

A far-right website that injects opinion into news articles aggregated from other sources to advance its undisclosed anti-immigration, nationalist ideology.

Ownership and Financing

FL24.net, which is short for France Libre 24 (Free France 24), is owned by the company 6S Media, which is registered in Warsaw, Poland.

Several of the company's investors are active in Polish far-right politics, according to a joint investigation by nonprofit EU DisinfoLab and Politico in January 2020. According to the joint report, 6S Media has the same address and a similar set of shareholders as 5S Media, a Polish media company that owns a magazine called *Najwyższy Czas!*, co-founded by Janusz Korwin-Mikke, a lawmaker of the right-wing Konfederacja party.

Asked about the report linking the site to the Polish far-right, the website's manager, Anne van Gelder, told NewsGuard in a Facebook message that Politico's article was "dishonest" and "full of fake news" ("mensonger" et "truffé de fake news"), although she did not specify what was "fake."

In the wake of Politico's investigation, the site posted an article confirming that it is owned by a Polish company and funded by Polish investors, although it did not explicitly confirm its political agenda or that of its backers. "We have found on our way friends of freedom and western civilization that support our initiative, because they share with us similar values and a similar attachment to freedom," the site wrote. ("Nous avons trouvé sur notre chemin des amis de la liberté et de la civilisation occidentale qui soutiennent notre initiative, car ils partagent avec nous les mêmes valeurs et le même attachement à la liberté".)

FL24.net's Facebook page indicates that it is run by three people in Poland and two in France.

The website runs advertising.



Proceed with caution: This website fails to meet several basic standards of credibility and transparency.

Score: 52/100

- ✓ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22 points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✗ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✓ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✓ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✓ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

Content

In an article published in January 2020, the website describes itself as a “free information portal presenting the widest possible array of political, cultural and social news in France and worldwide, in a spirit of maximum free speech, refusing the constraints of political correctness.” (“un portail d’information libre présentant un spectre le plus varié possible de l’actualité politique, culturelle et sociale de France et du monde entier, dans un esprit de liberté d’expression maximum, et de refus du carcan politiquement correct”).

Content on the site is divided into sections including France, Justice, Insecurity (Insecurité), Economy (Economie), World (Monde), Culture, and People. Articles are typically based on content first published elsewhere, along with the site’s commentary.

Typical articles have run under headlines including “VIDEO. A psychiatrist clearly establishes a link between violence and immigration” (“VIDEO. Un psychiatre lie clairement violence et immigration”); “Hundreds of millions of Christians persecuted in the world: the scary statistics” (“Des centaines de millions de chrétiens persécutés dans le monde: les statistiques qui font peur”); and “Does Hidalgo think of herself as a Pharaoh? She wants 20-billion euros of constructions to house the Bohos” (“Hidalgo se prend-elle pour un pharaon? Elle veut des constructions pour 20 milliards d’euros pour loger les bobos”).

Many articles on FL24.net advance a far-right, anti-immigration, anti-Islam perspective. Articles frequently take aim at politicians from the political left and center.

For example, an October 2019 article stated that centrist President Emmanuel Macron “sincerely believes in his nonsense for leftist teenagers about kindness and collaboration” (“il croit vraiment à ses âneries pour ados de gauche sur la bienveillance et le collaboratif”).

Credibility

FL24.net does not appear to conduct original reporting, typically inserting opinion into articles that were rewritten and aggregated from other media

outlets, including Le Journal du Dimanche, Agence France-Presse, Le Figaro, and 20 Minutes. Sources are usually listed at the bottom of articles. Headlines, although often opinionated, generally reflect the content accurately.

However, NewsGuard's review in early 2020 found a pattern of publishing misleading and unsubstantiated claims.

For example, in January 2020, FI24.net published a misleading article about the Wuhan coronavirus outbreak titled "Conspiracy-mongering or truth? Was the Wuhan Coronavirus created in a military lab?" ("Complotisme ou vérité? Le coronavirus de Wuhan a-t-il été créé dans un laboratoire militaire?"). The article cited an Italian journalist, Paolo Liguori, who claimed the virus was likely created in a military lab in Wuhan. Although it is true that Liguori made this claim, the article did not provide any evidence to back Liguori's assertion or note that many authorities have said the claim has not been substantiated.

The article also stated that "according to gnews.com, the Chinese Communist Party admitted an 'accidental' leak of coronavirus from the P4 laboratory in Wuhan." ("Selon gnews.org, le Parti communiste chinois a admis une fuite "accidentelle" de coronavirus du laboratoire P4 à Wuhan à cause d'une "erreur humaine"").

Several news outlets and the American fact-checking website PolitiFact have reported that there is no evidence that the virus originated in this lab. French Health Ministry's Health General Direction (Direction générale de la Santé) told 20 Minutes that "no element allows us to substantiate the allegations establishing a link between the current sanitary crisis and the existence of a P4 [level of security] laboratory in Wuhan" ("aucun élément ne permet d'accréditer les allégations liant la crise sanitaire en cours à l'existence à Wuhan d'un laboratoire P4").

