



# **MEDIA LITERACY EMPOWERED**

## MANUAL



# MEDIA LITERACY EMPOWERED MANUAL

WRITTEN AND DEVELOPED BY



IN COLLABORATION WITH

מרכז המידע  
לחוקרי-מדיניות  
הממשלה



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1.

INTRO-

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Topic of media and information literacy is important because never before has information been distributed among people so quickly and to such an extent, this has its advantages but there is also a lot of negative consequences because people are not educated enough on how to filter and consume all of the information they are receiving daily. The media as a means of informing and exchanging information greatly influences and shapes life of modern human. Young people born in the era of modern technology are especially exposed to the influence of modern media. The negative influence can be seen in all scandals involving social medias and personal data of users, identity thefts, personal profile hackings, financial frauds, psychological and sexual harassments and bullying, revenge porn, spreading of disinformation and fake news, spreading panic, promotion of hate speech, calls for violence and hate crimes and many other dangerous and sometimes life-threatening occurrences.

Beyond Borders – Italy in cooperation with Club for Youth Empowerment 018 (KOM 018) and Verde Sur - Spain implements the project “Media Literacy Empowered” through the set of activities which are aimed at increasement of media literacy among young people, youth workers and teachers.

## General Objectives

To raise the level of media literacy among young people.

## Specific Objectives

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media;
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content;
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries.

Project “Media Literacy Empowered” is focused on the priority YOUTH: Increasing quality, innovation, and recognition of youth work. The small-scale partnership delivers the concrete tools – guidelines with a training module **as well as video tutorials for youth workers and in this sense increase the quality and innovation in the youth work. This is connected with the priority. New learning and teaching methods and approaches as it delivers these new tools that will be used by youth workers, facilitators, teachers and other educators** in the work with young people on the topics especially relevant for young people today. The project develops new tools using counter and alternative narratives, creativity and art for youth workers and teachers, but also for young people to raise the awareness about the problems caused by media illiteracy. New guidelines on media literacy are developed primarily aimed at youth workers and teachers to provide materials and tools for implementation of the project with the

topic of media literacy; the project also delivers a set of YouTube tutorials on the same topic aimed at young people as main consumers of the short online media content.

# 1.1 Introduction to the Narratives

Since the mid-1960s there has been a huge amount of interest in, and speculation about, the nature of narrative. This may well be a function of our information society, where communication and the means of communication have become increasingly important to societies, organizations, and individuals alike. Furthermore, cross-cultural studies (e.g. Chafe 1980; Levi-Strauss 1972) suggest that narrative is a basic and constant form of human expression regardless of ethnic origin, primary language, social background and other categories. Narratives are everywhere. They are as critical to our daily existence as food and shelter. Without them, we would lack some of the most important tools to learn and share our experiences. Narrative can also be defined as a way of presenting or understanding a situation or series of events that reflects and promotes a particular point of view or set of values. But narratives have many purposes beyond entertainment and escape. Throughout human history, people from cultures across the world have consumed and created narratives multiple times a day. Although Charles Dickens' highly opinionated schoolmaster in *Hard Times*, Mr Gradgrind, insisted that the most important thing in life as in education are 'facts! facts! and more facts!' stories are what we remember the most. They arise out of our historical and cultural contexts. They are signifiers of it, but they are also modes of explanation: by our stories, as it were, shall we be known. The reason is that narratives are the primary way that we understand and give meaning to our lives.

# 1.2 Narratives in Mass Media

Mass media refers to a broad range of communication channels that are designed to reach a large audience. These channels transmit information to the general public and play a crucial role in shaping public opinion, disseminating news, and influencing societal attitudes. Mass media can take various forms, and the most common types include:

## Print Media

This category includes newspapers, magazines, brochures, and other printed materials. Print media has been a traditional form of mass communication, providing in-depth coverage and analysis of news and events.

## Broadcast Media

This includes radio and television. Broadcast media use airwaves to transmit information to a wide audience. Radio and television programs cover news, entertainment, educational content, and more.

## Digital Media

With the rise of the internet, digital media has become increasingly important. This category encompasses online platforms, websites, blogs, social media, podcasts, and streaming services. Digital media allows for interactive and real-time communication and exchange of information.

## Social Media

This subset of digital media involves platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others. Social media enables users to create, share, and engage with content, contributing to the democratization of information dissemination.

## Film

The film industry produces movies that can reach a global audience through theatres, television, and online streaming platforms.

## Outdoor Advertising

This includes billboards, posters, banners, and other forms of visual communication placed in public spaces to convey messages to a large audience.

Mass media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion, influencing cultural norms, and providing information on a wide range of topics. It serves as a powerful tool for communication, entertainment, and education, connecting people across vast distances and contributing to the formation of a shared societal narrative.

In the vast landscape of mass media, narratives serve as the threads that weave together the stories that shape our understanding of the world. These narratives, whether conveyed through news reports, television shows, or social media posts, hold the power to influence opinions, shape societal perspectives, and catalyse cultural shifts. In essence, they are the compelling tales that capture our attention, evoke emotions, and contribute to the collective narrative of our time. As we navigate the digital age, marked by an unprecedented influx of information, understanding the complexities of media narratives becomes increasingly crucial. From the eloquent prose of journalistic storytelling to the visually captivating allure of multimedia presentations, narratives form the backbone of how information is communicated, interpreted, and internalized. Digital media forms enable creators and participants to develop and distribute stories in hybrid forms including collaborative and user-generated content, in simpler terms, content that everyday people can contribute to, share, or generate on social media, forums, websites, or other online platforms. These new trends are now challenging the traditional understanding of story forms and advances new modes of audience engagement.

The evolution of communication trends, particularly the rise of user-generated content and hybrid storytelling in digital media, presents a wealth of opportunities for diverse voices to be heard and shared. The democratization of content creation allows everyday individuals to contribute to the narrative landscape, fostering inclusivity and varied perspectives. However, alongside these positive developments, there exist inherent risks and areas at risk of manipulation. The sheer volume of information, coupled with the ease of dissemination, can lead to the spread of misinformation, fake news, and potentially harmful narratives. As we embrace these dynamic changes in communication, it becomes imperative to bolster efforts in education and media literacy. Enhancing individuals' ability to critically evaluate content, recognise reliable sources, and navigate the digital landscape responsibly is paramount. Additionally, active measures against negative and manipulative content are essential. This involves not only cultivating an informed audience but also advocating for ethical standards in content creation, distribution, and consumption. Ultimately, the ongoing evolution of communication demands a collective commitment to education, raising levels of media and information literacy, and ethical practices to harness the positive potential while mitigating the associated risks.



# 1.3 Introduction to Media Literacy

In the contemporary landscape of rapidly evolving media and information technologies, the concept of media literacy has emerged as a crucial skill set for navigating the complex web of communication. Media literacy includes the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media content in various forms, including news, entertainment, and digital platforms. Today, as information flows abundantly and influences societal perceptions, media literacy stands as a cornerstone in empowering individuals to engage critically with the media landscape.

*The ability to access, analyse, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication.*

*Media literacy is an expanded conceptualization of literacy that includes the ability to access and analyse media messages as well as create, reflect and take action, using the power of information and communication to make a difference in the world*

*Media literacy is the ability to apply critical thinking skills to the messages, signs, and symbols transmitted through mass media.*

## Understanding Media Literacy today:

Media literacy is not merely about deciphering text; it extends to decoding the visual, auditory, and interactive components that constitute modern communication. In the digital age, where information is disseminated rapidly, media literacy becomes paramount for distinguishing between credible sources and misinformation. It involves not only recognizing biases and perspectives but also understanding the impact of media on shaping public opinion, cultural norms, and individual behaviours. The significance of media literacy is underscored by its role in fostering informed, discerning, and active participants in today's information-rich society. It equips individuals with the tools to critically assess the authenticity of information, recognise fact from fiction, and navigate the ethical challenges posed by developing media platforms. In an era marked by the democratization of content creation and the increase of user-generated material, media literacy acts as a shield against the potential pitfalls of misinformation and manipulation.

In today's context, media literacy is not merely a skill – it is a civic responsibility. It empowers individuals to contribute meaningfully to public discourse, promotes digital citizenship, and mitigates the risks associated with the unchecked spread of information. As technology continues to shape the way we consume and disseminate information, media literacy becomes an necessary tool for fostering a society that values critical thinking, ethical communication, and the responsible use of media.

## Key Components of Media Literacy

*Critical Analysis* – Media literacy involves the ability to critically analyse and deconstruct media messages, understanding the techniques employed to convey information and influence perceptions.

*Creation* – It extends beyond consumption to include the creation of media content, encouraging individuals to become active contributors and responsible producers in the digital space.

*Ethical Engagement* – Media literacy promotes ethical engagement with media, emphasizing the responsible use of information and the recognition of media’s role in shaping societal values.

In essence, media literacy is not only an educational imperative but a cornerstone for fostering an enlightened and empowered population capable of navigating the complex and dynamic media landscape of the 21st century.

## Negative and Manipulative Media Content

In the ever-growing realm of media, there exists a spectrum of content that extends beyond informative or entertaining narratives. Unfortunately, alongside credible, and unbiased information, there is a rise of negative and manipulative media content. This includes sensationalized news, misinformation campaigns, and content crafted to evoke emotional responses rather than provide factual insights. Identifying and navigating through such content is a critical facet of media literacy. Individuals with strong media literacy skills can discern the subtle techniques employed in manipulating information, empowering them to make informed choices about the media they consume and share.

### Steps in proofreading and applying media literacy skills:

Building media literacy skills involves adopting a systematic approach to analysing and understanding media content. Here are key steps in proofreading and applying media literacy skills:

**Question the source:** Examine the source of the information. Determine its credibility, reputation, and potential biases. Reliable sources are foundational to accurate media consumption.

