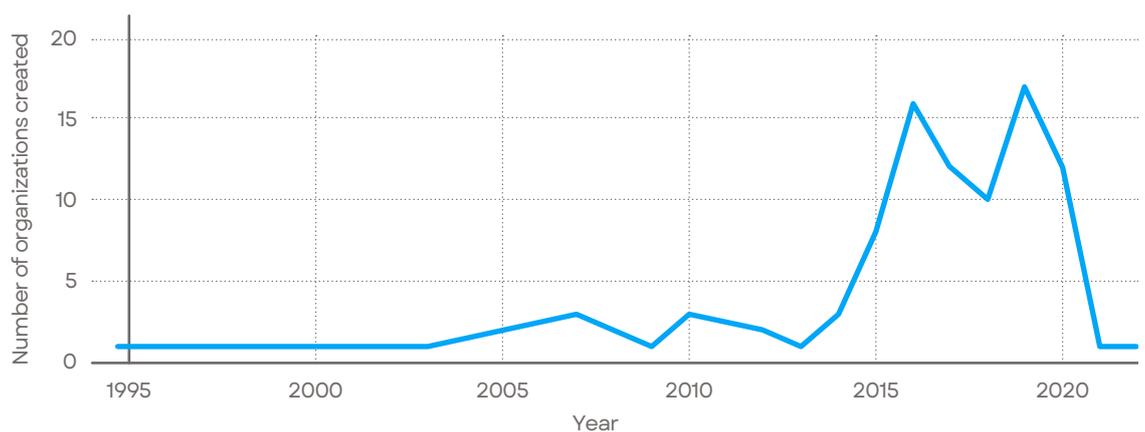
What is the best description for your fact-checking initiative?



## Timeline of launches

Similar to 2021, only one signatory surveyed was established in 2022, reflecting the recent slowdown in fact-checking sites' growth following peak years of 2015-2020. The majority of respondent signatories launched in 2019, with 17 in total. The oldest fact-checking organization dates back to 1994.

Number of organizations created vs. year





## Employees

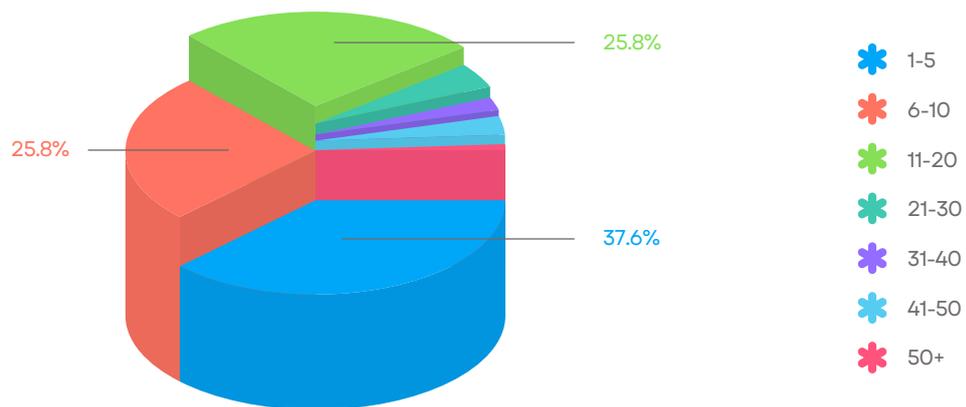
### Full-time

The survey revealed that most of these fact-checking operations have relatively small teams. Key takeaways include:

- 37.6% of organizations have 1-5 full-time employees, making this the most common staffing level.
- 25.8% of organizations have 6-10 employees, and an equal percentage (25.8%) have 11-20 staffers, indicating that a significant portion of fact-checking operations also maintain modest-sized teams.
- Only 1% of organizations reported having more than 51 workers, highlighting that large-scale fact-checking operations are rare.

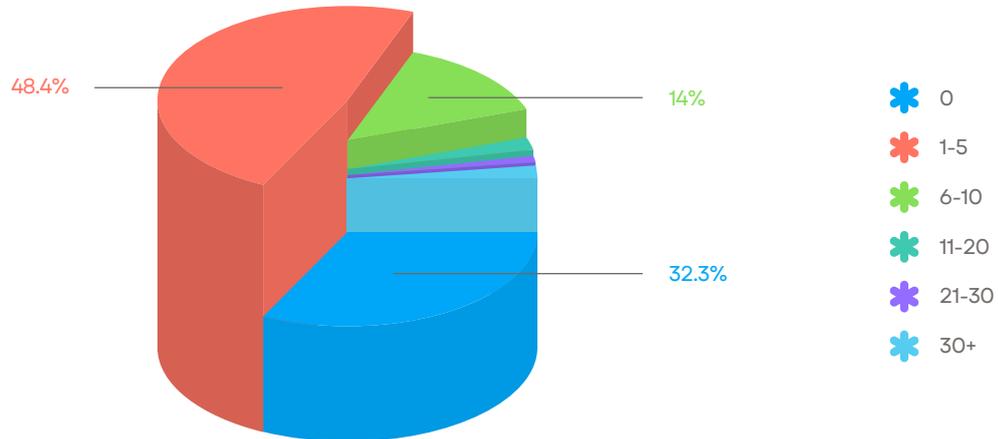
Not much has changed from last year's trend.