Moreover, according to a February 2020 report by the World Health Organization, "increasing evidence demonstrates the link between the 2019-nCoV and other similar known coronaviruses (CoV) circulating in

bats." A study published the same month in Nature found that the virus is "96% identical at the whole-genome level to a bat coronavirus."

Also, contrary to the claim in the article cited by FL24.net, the Chinese Communist Party has not acknowledged that there was an accidental leak from the laboratory.

In February 2020, the website published a story titled "Numbers are unavoidable: here is the nation the most racist in the world. Will you guess which it is?" ("Les chiffres sont implacables: voici la nation la plus raciste du monde. Devinerez-vous laquelle c'est?"). The article, based on a survey that was supposedly commissioned in 2016 by NGOs called Open Borders for Refugees and Stop Dis Nation, claimed that Algeria is the "most racist country in the world."

However, NewsGuard could not find any information about these NGOs or any evidence that they exist. The story about Algeria, which has run on many far-right websites since 2016, was initially published on Africa 24, a website that has been cited by fact-checkers as frequently publishing misleading articles.

Because the site has published numerous unsubstantiated claims that present a one-sided and agenda-driven view of events, NewsGuard has determined that FL24.net does not gather and present information responsibly.

Asked about the site's standards, van Gelder, the publication's manager, told NewsGuard in a Facebook message: "We are very responsible and only present facts that we verify as best as we can, as much as we can. Out of more than 6.000 posts which we published, there is nothing fake." ("Nous sommes très responsables et ne présentons que les faits que nous vérifions de notre mieux, autant que faire se peut. Sur plus de 6000 textes parus dans nos colonnes, il n'y a aucun fake").

FL24.net does not articulate a corrections policy and NewsGuard did not find corrections on the site.

Van Gelder told NewsGuard that the website employs a person who corrects articles, but she did not provide any examples of corrections.

FI24.net does not disclose its anti-immigration, nationalist agenda and does not have a dedicated section for opinion. Nevertheless, news articles frequently include opinion promoting this perspective.

For example, a February 2020 article titled "Are you nuts? Coronavirus: China accuses the USA" ("Ça va pas, la tête? Coronavirus: la Chine accuse les États-Unis") referred to China's president Xi Jinping as "the most dangerous totalitarian tyrant of our times" ("le tyran totalitaire le plus dangereux de notre temps").

Another February 2020 article titled "An Islam convert terrorizes his neighbors with a machete and wants to marry their 11-year-old girl" ("Un converti à l'islam terrorise ses voisins avec une machette et veut épouser leur fillette de 11 ans!") called the alleged incident a "perfect example of the savagery created almost systematically by the 'peace and love religion' that no one is allowed to criticize in this country at risk of being threatened with death by its followers." ("parfait exemple de la barbarie engendrée quasi-systématiquement par la 'religion de paix et d'amour' qu'il est interdit de critiquer dans ce pays sous peine d'être menacé de mort par ses pratiquants").

A January 2020 article was titled "Against the opinion of French people, Macron-land imposes the return of jihadis to France" ("Contre l'avis des Français, la Macronie leur impose le retour des djihadistes en France"). The article stated: "The French are hurt and united in support of victims, not jihadis or their offspring, who also acted as executioners. Imposing their return is insulting the memory of victims." ("Les Français sont meurtris et solidaires des victimes et pas des djihadistes ou de leurs rejetons, qui ont aussi joué les bourreaux. Imposer leur retour, c'est insulter la mémoire des victimes")

None of these articles was labelled commentary.

Because FI24.net favors right-leaning causes in its news coverage without disclosing its orientation, NewsGuard has determined that the site does not meet its standard for handling the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Asked about the site's handling of the difference between news opinion, van Gelder said that "Our articles contain opinions," without further explanation ("nos textes contiennent des commentaires").

Transparency

The website states at the bottom of its homepage that it is owned by the company 6S Media.

The site states that it is managed by Anne van Gelder and provides a link to her Facebook profile, which states that she is a multimedia journalist and lives in Paris.

Readers can reach the website through a general email address listed at the bottom of the homepage. The site does not provide a phone number.

Some articles include the name of the writer while others provide only initials. The site does not provide biographical or contact information for its content creators.

Asked about the lack of information regarding content creators, van Gelder said that "Content creators sign their articles," but she did not address the lack of contact or biographical information. ("Les créateurs de contenu signent leurs articles").

In the January 2020 article on the site published in the wake of the Politico article, the site addressed the lack of transparency regarding its staff, stating: "If we remain, for some of us, anonymous, it's simply because we are taking risks in the face of Islamist terrorism and left-leaning violence." ("Si nous restons, pour certains d'entre nous, anonymes, c'est tout simplement parce que nous prenons des risques face au terrorisme islamiste et à la violence gauchiste".)

Advertising is distinguished from editorial content.

History

The website was launched in July 2019.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on Feb. 13, 2020, to add comments from the website's manager. The label was also updated to reflect that the website now meets NewsGuard's standards for disclosing ownership and editorial leaders. The criteria checklist had been updated accordingly.

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Edited by: [Eric Effron](#), [Yves Clarisse](#)

Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

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