**Evaluate the tone and language:** Analyse the tone and language used in the content. Note if it is objective or sensationalized. Media literacy involves recognizing emotionally charged language and understanding its potential impact.

**Cross-reference information:** Cross-reference information with multiple sources. Consistent information across various reputable sources enhances credibility and minimizes the risk of falling prey to misinformation.

**Check for confirmation bias:** Be aware of personal biases and actively seek opposing viewpoints. Media literacy encourages an open-minded approach to prevent confirmation bias and foster a well-rounded understanding.

**Examine visual elements:** Visuals play a crucial role in media. Scrutinize images, graphs, and videos for potential manipulation. Media literacy involves understanding how visual elements contribute to the overall narrative.

**Consider the timing:** Evaluate the timing of the information's release. Media literacy acknowledges that the timing of news can impact its reception and aims to discern whether there is a deliberate agenda behind the timing.

**Understand the audience appeal:** Recognize the target audience and the emotional appeal crafted for them. Media literacy involves understanding how content may be tailored to resonate with specific demographics.

**Seek fact-checking resources:** Use fact-checking resources and websites. Media literacy skills include knowing where to verify information independently and distinguish between credible fact-checking sources.

**Reflect on personal reaction:** Reflect on your emotional response to the content. Media literacy encourages individuals to be aware of how content may be designed to provoke specific reactions and to approach information with a critical mindset.

**Promote media literacy education:** Advocate for media literacy education in schools and communities. Supporting initiatives that promote media literacy is essential for cultivating a society equipped to navigate the complexities of the media landscape.

By incorporating these steps into one's media consumption habits, individuals can strengthen their media literacy skills, fostering a more discerning and informed approach to the content they encounter.

# 1.4 Forms of Media Manipulation

## Fake news

Fake news is a media report that contains unequivocally false claims or information that does not correspond to the facts, deliberately misleading the public. Fake news often targets arousing emotions in readers and is often related to “hot” topics and questions that spark intense public debate, where people have strong opinions and divided views. Fake news doesn’t necessarily have to be based solely on false information; only a part of it can be invented, while the rest of the content is accurate or factually neutral. This increases the chance that readers believe in the false information. Although there is no recipe for recognizing fake news, there are certain signs that can indicate that the information that reached you might be incorrect, such as the fact that it was published on an anonymous portal.

## Disinformation

Disinformation is a media manipulation based on facts but presents them incorrectly, containing a “mix” of facts and inaccurate information or half-truths. Disinformation can be considered a milder form of fake news and, in some cases, is the result of imprecise or incomplete news reporting, resulting in unintentional misinformation. This form of misinformation often intertwines with unchecked information, spin, fact manipulation, biased reporting, and other forms of manipulation.

## Fact manipulation

Fact manipulation refers to a media report that interprets facts in a deceptive way. These reports usually use accurate information to draw false conclusions or statements, aiming to lead readers to incorrect conclusions compared to the real meaning of the conveyed information. Like fake news, fact manipulation does not appear accidentally—it is most often the result of a conscious intention to build an unverified or false story based on verified information, although it can also result from a lack of knowledge about the subject being written about.

## Spin

Spin is a propagandistic activity through which political parties attempt to present everything they do in a positive light in the public and media. Although spin is not solely a political category, it is most commonly used in politics to diminish or change the negative public perception of events, individuals, institutions, etc. Spin generally contains part or all of the information whose effects someone wants to diminish or nullify, without giving it too much importance, and adds information that changes the image of the situation to focus on someone or something else.

## **Biased reporting**

Biased reporting refers to media reports whose primary intention is to present a particular person, group, or institution in a positive or negative light. Such reports usually favor facts, opinions, and conclusions that fit a certain narrative, while simultaneously neglecting or distorting anything that does not fit into it. Biased media reports are never neutral. They always bring a certain value judgment on the topic they address, and there is always a side presented in a positive or negative light, which is the first sign that the media report in front of you could be biased. Biased reporting often occurs alongside the transmission of fake news, conspiracy theories, fact manipulation, or pseudoscience.

## **Native advertising/Hidden advertising/Covert advertising**

Native advertising is promotional content located in the editorial section of the media, presented as the work of the media's editorial team, not as a sponsored article. Paid promotion of products, events, political parties, or anything else must not be presented as a neutral informative report but must make it clear to readers that they are reading a text that originated as paid promotion.

## **Clickbait**

Clickbait is a sensationalistic headline that falsely represents the content of an article with the aim of attracting readers to click on the shared link. Clickbait is undoubtedly the most widespread form of manipulation in online media. It is the easiest way to turn a legitimate and sometimes dull piece of news into advertising profit with a new and provocative headline. Anonymous portals often use clickbait to better "package" someone else's text and present it as their own. The biggest danger of clickbait is that not everyone will open the article, and conclusions will be drawn only based on the headlines read on the portal or on social networks.

## **Unchecked information**

Unchecked information, in short, refers to speculation, rumours, and other unconfirmed claims presented as facts. Especially problematic are those pieces of information that are not only unchecked but there is no way to verify them. Such an example can be found in news based on "anonymous sources" for which no additional evidence is provided. If the news you are reading provides detailed information about something but gives no evidence or source for the claims made or relies solely on information obtained from an anonymous source, it is unchecked information that cannot be considered credible.

## **Censorship**

Censorship, broadly speaking, involves monitoring and/or limiting freedom of expression. Censorship often takes the form of self-censorship in the media by refusing to cover certain topics or personalities. In the context of fact-checking, censorship refers to the removal of content related to politically sensitive or publicly important topics soon after publishing.

**Conspiracy theories:** Conspiracy or plot involves the secret collaboration and actions of a group of people to achieve some interest harmful to another group of people. The term “conspiracy theory” however, does not refer to uncovering such groups, plans, and activities but rather theorizing about what happens “behind the scenes” while putting facts in the background.

### **Pseudoscience**

Pseudoscience presents opinions, views, and values as scientific facts, obtained not through the scientific method but presented as if they were. Pseudoscientific content is often found in articles dealing with lifestyle, health, and science, where existing scientific research is either wrongly or manipulatively interpreted or references non-scientifically verified research.

### **Satire**

Satire is a literary form that critically mocks an individual, group, state, or authority, often used as a means of political commentary. Satirical content appearing in the media serves to emphasize and criticize the subject, usually through caricature or satirical news. If it is clearly stated that a particular media content is satirical, it is not considered manipulation. However, satire can also be used as a manipulation if not explicitly labelled as such.

# 1.5 Counter and alternative narrative in-Media Literacy Education

## What is WE CAN Manual?

Published in 2017, the WE CAN Manual responds to the escalating prevalence of hate speech across Europe, notably in online platforms. Recognizing the destructive impact of hate speech on democratic principles and human rights, the Council of Europe has developed this manual to address the urgent need for action. By equipping young people and educators with practical tools and strategies, the manual aims to empower individuals to confront and counteract hateful narratives effectively. Its objective is to cultivate a more respectful and tolerant digital space by dismantling harmful narratives and promoting truthful and inclusive alternatives.

In an era dominated by digital communication and media consumption, the power of narratives shapes our understanding of the world around us. However, alongside informative and balanced content, media platforms often propagate biased and manipulative narratives that can distort truth, perpetuate stereotypes, and influence public opinion. In response to these challenges, methodology of counter and alternative narratives can be applied and used as tool for assessing and countering manipulative narratives in media. Just as the WE CAN Manual provide tools for countering hate speech through the development of alternative narratives, so too can its methodology be harnessed to challenge negative portrayals and misleading representations within media content. By cultivating critical thinking skills and empowering individuals to deconstruct media messages, we can equip them with the capacity to discern between factual reporting and biased storytelling, thereby fostering a more informed and media-literate society.

Manual link: <https://rm.coe.int/wecan-eng-final-23052017-web/168071ba08>

To address media literacy issues using the WE CAN manual, you should focus on chapters that provide insights into understanding narratives, identifying hate speech online, and developing counter and alternative narratives. Here are the chapters that would be particularly relevant:

**Chapter 2 - Hate speech:** This chapter can provide valuable insights into understanding how hate speech operates in media contexts. It covers defining hate speech, analysing its categories, and examining who is targeted by hate speech. Understanding these aspects can help participants recognize hate speech in media content.

**Chapter 3 - Hate speech online and social media:** This chapter delves into the role of social media in propagating hate speech and provides insights into communication on the web. It also discusses social media approaches towards hate speech, the role of internet literacy, and campaigning through social media. These discussions can help participants understand how hate speech manifests online and how to navigate digital platforms more critically.

**Chapter 4 - Narratives:** This chapter explores the significance of narratives and storytelling, which are essential components of media literacy. Understanding how narratives shape perceptions and influence opinions can help participants become more discerning consumers of media content.

**Chapter 5 - Counter and Alternative narratives:** This chapter focuses on developing counter and alternative narratives to challenge hateful narratives. Participants can learn how to identify and deconstruct harmful narratives in media and how to construct more truthful and inclusive alternatives.

By incorporating content from these chapters into your media literacy program, you can provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of how hate speech operates in media contexts and equip them with the skills to critically analyse and respond to such content.

So, what are Counter and Alternative narratives and why do we need them in media literacy education

“Counter and alternative narratives combat hate speech by discrediting and deconstructing violent narratives that justify it and by putting forward non-exclusionary visions of the world based on human rights values such as openness, respect for difference, freedom and equality. They do so in a number of ways. Some provide facts from different and credible sources to put into question negative misperceptions. However, research and practice have shown that only providing more information or facts is often not effective. Narratives need to connect to people’s understandings and the contexts of their specific lives, creating new meanings and relating to their emotions and needs. Often this can be done through the use of humour and satire, appealing to people’s emotional connections to the subject, facilitating spaces of direct personal contact with people with different perspectives, or creating opportunities to experience a different alternative narrative altogether.”

