

## About us

About Demagog.cz

How do we rate?

Criticisms for assessment

Our financing

Code of Ethics

FAQs

Contacts

We offer workshops

RSS subscription

API for developers

## How do we rate?

### What is a "factcheck"?

Factcheck means verifying the truth of politicians' factual statements. We only follow verifiable claims of politicians, i.e. those based on facts in various forms, be it numerical information, actions of the given person (voting on laws, statements, etc.) or historical events.

### How do we select content to verify?

We generally verify two types of content:

- Discussions, speeches or interviews and their parts, which include a number of factual statements;
- Individual statements usually found on social networks Twitter, Facebook or Instagram.

When we verify a longer whole, e.g. a segment of a political debate, we select from it all the factual statements made by politicians in addition to indisputable banalities and obvious things. Therefore, we do not only select statements that we consider important, and among the verified statements there will also be those that some readers will consider banal. However, we do not exclude them from verification in order to ensure impartiality and objectivity even in the selection of statements.

In the publication, we also include a category of unverifiable claims, which are considered factual (based on facts), but for which it was not possible to find any public source that would confirm or refute the given claim (for more details, see "How we evaluate").

When we select individual statements from social networks for verification, and also when we choose which discussion, speech or interview, or which part of them we will focus on, we proceed according to the following priorities:

- Balance of content** : we try to devote approximately equal attention to all parliamentary parties and movements, or before the elections to all candidate subjects with significant support. We make an exception for government parties and ministers, which we verify more often due to their higher level of responsibility;
- Relevance of content** : Where possible, we focus on party leaders discussing current political issues in a national forum. So we don't follow rank-and-file MPs that often, let alone local representatives, we don't choose discussions on topics that don't have political overlap, or aren't essential at the time of verification, and we focus on national media when choosing;
- Verifiability of content** : When we find an interesting discussion with representatives of parties that we have not covered for a long time, it may still happen that there was no verifiable content based on facts. Many debates take place primarily at the level of opinion, and thus do not lend themselves to verification.

Our selection of statements to verify ultimately depends on the availability and quality of the content, and thus will never be perfect. Therefore, we welcome [recommendations](#) and [criticisms](#) for evaluation and selection.

### What does the Demagog.CZ project not evaluate?

- Opinionated political statements and evaluative judgments that are not based on clear and verifiable facts. It is up to the viewer, listener or reader to choose which opinion they agree with.
- Predictions of the future. E.g.: Government XY's action is good because it will cause employment growth. We cannot predict, and however (un)probable some predictions are, their veracity cannot be assessed before the predicted event (un)occurs.
- Banalities ( "I had goulash for lunch yesterday" ), generally known facts ( "the Czech Republic is a member of the EU" ) and glosses ( "Everyone in the state administration knows who the minister of the environment is." ).

### How do we evaluate statements?

For the final evaluation of the statement, we use 4 basic categories:

#### • False

These claims are not consistent with publicly available numbers or information about any action or non-action. It can also be a situation where the methods of calculating a given indicator differ, but the number or statement in question is not confirmed by any of these sources.

#### • Truth

Using the right information in the right context. You may also come across "truth with a caveat" in reasoning, if the statement is not strictly true, but only a small or insignificant deviation. For numerical data, we roughly stick to the 10% limit and tolerate rounding, unless the politician himself makes sure that it is accurate.

Let's assume that there are 4,000 civics teachers in the Czech Republic. *There are 3,800 civic education teachers in the Czech Republic*

"We would label the statement as true with the proviso that it is a 5% deviation. " *You are mistaken, Mr. Deputy. There are not 3,800, but 4,200 civics teachers in the Czech Republic.* "

In such a case, the statement would already be evaluated as false, even if it fits within the 10% tolerance, since the speaker here is correcting someone else, and the statement cannot be interpreted as an approximate statement.

When evaluating, we take into account whether the speaker relativized his statement with words like "I think," "I heard," etc., which indicate that he is not sure. However, we do not verify whether the speaker really thinks it, or whether he heard the information: Since we cannot see into people's heads, similar rhetorical turns could then be "absolved" of responsibility for any factual statement. We therefore approach similar turns as if they were approximate but otherwise standard statements of fact.

#### • Misleading

This is a subset of true statements that use correct facts, but present them in a context that leads a reasonable listener to a false conclusion. So it is not an intermediate stage between truth and falsehood. Typically, these are statements taken out of the original context or otherwise distorted statements, e.g. unreasonable comparisons.

An example of a misleading statement: "The first post-revolutionary chancellors, including Schwarzenberg, did not have a security clearance."

Strictly speaking, this is true, but the information is given out of context. The anchoring of the security clearance was only introduced by the Act on the Protection of Classified Information from 1998. The first chancellors could not even obtain a "security clearance", yet there was a check of persons handling classified information.

#### • We use the Unverifiable

Rating in the event that it is not possible to find the source of the claim, or it is not possible to confirm or refute it based on the available information.

## How is the independence and quality of the assessment ensured?

All our reviews are always written with proper links to public internet sources, in some cases with reference to publications with author and party. If we cannot find a clear primary source of data, we contact you with a request for links to the sources of the statement and the speaker himself, although we do not always do this due to the large number of verified statements. Disputed topics are then consulted with experts on the given question. Each published justification undergoes an autonomous review by two other persons (editors), where the factual and methodological accuracy and correctness, as well as the overall logic of the statement, are checked.

Demagog CZ is not tied to any political party or grouping, and these entities are strictly excluded from participating in the project's financing. The code of ethics prohibits interns from working in political parties. It is understandable that the people who are involved in the project are probably interested in politics and, like everyone else, they have their preferences, but the strict methodology in their work prevents them from being reflected in the evaluation.

## How to deal with statement and rating statistics?

On our website, you will find overviews of how many statements we have verified for individual politicians and with what evaluations. These statistics are subject to the following limitations:

- Different statements have different meanings for listeners, and it is not possible for these statistics to capture the weight of individual units and the seriousness of their possible impact on public opinion.
- Since we do not evaluate whether false and misleading statements are intentional, our statistics should not in themselves be the basis for a normative evaluation of speakers and their character.
- The aim of these statistics is not to assess which of the politicians is doing worse or better, but to draw attention to the number of factual errors that are heard in political discussions. The result is influenced by our choice, as well as the choice of questions by the moderators, etc.

Anyone publishing the statistics we publish should take these limitations into account and adapt any accompanying text to them.

FAQs

Contacts

We offer workshops

RSS subscription

API for developers

### Stay in touch

Every few weeks we send out a newsletter with a summary of our work and behind-the-scenes highlights.

### Social networks

Don't miss the latest events from Demagog.cz. By sharing our posts with

your e-mail

Start to  
subscribe

By pressing "start subscription" you agree to the processing of e-mail according to the [Personal Data Processing Policy](#).

your friends, you support our work.



#### Demagog.cz, z.s.

ID number: 09140944  
with registered office at Roháčova 145/14  
Žitkov, 130 00 Prague 3

Registered in the federal register at the Municipal Court in Prague.

Demagog.cz has a transparent bank account  
97112830015500 held at Raiffeisenbank, a.s.

The Demagog.cz project is supported by:



#### Contacts

Contact person  
Petř Dvořák | project coordinator  
petr.dvorak@demagog.cz  
+420 775 275 177

Reprimands for evaluations, workshops, various  
info@demagog.cz

For the media  
Logos for download

The Demagog.cz project cooperates with:



Demagog.cz respects the code of principles of the International Fact-Checking Organization (IFCN)



Demagog.cz verifies the veracity of the selected content for Meta



Central European Digital Media Observatory