It should be noted that most fact-checking organizations operate with limited staff, which may impact their capacities to cover a wide range of information and respond quickly to emerging claims or misinformation.



### Part-time

The survey shows most fact-checking organizations rely on small teams, with 48.4% employing 1-5 part-time workers, 32.3% having none, and only 2% having more than 30 part-timers.

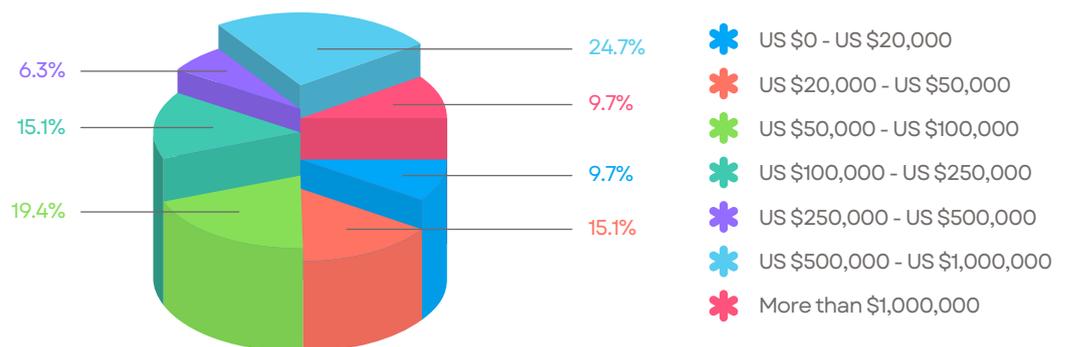


## Volunteers

The survey reveals 74.2% of fact-checking organizations have no continuous volunteers, while 8.6% have 10 or more, indicating most fact-checkers rely on paid staff, with few utilizing substantial non-paid support. This trend is consistent with last year's findings.

## Funding

Fact-checking organizations' budgets shifted in 2022, with more groups operating with greater financial resources. A comparison with the previous year shows an increase in organizations with budgets over \$500,000, rising from 18.6% to 24.7%. Meanwhile, those with budgets of up to \$20,000 dropped from 25.9% to 9.7%. The trend suggests an enhanced capacity for tackling misinformation and fact-checking claims effectively.





## Revenue sources

The survey shows that [Meta's Third Party Fact-Checking program](#) is still the leading funding source for fact-checking organizations, contributing 45.2% of their total income. Grants constituted 29% of primary funding, with donations or membership subscriptions accounting for 6.5%.



Advertising revenue from website traffic (1.1%), fact-checking partnerships with TikTok (2.2%), partnerships with academic institutions (2.2%), and training (1.1%) made up the remaining sources.

Compared to 2021, Meta's program, including Instagram, increased slightly (from 44.2%), while grants remained relatively stable (29.1% in 2021). Donations or membership subscriptions saw a notable rise (from 4.7% in 2021), indicating growing individual support. Partnerships with academic institutions experienced a slight decrease (from 3.5% in 2021).

Advertising revenue and training as funding sources remained fairly constant.

The fact-checking partnership with TikTok emerged as a new funding source for several organizations in 2022.

Despite ongoing staff layoffs and budget cuts at big tech companies like Meta and Google, fact-checking organizations have not yet experienced significant changes in funding. The financial landscape, however, remains uncertain, and organizations should proactively diversify their funding sources. Increasing individual donations and membership subscriptions can reduce reliance on big tech grants and foster community-driven support.

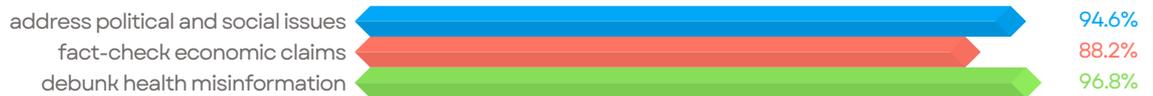
The emergence of the TikTok partnership highlights the importance of exploring new collaborations with other tech companies, platforms, and stakeholders, such as academic institutions and media organizations. These alliances can provide alternative funding sources, leveraging collective expertise.



## Focus areas

Most fact-checking organizations surveyed now tackle misinformation across various public interest topics, moving beyond initial areas of specialization.

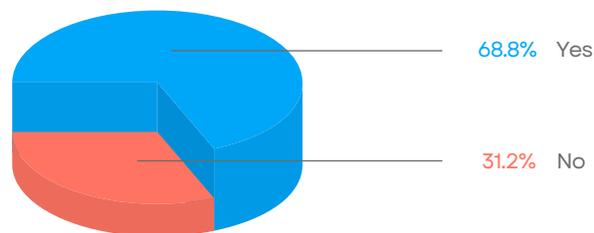
By the numbers:



This shift showcases the versatility and wide-ranging approach of today's fact-checking operations in fighting false claims.

## ClaimReview

Fact-checkers using ClaimReview increased to 68.8%, still below the 2020 figure when first recorded. [ClaimReview](#), a structured data markup for labeling fact-checked content, is regaining popularity among fact-checkers.



## 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: 2019-2022](#)

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

# State of the Fact-Checkers 2022