In the context of manipulative narratives in media, applying the principles outlined through WE CAN manual, involves several strategic approaches:

**1. Deconstructing manipulative narratives** – Media literacy programs can teach individuals to critically analyse media content, identifying manipulative narratives that promote hate speech or misinformation. By deconstructing these narratives, participants can recognize the underlying biases and agendas, discrediting their validity.

**2. Providing diverse and credible sources** – Similar to combating hate speech, media literacy education should emphasize the importance of seeking information from diverse and credible sources. By exposing individuals to a variety of perspectives and reliable sources, they can challenge and question manipulative narratives.



**3. Emphasizing contextual understanding** – Understanding the context in which manipulative narratives are disseminated is crucial. Media literacy programs can encourage participants to consider the motives behind these narratives and how they fit into broader societal, political, and **cultural contexts**. This **contextual understanding helps individuals discern the manipulative nature of certain narratives**.

**4. Appealing to emotions and personal connections** – Manipulative narratives often exploit emotions to sway opinions and reinforce biases. Media literacy education can help individuals recognize these emotional appeals and critically assess their impact. By understanding how manipulative narratives target emotions, individuals can resist their influence and make more informed decisions.

**5. Utilizing humour and satire** – Humour and satire can be effective tools for exposing the absurdity or illogicality of manipulative narratives. Media literacy programs can teach participants to recognize satire and humour in media content, enabling them to see through manipulative tactics and question the credibility of such narratives.

**6. Facilitating dialogue and personal contact** – Creating spaces for dialogue and personal contact with individuals from diverse backgrounds can humanize marginalized groups and challenge stereotypes perpetuated by manipulative narratives. Media literacy programs can encourage open discussion and exchange, fostering empathy and understanding across different perspectives.

**7. Promoting alternative narratives** – Lastly, media literacy programs can empower individuals to create and share alternative narratives that promote truth, fairness, and equality. By providing platforms for diverse voices to be heard, individuals can challenge manipulative narratives and offer more accurate and inclusive representations of reality.

### Media Literacy Empowered video tutorials



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# 2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

## Italy

Italy has a solid legislative framework that formally protects media freedom and pluralism<sup>1</sup>. However, the ability of journalists to conduct their investigative work still faces several challenges<sup>2</sup>. Talking about more recent data, we can refer to a webinar on Media Literacy Education in Italy held on May 12, 2021, an agreement involving political representatives, educators and broadcasters during which experts reached to define criteria, ethical principles and legal frameworks for Media Education activities in Italy<sup>3</sup>. Also, the literacy rate of Italy reached 99.94% in 2021<sup>4</sup>.

Nevertheless, the Italian situation sees the presence of digital inequalities that accentuate situations of educational poverty and are fuelled by both difficulty in accessing the Internet and a low capacity to use it<sup>5</sup>. Some governmental directions have been given for the report of the 2022 European Media Literacy Week published by the European Commission, in which representatives from a variety of institutions (governmental, non-governmental, scientific, media and private sectors) shared their perspectives on media literacy and its importance in society through a series of lectures and workshops<sup>6</sup>. The main lines of the national strategy on media literacy are also contained in the National Digital School Plan (PNSD), provided for by the “La Buona Scuola” law (Law 107/2015), which focuses on innovation in the school system and the opportunities of digital education<sup>7</sup>. In terms of media credibility, finally, it has been a topic of concern in Italy, as it has been in many countries. There have been instances of misinformation, disinformation, and fake news circulating in the media landscape. Italian authorities and media organizations have been taking steps to address these challenges and promote media credibility.

Efforts have been made to fact-check information, promote responsible journalism, and raise awareness among citizens about the importance of verifying sources and

<sup>1</sup> <https://cmpf.eui.eu/media-pluralism-monitor/mpm-2016-results/italy/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.rcmediafreedom.eu/Dossiers/Italy-journalism-and-the-rule-of-law>

<sup>3</sup> <https://cdn1.media-and-learning.eu/files/2021/05/Webinar-on-Media-Literacy-Education-12052021.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.globaldata.com/data-insights/macroeconomic/literacy-rate-in-italy/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/italy/68-media-literacy-and-safe-use-of-new-media>

<sup>6</sup> <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/report-2022-european-media-literacy-week>

<sup>7</sup> <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/italy/68-media-literacy-and-safe-use-of-new-media>;  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/551095/estimation-of-internet-users-by-data-provider-italy/>

critically evaluating news content. Organizations like the Italian Press Federation (Federazione Nazionale della Stampa Italiana) have been involved in initiatives to uphold journalistic standards and combat misinformation.

With the increasing digital population in Italy and the rising involvement of younger generations in online spaces, the usage of social media is poised to continue its upward trajectory. As of January 2022, Italy boasted nearly 51 million active internet users<sup>8</sup>, of which 85 % were actively participating on social media platforms. Projections indicate a steady and moderate growth in the number of social media users within Italy, with estimates reaching over 46.5 million by the close of 2026<sup>9</sup>.

The global outbreak of the coronavirus in 2020-2021 led to a significant surge in social media adoption, and while this trend is gradually normalizing, individuals who became active on social media during the past two years are anticipated to remain engaged. By the year 2026, social media platforms in the country are expected to encompass a reach of 78 per cent of the population<sup>10</sup>. While linear TV continues to maintain a strong presence among Italian viewers, online entertainment and social networking have captured eight percent of digital users' media consumption time in 2021<sup>11</sup>.

Social media platforms undeniably hold a special place in Italy's digital landscape, as users dedicate a significant portion of their online activity to social interactions. In February 2022, Italian users spent approximately 17 hours per month engaging with member communities on social networks and an additional 11 hours on instant messaging platforms<sup>12</sup>. Among the various social media activities, liking content and sending private messages emerged as the most popular, with over 60 percent of Italians reporting their involvement in these actions while using social platforms. Although activities such as posting photos, videos, comments, and status updates were slightly less prevalent, a mere eight percent of Italians reported passive usage of social media<sup>13</sup>. Within the realm of social media, Meta platforms consistently rank as the top choices in Italy. While WhatsApp, a messaging and chat app, enjoys high usage rates among mobile users in the country, the Facebook platform dominated the market, being used by nearly 80 percent of Italians by the close of 2021<sup>14</sup>.

The web version of this social media giant accounted for the lion's share of visits, directing almost 82 percent of all social media traffic to Facebook as of February 2022. Instagram, with an estimated 29 million users as of March 2021, secured the second spot in popularity. This Meta-owned photo and video-sharing platform boasted a reach of over 76 percent among young users aged 14 to 29 in 2021<sup>15</sup>. Social videos proved to be highly engaging content for Italian internet users, with YouTube capturing the attention of 95 percent of users at the beginning of 2022. In a similar vein, TikTok

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/551095/estimation-of-internet-users-by-data-provider-italy/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/568968/predicted-number-of-social-network-users-in-italy/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/567335/predicted-social-network-user-penetration-rate-in-italy/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1311530/share-time-spent-italy-digital-content/>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/594259/italy-monthly-time-spent-on-top-15-website-categories/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.statista.com/forecasts/1000756/most-common-social-media-activities-in-italy>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/622862/social-networks-ranked-by-market-share-in-italy/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.statista.com/topics/6449/social-media-usage-in-italy/#topicOverview>

emerged as another beloved social video platform, drawing around 2.7 million monthly active users in January 2022<sup>16</sup>.

Notably, Khaby Lame, an Italian content creator, gained international recognition on TikTok with an impressive following of 75 million global fans by June 2021<sup>17</sup>.

While live streaming videos may not be the most predominant content type, with fewer than 30 percent of internet users watching such content as of the third quarter of 2021, prominent Italian-language streamers on Twitch still maintain substantial audiences (<sup>18</sup>). In January 2022, Twitch streamer POW3Rtv commanded a following of over 1.7 million, while ilMasseo, the second-ranked streamer, engaged with over 1.5 million Twitch users through his live content<sup>19</sup>.

Media manipulation is a serious issue that affects the quality of information and the public opinion in Italy. It can take various forms, such as propaganda, fake news, manipulative content, and hate speech. Starting from propaganda, which is the use of media to promote a certain political agenda or ideology, often by distorting or omitting facts, appealing to emotions, or creating a false sense of consensus, its usage by governments, political parties, or private actors is well known to influence the public opinion and the electoral outcomes in Italy.

More specifically, according to a report by the Oxford Internet Institute<sup>20</sup>, Italy indeed is one of the countries where organized social media manipulation campaigns are widespread and sophisticated. The report found evidence of state actors working with private firms to produce and disseminate propaganda on social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

These campaigns often target specific groups of voters, such as young people, women, or minorities, and use various techniques, such as bots, trolls, fake accounts, hashtags, memes, and videos. The report also found that propaganda in Italy is often linked to populist and nationalist movements, such as Movimento Cinque Stelle “the Five Star Movement” and Lega “the League”, which use social media to mobilize their supporters and attack their opponents.

About fake news, meaning the deliberate creation and dissemination of false or misleading information that is presented as factual and credible, it can be motivated by various reasons, such as financial gain, political influence, ideological bias, or personal amusement. Fake news can have negative consequences for the society, such as eroding trust in institutions, undermining democracy, polarizing opinions, and inciting violence. According to a study by Luigi Massa<sup>21</sup>, fake news is a prevalent phenomenon in Italy, especially during electoral periods. The study identified seven types of fake

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1118984/tik-tok-app-monthly-active-users-in-italy/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1101081/top-tiktokers-by-number-of-followers-in-italy/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1311577/top-video-content-type-italy-by-reach/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1179149/most-popular-twitch-streamers-from-italy/>

<sup>20</sup> [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=4022555](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4022555)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2021-01-13-social-media-manipulation-political-actors-industrial-scale-problem-oxford-report>

content on the internet: false context, imposter content, manipulated content, parody or satire, false connection, misleading content, and fabricated content. The study also analyzed the legal remedies against fake news in Italy and Europe, and suggested some possible solutions, such as enhancing media literacy, promoting fact-checking initiatives, regulating online platforms, and enforcing sanctions. According to a report by the European Commission<sup>22</sup>, manipulative content is a growing threat to the security and stability of the European Union. The report highlighted some of the risks and challenges posed by manipulative content, such as undermining trust in information sources, interfering with democratic processes, or endangering public safety. The report also proposed some actions to counter manipulative content, such as strengthening cooperation among stakeholders, raising awareness among citizens, supporting research and innovation or developing ethical and legal frameworks.

Finally, hate speech (the expression of hatred or incitement to violence against a person or a group based on their identity or characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability) can be manifested through various forms of media, such as words, images, symbols, or gestures. It definitely can have harmful effects on the society, towards human rights, discriminating minorities, fostering intolerance, or provoking conflicts.

According to a report by Amnesty International<sup>23</sup>, hate speech is a widespread problem in Italy, and especially online. The report documented some of the cases of hate speech against migrants, refugees, Roma people, LGBTQ+ people, and women in Italy. The report also criticized the lack of effective measures to prevent and combat hate speech in Italy and urged the authorities to adopt a comprehensive national strategy to address this issue.

In such terms, media manipulation can be identified as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that poses significant challenges for the Italian society, having negative impacts on the quality of information, the public opinion, and the democratic values.

Unlike for example Germany, Italy has no binding act assigning responsibility for teaching media literacy to child and youth services. The main lines of the national strategy on media literacy are contained in the National Digital School Plan (PNSD), provided for by the 'La Buona Scuola' law (Law 107/2015), which focuses on innovation in the school system and the opportunities of digital education<sup>24</sup>.

Also, according to the European Commission's Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI) 2020, Italy ranks 25th out of 28 EU member states in terms of human capital, which measures the skills needed to take advantage of the possibilities offered by a

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/global/fact-sheet/news-media-and-political-attitudes-in-italy/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4022555>

<sup>24</sup> <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/italy/68-media-literacy-and-safe-use-of-new-media>

digital society. The DESI report states that “Italy has a low level of basic digital skills among its population (42% compared to 58% in the EU) and a very low share of ICT in total employment (2.7% compared to 3.9% in the EU)”. As previously mentioned, one of the main initiatives to improve the level of media literacy, information literacy and digital literacy in Italy is the National Digital School Plan (PNSD), which was launched in 2015 as part of the ‘La Buona Scuola’ law. The PNSD aims to foster innovation and digital transformation in the school system, by providing schools with digital tools, connectivity, training, and support. The PNSD also includes a specific focus on media and information literacy, as it recognizes that students need to develop critical thinking, creativity, citizenship, and intercultural skills in relation to information and media sources. Another important initiative is the Media and Information Literacy: Critical-thinking, Creativity, Literacy, Intercultural, Citizenship, Knowledge and Sustainability (MIL CLICKS) project, which was initiated by UNESCO in 2017. The MIL CLICKS project uses social media platforms to raise awareness and promote media and information literacy among young people, educators, parents, and policy makers. The project also provides online resources, such as videos, quizzes, games, and articles, to help users develop their MIL competencies<sup>25</sup>.

Italy has some challenges to overcome in terms of improving its human capital and digital skills, but it also has some promising initiatives that aim to enhance the level of these literacies among its population<sup>26</sup>.

Other reliable sources:

- YouthWiki Italy

(<https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/italy/68-media-literacy-and-safe-use-of-new-media>)

- Media Literacy in Germany and Italy - European Youth Press

(<http://www.youthpress.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Media-literacy-in-Germany-and-Italy.pdf>)

- Media Literacy in Germany and Italy | StampMedia

(<https://www.stampmedia.be/artikel/media-literacy-germany-and-italy>)

- Introduction to Media Literacy in Italy

(<https://cdn1.media-and-learning.eu/files/2021/05/Webinar-on-Media-Literacy-Education-12052021.pdf>)

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/media-and-information-literacy-critical-approach-literacy-digital-world>

<sup>26</sup> [https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-19160-2\\_5](https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-031-19160-2_5)

## - Webinar on Media Literacy in Europe: Italy - Media and Learning

(<https://media-and-learning.eu/event/webinar-on-media-literacy-in-europe-italy/>)

There is some data available on young content creators in Italy, but it may not be very comprehensive. Nevertheless, most information regards the most popular social platforms for content creation in Italy meaning Instagram, Tik Tok and YouTube. These platforms allow users to create and share various types of content, such as photos, videos, stories, reels, live streams, and more. The number of followers that content creators have varies depending on their niche, style, quality, and engagement. Some of the leading Italian content creators on TikTok in the first quarter of 2021 were Khaby Lame (36.5 million followers), LeTwins (8.8 million followers), and Gianmarco Rottaro (7.9 million followers<sup>27</sup>).

On Instagram, some of the most popular Italian influencers in 2020 were Chiara Ferragni (21.5 million followers), Gianluca Vacchi (16.6 million followers), and Mariano Di Vaio (6.3 million followers). On YouTube, some of the top Italian channels in 2020 were FavijTV (6.4 million subscribers), Me contro Te (5.9 million subscribers), and iPantellas (5.4 million subscribers).

Of course, the format of the content that creators produce depends on their personal preferences, target audience, and platform features. Some common formats are comedy sketches, pranks, challenges, tutorials, reviews, vlogs, music, dance, gaming, beauty, fashion, lifestyle, travel, and fitness. There have been some controversies involving Italian content creators in the past, mostly related to their behaviour, ethics, authenticity, and image. For example, some influencers have been accused of lying about their age, selling baby replicas for profit<sup>28</sup>, using bots to inflate their numbers, promoting harmful products or services, exploiting feminism for commercial purposes, or being insensitive or disrespectful to certain groups or issues<sup>29</sup>. These controversies have often sparked backlash from the public, the media, or other influencers.

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1081963/leading-tiktok-creators-in-italy>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20220713-the-dark-side-of-being-a-content-creator>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.nssmag.com/en/pills/23537/onlyfans-content-creators-italy>



# Spain

Media education in Spain has never received a public acknowledgment according to its importance within our time's society. While the presence of media education in the curricula of European countries was growing during the 1970's, Spanish scholars refused to grant this topic a priority attention until mid-2000s. Alternatively, they let the task of raising awareness about the need to develop a critical and creative media education system in hands of other professional groups, like journalists or teachers. In Spain, the media education has not been priority in past years although, during the Covid-19 period due to increased issues it made itself a priority. The young people do not take their resources from the mainstream media, but they genuinely use the social media tools that gives them more opportunities to see the world though, the young people do not have any fact-checking mechanisms for the information that they are circulated within the social media platforms. Thus, there is huge need in Spain for mainstreaming the fact-checking mechanisms. Moreover, there is no central media or information literacy education methodology. The most common, The Multi-Literacies Project (Proyecto Alfabetizaciones Múltiples), considers multi-literacy as an essential competency for life, empowering citizens to develop capacities for reflection, oral expression, critical thinking, and guarantees them full participation in digital society and knowledge.

According to Media Literacy Index, Spain score is gradually decreasing in past 5 years. In 2017, the Index score was 24 and currently it is 21 as indicated in Media literacy Index Report in 2021. Moreover, Spain is in the 2nd rank of clusters even though, it is considered as in good situation comparing to the Eastern European states, it is still one of the lowest ones among Western European countries.

The Spanish government is planning to constantly monitor the internet in search of fake news stories and will give a "political response" to such campaigns, including retaliatory measures when a foreign state can be identified as being behind a disinformation campaign against Spain. That's according to the "Procedure for Intervention against Disinformation," which was approved in October 2020 by the country's National Security Council and was published on Thursday in the Official State Gazette (BOE). The document makes provisions for the possibility of carrying out communication campaigns in order to counter fake news stories, albeit stopping short of censoring them. It leaves in the hands of the government the authority to decide what exactly constitutes misinformation. The protocol updates one that has been in place

since March 2019, but that was not made public, and regulates an activity that began under the previous government, led by conservative Popular Party (PP) prime minister Mariano Rajoy.

Young people are rarely using the mainstream media channels and their main information source is usually the social media. According to the report of Consejo de Juventud on media consumption of young people, most of the young people never watch news on TV. The latest research in Spain surveyed young people aged 13 to 25 about their use of top platforms. According to the research, WhatsApp, Instagram, and YouTube are their top social and video platforms. About 9 out of 10 Spanish young people use these platforms. Upwards of two-thirds check them daily, with everyday use highest for WhatsApp, at 73%. TikTok and Facebook are also popular, with higher engagement among teens than young adults. Two-thirds of Spanish young people use TikTok, but daily use of the platform is higher among teens (61%) than people 18 to 25 (35%). And while more than half are Facebook users, teens are more likely than people 18 to 25 to check in every day (36% vs. 26%), with males 18 to 25 the group least likely to be daily users. Many Spanish young adults are infrequent users of other platforms – Twitch and Discord for males; Twitter and Pinterest for females. While Twitch is used by 59% of males 18 to 25 and Discord is used by 46%, less than 1 in 4 are daily users. Twitter is used by 62% of females 18 to 25, with 34% checking in daily; 54% use Pinterest, with daily checks from just 11%. Spanish gaming influencers are widely recognized. While 81% of Spanish young people follow influencers, it's more common among males (at 88%, compared with 74% of females). Two-thirds consider themselves fans of specific influencers – especially teen boys (74%). When we presented respondents with 40 names of popular creators who are local to Spain, at least half were aware of gamers El Rubius, AuronPlay, and VEGETTA777, as well as fashion blogger Dulceida.

<sup>30</sup> <https://english.elpais.com/politics/2020-11-09/spain-to-monitor-online-fake-news-and-give-a-political-response-to-disinformation-campaigns.html>

# Serbia

The current state of media and information literacy (MIL) in Serbia has been examined through recent research conducted by the Institute for Media and Diversity - Western Balkans. The findings highlight significant areas for improvement within the realm of MIL education, particularly regarding its early integration into the educational curriculum, even extending to preschool levels. Moreover, the research underscores concern regarding the efficacy of the existing educational system, which has been deemed outdated and lacking in innovation by some experts. Through a thorough analysis comprising quantitative data and in-depth interviews, the research underscores the importance of MIL as a focal point for various organizations and institutions across Serbia. However, to address the identified challenges and drive MIL forward, there is a consensus among interviewees on the necessity of reforming the formal educational structure, aligning it more closely with contemporary needs including internet safety and digital communications. The research also emphasizes the pivotal role of non-governmental organizations in MIL initiatives, particularly in promoting critical thinking among citizens<sup>31</sup>.

Serbia ranks on 31st out of 41 countries according to the European Media Literacy Index<sup>32</sup> 2023, which puts the country in 4th cluster. The fourth cluster is of already problematic countries, but still not those with the poorest performance. The 21st edition of the World Press Freedom Index, compiled annually by Reporters Without Borders, shows that in 2023<sup>32</sup>, Serbia's rank in the index dropped to 91 out of 180, with a score of 59.16, a significant decrease from its 2022 position of 79 out of 180, where it scored 61.51. According to this analysis, In Serbia a quality journalism, which investigates crime and corruption, is caught between rampant fake news and propaganda. While the legal framework is solid, journalists are threatened by political pressures and impunity of crimes committed against them. Serbia's media landscape is marked by a multitude of over 2,500 registered outlets, yet it remains highly fragmented with influential players like RTS and N1. Despite constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression, journalists face political attacks, often amplified by certain TV networks, in a polarized climate where criticism of the ruling elite can result in restricted access. Legal protections for journalists exist but are inconsistently enforced, leaving concerns about self-censorship and judicial independence. Economic dependence on advertising and public subsidies, coupled with issues of media concentration, raise worries about bias

<sup>31</sup> <https://english.elpais.com/politics/2020-11-09/spain-to-monitor-online-fake-news-and-give-a-political-response-to-disinformation-campaigns.html>

<sup>32</sup> <https://osis.bg/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/MLI-report-in-English-22.06.pdf>

and control. Sociocultural challenges include targeting of female journalists and media reporting on refugees by far-right groups. Efforts to enhance journalist safety, though underway, are marred by unresolved attacks, fostering an environment of insecurity within the profession<sup>33</sup>. When it comes to fake news in Serbia situation is troubling, in reality deliberate dissemination and organization of false narratives prevail over journalistic integrity. These intentionally crafted deceptions, driven by personal gain or political motives, are systematically propagated to deceive the public and discredit dissenting voices. They often bear political or nationalistic biases, serving as potent instruments for targeting, discrimination, or propaganda. Compounding the issue is the significant influence wielded by high-circulation media outlets, which not only perpetuate false narratives but also foster a culture of impunity for their dissemination. According to Vesna Radojević, a journalist at KRIK and editor of the "Raskrikavanje" project, the fact that the largest producers of false news in Serbia are also the highest-circulation media indicates a trend of impunity for false news by the public. She emphasizes that the lack of critical thinking in Serbia is a result of the country's challenges not only with political freedoms but also with media freedoms. She points out that the ruling regime maintains its power by controlling most major media outlets, leading to a situation where little can be done when media and journalists are complicit in this control. This pattern is typical of authoritarian societies, where journalists are labelled as foreign agents and enemies of the state for simply doing their job as professional truth-seekers. Radojević highlights that decision-makers are the main culprits in perpetuating this situation, as they not only lack a predisposition towards unbiased reporting but actively encourage biased narratives. She asserts that the newspapers in Serbia, far from being tabloids, serve as tools for the ruling party, used to send messages, praise the government, and discredit dissenting voices. These newspapers are also instrumental in instilling fear among citizens and maintaining the narrative of being under constant attack<sup>34</sup>. Despite efforts such as fact-checking initiatives and awareness campaigns, the prevalence of false news remains stubbornly high, posing a formidable challenge to the integrity of public discourse and democratic processes in Serbia. Addressing this pervasive issue requires multifaceted strategies targeting both the perpetrators of false news and the cultivation of critical thinking among the public to mitigate its detrimental impact on society. In 2021, five daily newspapers - Kurir, Alo, Informer, Srpski telegraf, and Večernje novosti - collectively featured 1,172 false, unsubstantiated, and manipulative news stories on their front pages. These publications continued to receive substantial funding from municipal budgets, totalling at least 29 million dinars. According to analysis conducted by Raskrikavanje, Srpski telegraf emerged as the primary purveyor of falsehoods, with 403 fabricated or

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.danas.rs/vesti/drustvo/namerne-lazne-vesti-sve-brojnije-ekspanzija-tek-sledi/>

unsupported front-page stories. Alo and Informer followed closely with 225 and 212 such stories, respectively. Večernje novosti and Kurir featured 169 and 163 false, unsubstantiated, and manipulative stories on their front pages, respectively. Notably, the analysed newspapers exhibited a notable bias towards President Aleksandar Vučić and the Serbian Progressive Party, frequently portraying them positively, with Kurir featuring the president on its front page at least 143 times, Večernje novosti 111 times, Alo 101 times, Srpski Telegraf 92 times, and Informer 86 times<sup>35</sup>.

The latest report from the National Youth Council of Serbia (KOMS), titled “Youth in the Media Mirror 2022<sup>36</sup>,” once again highlights that mainstream media predominantly portray young individuals in a negative light. The report indicates that the majority of content about youth in the observed media focuses on issues of youth safety, primarily due to coverage of crime and criminal activities. Researcher Ivan Subotić asserts that mainstream media are profit-oriented and inclined to publish sensationalist content to attract more clicks. He notes, “Youth are not at all in focus when it comes to analytical examination of their position and problems, but they are very much in focus when they are at the centre of a scandal or tragic event. News from the crime section continues to dominate.” Despite occasional coverage of youth-related competitions, successes remain overshadowed by ongoing challenges, such as maintaining education in North Kosovo and Metohija amidst barricades and incidents of violence in schools in Trstenik. The issue lies not in addressing these topics, but, as Ivan states, in the approach taken. He points out disparities in coverage across different media outlets, with some providing analytical perspectives while others sensationalize events and seek attention on social media platforms. The dissatisfaction among youth with media representation is evident, with individuals like Irena (24) and Milan (24) expressing disappointment in mainstream media’s failure to meet their needs and highlight their achievements. Ivan further highlights the lack of media initiatives addressing youth issues, indicating a lack of interest among media outlets. Specifically, he draws attention to the underrepresentation of women and marginalized youth in media coverage, emphasizing the urgent need for more inclusive reporting. Moreover, Milja Zdravković from KOMS emphasizes the importance of media proactivity in representing youth perspectives, urging mainstream media to allocate space for youth voices and concerns in their central programs. In contrast, the report acknowledges a positive difference in youth-oriented media, such as Oradio, which received commendable ratings and comments for its coverage. The analysis covered various thematic areas, including youth activism, mental health, gender-based violence, and ecology, revealing a more balanced and professional approach in youth media compared to mainstream outlets. Milja notes the significance of two-way communication with youth in youth media,

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.raskrikavanje.rs/page.php?id=Na-naslovnica-pet-novina-blizu-1-200-laznih-i-neutemeljenih-vesti-u-2020--godini-829>

<sup>36</sup> <https://koms.rs/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Mladi-u-medijskom-ogledalu-2022-istrazivanje.pdf>

contrasting with mainstream media's often negative portrayal of young individuals, which influences the formation of public perceptions and narratives about youth<sup>37</sup>.

On its European journey, Serbia is aligning its media laws and regulations with EU and majority of existing policy and legislation in this area is well written and defined, however there is a significant concern about its implementation. At the beginning of 2020, the Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted a new Strategy for the Development of the Public Information System in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020 – 2025. The strategy does not point out young people as a separate target group, but it does not exclude them either. The strategy involves improving media literacy by continuing the process of introducing media literacy into the formal education system, as well as developing the competencies of teachers and professors. The Ministry of Culture and Information with partners, the Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Telecommunications, the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, Commissioner for Equality Protection and Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media (REM) are responsible for the implementation. Action plan was adopted for period of 2 years and since 2022 there is no report on progress of the strategy implementation nor new Action plans. The overall objective of another Strategy of Digital Skills Development in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2020 - 2024 is to improve the digital knowledge and skills of all citizens including members of vulnerable social groups and youth. The Government of the Republic of Serbia adopted the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategy for the Development of Digital Skills in the Republic of Serbia for the period from 2020 to 2024, however this action plan refers only for the years 2023-2024 and again any evaluation reports are missing. The newly adopted National Youth Strategy for the period from 2023 to 2030 addresses media literacy and online security, primarily through Measure 4.5 – “Support to programmes for the development of digital competencies and digital citizenship” and Measure 5.1 – “Support to programmes that contribute to the development of healthy lifestyles and mental health of young people.” Under Measure 4.5, it is stipulated that the Ministry of Youth and Tourism and the Government of the Republic of Serbia remain committed to endorsing digitalization, fostering digital literacy, and promoting digital citizenship. In Serbia, there is no explicit policy on media literacy in the formal education system, rather it has been recognized as a broader concept of functional literacy. Nevertheless, the Strategy for Development of Education in Serbia by 2030 outlines Objective 1.3, which focuses on laying the groundwork for the advancement of digital education at the pre-university level. The goal is to facilitate the growth of digital pre-university education by emphasizing support for institutions in this sector to improve digital capacities, enhance students' digital competencies, and develop the

<sup>37</sup> <https://oradio.rs/sr/vesti/drustvo/mlada-osoba-u-mejnstrim-medijima-ponovo-negativac-12611.html>

digital skills of educators. This entails the implementation and promotion of inventive pedagogical approaches that integrate information and communication technology (ICT) into the teaching and learning process<sup>38</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki/chapters/serbia/68-media-literacy-and-safe-use-of-new-media>

3.

TEMATIC  
WORK-  
SHOPS



# 3. TEMATIC WORKSHOPS

## TEA RECIPE - INTRODUCING NARRATIVES

NARRATIVES AND STORYTELLING



TIME: 60-90'

**Overview:** This session helps to better understand term narrative. Participants will have opportunity to see differences between hand-outs and their own stories which will be created based on their own experiences. They will learn that narrative is everything that surrounds one message (written or told) that they receive, and they will see that one message can create a lot of different narratives.

### Objectives:

- To better understand concept of narrative and storytelling
- To set desirable conditions for understanding counter, alternative and oppressive narratives

**Materials:** copies of recipe for tea with questions, pens/markers, copies of definitions of terms for each participant.

**Group size:** 10-30

**Instructions:** Give one copy of recipe with questions to each participant and explain to them that they need to create a story based on given material. They should develop these stories based on their answers on questions that are included in the Handout 1. Participants should be creative and free to create whatever story they want, that story should include a lot of details or characters or both. They should not worry about the length of the text and focus on writing down first things that come to their mind. Give them 30 minutes to do this and make sure that the work is done individually. List some ideas, such as real-life event, short stories, news stories, interest from journals, description of movie or tv show, whatever they are thing once they read all materials. Do not give them any other specific details or instructions and insist that they are free to write down anything. After they are finished each participant will present their story to the rest of the group. After the discussion with participants, you will give each of them materials with definitions of terms (narrative, oppressive, counter and alternative narrative) and you will read with them out loud each definition and clarify if something is unclear.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Ask participants following questions:

What are the differences between the stories that were based on the same recipe and the same questions?

- Can they tell what is the reason for those differences?
- What is the result of them having different experiences?
- If they have a real-life example of same story evolving into different stories
- Can they see use of this workshop in their everyday life?

**Tips for facilitators:** Observe the work of participants and make sure they are following the instructions. Everyone should participate, so encourage them to be creative. Focus on their own experiences, movies they watched, weird dreams they had, its important to have different stories. At the end of this session, you should come to the mutual conclusion: Because we have different experiences, all information that we receive in everyday life we are experiencing differently. This conclusion is very important because we live in the time of fake news and oppressive narratives and those are really hard to be recognized sometimes. When reading the definitions ask participants if they have some examples for different kinds of narratives.

Handout 1.

Recipe for tea

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp dried camomile flowers
- pinch dried lavender, optional
- 2 tsp runny honey

Method:

Put the camomile and lavender into the teapot and fill up the pot with water that has boiled but been left to stand for 1 min.

Leave the flowers to infuse for 2-3 mins, stir in the honey then strain into cups to serve.

Questions to help with story

- Who is making tea?
- How many persons will drink this tea?
- What part of the day/time it is?
- Is there sugar in tea?
- Is there sandwiches or cakes?
- What is the occasion for this?

## Handout 2

### Definitions

A **narrative** is the presentation of one or more, real or fictitious, events that one or more persons report to one or more persons.

An **oppressive narrative** is a narrative that transfers negative information or provokes negative feelings and is directed at an individual or an entire group. This term is closely related to hate speech.

The **counter narrative** is a product that is created in reaction to the oppressive and has short-term effect.

An **alternative narrative** is created after a thorough analysis of the oppressive narrative. It has campaign features and produces lasting results. Alternative narratives respond to the very cause from which the oppressive narrative arose.

## MEDIA LITERACY QUIZ

THEME: MEDIA LITERACY



TIME: 45-60'

**Overview:** During this session participants will be introduced to basics of media literacy, they will gain better understanding of different negative media narratives and ways to recognize them.

**Objective:** To introduce some of the basic terms of media literacy to the participants and to provide them with knowledge about different features of media

**Materials:** Flip chart paper, markers, projector and the screen, Handout 1, Handout 2

**Preparation:** Prior to the workshop facilitator should prepare interactive presentation (Mentimeter) in the form of quiz about media literacy.

**Instructions:** Tell participants that during this session they will learn more about what media is, what kind of media reporting's exists and what are main characteristics regarding the traditional media. Divide participants in 4 groups and give them 3-4 minutes to come up with the name of their group which should be written in the form of username for some social media networks. After this give them the instruction for accessing the quiz and present questions, after all groups are done with first question, right answer will appear on the big screen with additional explanation, then second question will appear and so on till the quiz is done, based on the results one group should be named winner. After this give each group instruction to find examples of different media manipulation, each group will get 2 types of media manipulation, see Handout 2. At the end of the workshop give participants printed definitions of most important terms.

Quiz:

1. Which are the 3 types of media? A: Informational media, social networks, and internet media, but alongside these three types, there is often a division into print media, television, movies, and video games.
  - a. Television, magazines, and books
  - b. Traditional, modern private media
  - c. Informational media, social networks, and internet media
2. What is not a basic type of communication? A: Administrative language is a style of communication primarily connected to business and bureaucracy
  - a. Verbal
  - b. Visual

- c. Nonverbal
- d. Administrative
- e. Active Listening
- f. Written

3. What are the main principles of media literacy? A: Source evaluation, message decoding, and critical thinking.

- a. Message decoding, analysis, source evaluation
- b. Reading, message decoding, critical thinking
- c. Critical thinking

4. How much time does the average person spend on the internet? A: C According to the latest available data, the average person spends 6 hours and 58 minutes per day on screens connected to the internet. Daily screen time has increased by nearly 50 minutes per day since 2013. Almost half (49%) of 0 to 2-year-olds interact with smartphones. Gen Z averages around 9 hours of screen time per day. (Statista.com)

- a. 12 hours and 25 minutes
- b. 4 hour and 53 minutes
- c. 6 hours and 58 minutes
- d. 2 hours and 12 minutes

5. How many people worldwide use social media? A: There are 5.17 billion social media users globally. This means over 63% of the global population is on social media. The global social media users are forecasted to reach 5.42 billion by the end of 2025. Facebook is the biggest social media platform, with over 3.05 billion users

- a. 5.17 billion people
- b. 3.82 billion people
- c. 4.50 billion people

6. Spam is an abbreviation for Sending Pointless Annoying Messages: A: False. The primary meaning of spam is a message sent simultaneously to a large number of people.

- a. True
- b. False

7. A fact is a term that refers to information that is known and proven to be accurate: A: True

- a. True

b. False

8. A fake news is inaccurate or misleading information presented as news: A: True: It often aims to tarnish the reputation of a person or entity or to earn revenue from advertising.

a. True

b. False

9. Fact manipulation and fake news are the same. A: False. Fact manipulation is considered media content that contains some facts but presents them in a deceptive manner.

a. True

b. False

10. Disinformation is less harmful than fake news. A: True. Disinformation is a type of media manipulation based on facts but misrepresented, containing a “mix” of facts and false or half-truths. Disinformation can be considered a milder form of fake news and in some cases results from inaccurate or incomplete reporting.

a. True

b. False

11. Biased reporting is not objective but based on facts. A: True. Biased reporting refers to media articles whose main goal is to portray a certain person, group, or institution in a positive light. As a rule, such media articles contain only facts, evidence, and opinions that support the narrative of such a news article, while simultaneously ignoring other information and facts that do not fit into that story. These media articles may or may not be inaccurate, but they never show the whole picture.

a. True

b. False

12. Hidden advertising has more impact than paid and sponsored advertisements. A: True: If an advertising message appears in the editorial part of the media, it is presented as neutral information and can thus have a greater influence on readers because it appears as an objective assessment of the quality, usefulness, or significance of the advertised item.

a. True

b. False

13. Choose the image where you see Clickbait.

14. What are the other types of media manipulation? A: all of the above. **Unverified information** includes speculations, rumours, and other unconfirmed claims presented as facts. Especially problematic are pieces of information that are not only unverified but also cannot be verified. Such an example can be found in news based on “anonymous sources,” for which no additional evidence is provided. **Propaganda** is biased or misleading information used to promote a political goal or viewpoint. For images meant to show reality, **manipulation** can create big problems. While it’s common for news media to make minor changes like cropping or lighting adjustments, it’s unethical for journalists to edit a photo in a way that changes its meaning or misleads viewers. While this practice does not happen often in legitimate news media, there are plenty of less reputable news sources that are happy to edit photos to get your attention. Using photo editing software, almost anyone can make big changes to an image, from adjusting colours and lighting, to adding and removing content. That’s why you should always keep a critical eye on images in the media.

- a. Unverified information
- b. Propaganda
- c. Photo manipulation
- d. All of the above

15. What is censorship? A: Suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films, news, etc., deemed obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.

16. Can classification of information by governments be justified? What is the reason for hiding state information from the public? A: b – The purpose of classification is to protect information. Higher classifications protect information that might endanger national security. Classification formalizes what constitutes a “state secret” and accords different levels of protection based on the expected damage the information might cause in the wrong hands.

- a. No, there are no justification
- b. Yes in some cases
- c. Yes, but only in state of emergency

17. What are the indicators that the media are not free? Select all that apply. A: a and c:

- a. Censorship
- b. Disabling comments on blogs, vlogs, or other authored posts
- c. Large number of television and radio programs owned by the state

18. How many journalists worldwide were arrested during 2023? A: b: In its annual global report, the Committee to Protect Journalists found that 320 journalists were behind bars for their work as of the census date December 1, 2023, down from more than 360 in 2022. The number was the second-highest recorded by CPJ since the census began in 1992, a disturbing barometer of entrenched authoritarianism and the virioli of governments determined to smother independent voices. 120 journalists and media workers, including 11 women, have been killed in 2023, announced the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) on 31 December

- a. 155
- b. 320
- c. 280

19. When is World Press Freedom Day observed? A: May 3rd

- a. May 3rd
- b. May 10th
- c. June 3rd

Handout 1.

Group 1: Fake news / Click bait

Group 2: Spin / Propaganda

Group 3: Unverified information / Native Advertising

Group 4: Disinformation / Fact Manipulation

Handout 2.

Forms of Media Manipulation

Fake News:

Fake news is a media report that contains unequivocally false claims or information that does not correspond to the facts, deliberately misleading the public. Fake news often targets arousing emotions in readers and is often related to "hot" topics and questions that spark intense public debate, where people have strong opinions and divided views. Fake news doesn't necessarily have to be based solely on false information; only a part of it can be invented, while the rest of the content is accurate or factually neutral. This increases the chance that readers believe in the false information. Although there is no recipe for recognizing fake news, there are certain signs that can indicate that the information that reached



you might be incorrect, such as the fact that it was published on an anonymous portal.

#### Disinformation:

Disinformation is a media manipulation based on facts but presents them incorrectly, containing a “mix” of facts and inaccurate information or half-truths. Disinformation can be considered a milder form of fake news and, in some cases, is the result of imprecise or incomplete news reporting, resulting in unintentional misinformation. This form of misinformation often intertwines with unchecked information, spin, fact manipulation, biased reporting, and other forms of manipulation.

#### Fact Manipulation:

Fact manipulation refers to a media report that interprets facts in a deceptive way. These reports usually use accurate information to draw false conclusions or statements, aiming to lead readers to incorrect conclusions compared to the real meaning of the conveyed information. Like fake news, fact manipulation does not appear accidentally—it is most often the result of a conscious intention to build an unverified or false story based on verified information, although it can also result from a lack of knowledge about the subject being written about.

#### Propaganda:

Propaganda is material that aims to push a particular political point of view or agenda, often by using biased or misleading information. Political groups will spread propaganda in order to influence people and serve their own interests. There are many forms of propaganda, including posters, videos, text, and images. Propaganda is most often used in times of conflict. Governments will use propaganda to spread misinformation about their enemy, and also to make the public aware of rules and regulations that are in place.

#### Spin:

Spin is a propagandistic activity through which political parties attempt to present everything they do in a positive light in the public and media. Although spin is not solely a political category, it is most commonly used in politics to diminish or change the negative public perception of events, individuals, institutions, etc. Spin generally contains part or all of the information whose effects someone wants to diminish or nullify, without giving it too much importance, and adds information that changes the image of the situation to focus on someone or something else.

#### Biased Reporting:

Biased reporting refers to media reports whose primary intention is to present a particular person, group, or institution in a positive or negative light. Such reports usually favor facts, opinions, and conclusions that fit a certain narrative, while simultaneously neglecting or distorting anything that does not fit into it. Biased media reports are never neutral. They always bring a certain value judgment on

the topic they address, and there is always a side presented in a positive or negative light, which is the first sign that the media report in front of you could be biased. Biased reporting often occurs alongside the transmission of fake news, conspiracy theories, fact manipulation, or pseudoscience.

#### Hidden/Native Advertising:

Hidden/Native advertising is promotional content located in the editorial section of the media, presented as the work of the media's editorial team, not as a sponsored article. Paid promotion of products, events, political parties, or anything else must not be presented as a neutral informative report but must make it clear to readers that they are reading a text that originated as paid promotion.

#### Clickbait:

Clickbait is a sensationalistic headline that falsely represents the content of an article with the aim of attracting readers to click on the shared link. Clickbait is undoubtedly the most widespread form of manipulation in online media. It is the easiest way to turn a legitimate and sometimes dull piece of news into advertising profit with a new and provocative headline. Anonymous portals often use clickbait to better "package" someone else's text and present it as their own. The biggest danger of clickbait is that not everyone will open the article, and conclusions will be drawn only based on the headlines read on the portal or on social networks.

#### Unverified Information:

Unverified information, in short, refers to speculation, rumors, and other unconfirmed claims presented as facts. Especially problematic are those pieces of information that are not only unchecked but there is no way to verify them. Such an example can be found in news based on "anonymous sources," for which no additional evidence is provided. If the news you are reading provides detailed information about something but gives no evidence or source for the claims made or relies solely on information obtained from an anonymous source, it is unchecked information that cannot be considered credible.

#### Censorship:

Censorship, broadly speaking, involves monitoring and/or limiting freedom of expression. Censorship often takes the form of self-censorship in the media by refusing to cover certain topics or personalities. In the context of fact-checking, censorship refers to the removal of content related to politically sensitive or publicly important topics soon after publishing.

#### Photo manipulation:

Photo manipulation involves transforming or altering a photograph using various methods and techniques to achieve desired results. Some photo manipulations are considered skillful artwork while others are frowned upon as unethical practices, especially when used to deceive the public. Other examples include being used for political propaganda, or to make a product or person look better, or sim

ply for entertainment purposes or harmless pranks.

### Conspiracy Theories

Conspiracy or plot involves the secret collaboration and actions of a group of people to achieve some interest harmful to another group of people. The term “conspiracy or plot involves the secret collaboration and actions of a group of people to achieve some interest harmful to another group of people. The term “conspiracy theory,” however, does not refer to uncovering such groups, plans, and activities but rather theorizing about what happens “behind the scenes” while putting facts in the background.

### Pseudoscience:

Pseudoscience presents opinions, views, and values as scientific facts, obtained not through the scientific method but presented as if they were. Pseudoscientific content is often found in articles dealing with lifestyle, health, and science, where existing scientific research is either wrongly or manipulatively interpreted or references non-scientifically verified research.

### Satire:

Satire is a literary form that critically mocks an individual, group, state, or authority, often used as a means of political commentary. Satirical content appearing in the media serves to emphasize and criticize the subject, usually through caricature or satirical news. If it is clearly stated that a particular media content is satirical, it is not considered manipulation. However, satire can also be used as a manipulation if not explicitly labelled as such.

## THEMATIC WORKSHOPS: HOW TO NOT REPORT ON EVENTS

THEME: UNDERSTANDING MEDIA  
MANIPULATION



TIME: 60'

**Overview:** During this session participants will be better familiarised with different elements of media biases and manipulative narratives through reverse engineering technics

### Objectives:

- To better understand different forms of media manipulation
- To familiarise participants with basic principles of proper and responsible reporting

**Group size:** 15 - 30

**Materials:** Papers, pens/markers, Hand out 1, Handout 2

**Instructions:** Start the session by brainstorming on different types of media manipulations together with participants. Explain to them that they will take on the role of irresponsible and corrupt journalists in order to reverse engineer different types of media biases and to better understand elements of each type of negative media content. Divide participants into groups of 3-5 and give them the all the same information (see Handout 1). Each group will have a task to create specific type of news (fake news, propaganda, spin, hidden/native advertisement) which is based on information provided. Each group will have 20-25 minutes to develop this "news" after which they will present the work done in front of the whole group. After each presentation participants will underline key elements of specific type of media manipulation which can be found in texts created by them.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Ask participants following questions:

- What was the hardest or most challenging part of this session?
- Which group had the easiest job and why?
- Do you think this scenario can happen in real life situations?
- What did you learn during this session?










**Tips for facilitators:** Make sure participants have access to definition of specific type of media manipulation and suggest them to find some examples as guidelines for their work. If the group is more advanced facilitators can give each group their tasks without revealing it to other groups which will then have a task to recognize which type of media bias is used.

## Handout 1

Biggest ever Car Fair will be organized next week in capital city. Ministry of tourism announced that they expect over 100,000 visitors.

## Handout 2

### MEDIA MANIPULATION HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT

<p><b>FACT</b></p> <p>A chicken lays an egg</p> 	<p><b>FAKE NEWS</b></p> <p>Factually incorrect claim of often completely made up information. Created to mislead the public and hide the truth.</p> <p>A chicken lays an egg – and hatches a lizard</p> 	<p><b>MANIPULATION OF FACTS</b></p> <p>Known and correct information presented in a misleading way</p> <p>Panotic chicken – chicken lays egg in honor of national day</p> 
<p><b>DISINFORMATION</b></p> <p>Mix of facts, half-truths and untruths</p> <p>Chickens fed with genetically modified food lays healthier eggs</p> 	<p><b>CENSORSHIP</b></p> <p>Banning of reporting about events, people or themes</p> <p>Media content which is quickly removed, without obvious editorial reason</p> <p>A chicken that we cannot mention did something we cannot talk about, but you didn't hear it from us.</p> 	<p><b>HIDDEN ADVERTISING</b></p> <p>Advertising disguised as editorial text</p> <p>Experts tell us, chickens from "LJ" farm are the best laying chickens in Serbia</p> 
<p><b>PROPAGANDA</b></p> <p>Biased or deceptive information used to promote a particular point of view</p> <p>Serbian chickens most fertile in the region, a direct result of Serbia's economic well-being</p> 	<p><b>BIAS</b></p> <p>Media content which favors one side, not including other opinions</p> <p>Serbian chicken lays best egg in the world</p> 	<p><b>CLICKBAIT</b></p> <p>Article which uses sensationalised headline to grab attention, promising content which doesn't exist</p> <p>You'll never believe what this chicken did! 'Shocking!'</p> 



Raskrikavanje also recognises other forms of fake news, such as conspiracy theories, pseudo-science, and satire. Raskrikavanje will mark as unfounded articles whose claims cannot be proven or which have no source.



Created by Raskrikavanje for the IREX program "Learn to Discern", supported by the US Embassy in Serbia.

## BEHIND THE NEWS

THEME: MEDIA MANIPULATION



TIME: 120'

**Overview:** The aim of this workshop is to empower young people with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate the modern media landscape with critical thinking and awareness. By understanding the dynamics of media manipulation, recognizing biases, and appreciating the psychological factors influencing perception, participants will learn to approach information with a discerning mindset.

### Objectives:

- To foster an understanding of media literacy and the prevalence of media manipulation.
- To equip participants with the ability to critically analyse and interpret media content.
- To examine the psychological aspects that shape individual perceptions of news and information.

**Materials:** Printed copies of the news story for each participant, sheets with a scale from 1 to 5 for participants to individually score the characters, whiteboard or flip chart to note down participants' initial scores and facilitate group discussions, markers and pens for participants to use during the scoring activity and group discussions.

**Group size:** 20-30

**Preparation:** Read and thoroughly understand the provided news story on the scandal in Paulminate. Familiarize yourself with the characters, charges, and initial details. Review the workshop objectives to ensure a clear understanding of the educational goals and outcomes. Prepare scoring sheets and handouts. Develop discussion guides for both the initial individual scoring phase and the subsequent group discussions. This will help steer conversations toward key aspects of the news story. Set up a whiteboard or flip chart to record participants' initial scores and facilitate group discussions. Make sure you have enough markers.

**Instructions:** Participants are handed a news story that appeared on the latest TV news: "Scandal in Paulminate: Mayor Arrested for Arranged Marriages and Corruption." Facilitators should read out loud the news while the whole group follows.

*The mayor of Paulminate, Carl Nobey, was arrested this morning following an incisive investigation started from an inquiry conducted by the journalist Mark Hiderly. The*

*charge? Aiding illegal immigration and corruption. Evidence gathered by the judge for preliminary investigation unveiled an intricate scheme orchestrated by the mayor, who apparently arranged marriages between immigrant women housed in the Paulminate refugee center and wealthy local businessmen, in return of favors regarding tenders for public works in the area. All this, with the goal of securing Italian citizenship for the women involved.*

*In an unexpected turn of events, the president of the NGO "Earth is one", Will Comsee, which deals with refugee reception, categorically refused to make any statements regarding this scandal but denied any association's involvement in the facts being investigated. His silence adds further mystery to this case that has shocked the quiet town of Paulminate.*

After reading the news story, participants, in thoughtful silence, proceed to assign scores from 1 to 5 to the characters involved in the story, where 1 represents the most negative rating and 5 the most positive rating. Each participant makes his or her rating individually without any preliminary discussion. They should have around 10 minutes for this task. Next, the facilitator invites each of the participants to share their scores and give reasons for them. This initial stage aims to capture participants' personal opinions without external influences, encouraging the expression of individual judgments. The scores given are noted on a whiteboard to keep track of each participant's assessment. This visual representation can then serve as the basis for subsequent comparison and discussion. After this first phase, participants are divided into groups of five people each. Within these groups, participants should discuss their scores and the reasons that guided them in their assessment. The discussion can lead to deeper reflection and possible revision of the original scores in light of the different perspectives and arguments that emerged during the discussion within the groups. This structured approach allows participants' diverse opinions to be explored, promoting individual and collective reflection without outside influences at the initial stage and then allowing for constructive discussion within groups. The scores given are noted on a whiteboard to keep track of each participant's assessment. This visual representation can then serve as the basis for subsequent comparison and discussion.

After the initial discussion, participants are provided with an in-depth news report that introduces significant new details:

**Single arranged marriage:** Contrary to the initial perception, it is revealed that the mayor arranged only one arranged marriage instead of multiple marriages as initially reported and he declared to have done that as civil disobedience.

**Dramatic situation of refugee:** The refugee from Nigeria is 21 years old and she faced an extremely dramatic situation in her home country, risking stoning if she was repatriated. She was charged for having an extra marriage affair. This additional aspect gives new light on her situation and the reasons that may have influenced her choices.

**Residence permit denied three times:** The refugee had already received three denials for her residence permit, creating a legitimate concern on the mayor's part about potential imminent repatriation. This element may influence the perception of the

mayor's involvement in the situation.

**Waste management contract:** The businessman and contractor involved was awarded the waste management contract on a regular basis by winning the tender in the previous year.

**Businessman profile:** The guy involved is 50 years old, he's widowed and he declared that he decided to help the mayor for his good purposes.

These new details should stimulate a revision of initial judgments, encouraging participants to reconsider the complexity of the situation and reflect on the motivations and circumstances of the characters involved. Subsequent discussion could deepen these aspects and lead to further understanding of the dynamics of the story.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** After the presentation of these new details, a general discussion opens on the nature of an in-depth, sensationalistic, and superficial news stories and how they may influence personal perceptions and opinions formed based on the information provided. The discussion could be facilitated by the following questions:

- How did your initial perceptions and scores change throughout the workshop?
- Were there any surprising revelations or shifts in your understanding of the news story?
- How did the group discussions influence your perspective on the characters and the news story?
- Did hearing diverse opinions lead to a deeper understanding of the complexities involved?
- How did the new details presented in the in-depth news report affect your judgment of the characters?
- Were there elements that significantly altered your initial perceptions?
- In what ways has this workshop enhanced your awareness of media manipulation and its impact?
- How will you apply the skills and insights gained in your daily life?

**Tips for facilitator:** In anticipation of various scenarios during the workshop, facilitators should be well-prepared to adapt to different dynamics and ensure a successful learning experience for participants. Acknowledge participants' perspectives and validate their initial judgments. Encourage open-mindedness and frame the revision as a natural part of the learning process. Share examples of how reconsideration strengthens critical thinking skills.



### Handout 1: Definitions and key concepts

#### Media literacy:

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media in a variety of forms. It involves critical thinking skills, and an understanding of the role media plays in shaping our perceptions.

#### Media manipulation:

Media manipulation refers to the deliberate use of various techniques to shape or control information presented in the media. This can include tactics like misinformation, disinformation, and framing to influence public opinion.

#### Critical Thinking:

Critical thinking involves analysing and evaluating information, arguments, or claims in a logical and systematic way. It includes the ability to question assumptions, consider multiple perspectives, and make informed judgments.

### Handout 2: Initial news story (see the instructions)

### Handout 3: Scoring sheets

(Provide a table with columns for participant names, characters involved, and a space for each participant to assign scores from 1 to 5.)

Character	1 Score (1-5)	Average Score
Mayor – Carl Nobey	_____	_____
Journalist – Mark Hiderly	_____	_____
Refugee	_____	_____

Businessman	_____	_____
President of NGO	_____	_____
Will Comsee	_____	_____

### Handout 3: Scoring sheets

(Provide a table with columns for participant names, characters involved, and a space for each participant to assign scores from 1 to 5.)

**Additional Details: Reconsidering initial judgments** (Include the new details provided in the workshop description.)

**Single arranged marriage:** Contrary to the initial perception, it is revealed that the mayor arranged only one arranged marriage instead of multiple marriages as initially reported and he declared to have done that as civil disobedience.

**Dramatic situation of refugee:** The refugee from Nigeria is 21 years old and she faced an extremely dramatic situation in her home country, risking stoning if she was repatriated. She was charged for having an extra marriage affair. This additional aspect gives new light on her situation and the reasons that may have influenced her choices.

**Residence permit denied three times:** The refugee had already received three denials for her residence permit, creating a legitimate concern on the mayor's part about potential imminent repatriation. This element may influence the perception of the mayor's involvement in the situation.

**Waste management contract:** The businessman and contractor involved was awarded the waste management contract on a regular basis by winning the tender in the previous year.

**Businessman profile:** The guy involved is 50 years old, he's widowed and he declared that he decided to help the mayor for his good purposes.

## **Material for facilitators:**

- Misinformation, manipulation, and abuse on social media in the era of COVID-19

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42001-020-00094-5>

- Social media manipulation by political actors an industrial scale problem - Oxford report

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2021-01-13-social-media-manipulation-political-actors-industrial-scale-problem-oxford-report>

- Digital media and misinformation: An outlook on multidisciplinary strategies against manipulation

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s42001-021-00118-8>

- Disinformation by Design: The Use of Evidence Collages and Platform Filtering in a Media Manipulation Campaign

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10584609.2019.1686094>

- Detecting and Grounding Multi-Modal Media Manipulation

[https://openaccess.thecvf.com/content/CVPR2023/html/Shao\\_Detecting\\_and\\_Grounding\\_Multi-Modal\\_Media\\_Manipulation\\_CVPR\\_2023\\_paper.html](https://openaccess.thecvf.com/content/CVPR2023/html/Shao_Detecting_and_Grounding_Multi-Modal_Media_Manipulation_CVPR_2023_paper.html)

## CHECKING THE FACTS

THEME: INTERNET LITERACY;  
DISCRIMINATION; SOCIAL MEDIA AS A  
NEW SOURCE OF INFO



TIME: 60'

**Overview:** Participants are asked to act as 'researchers' for politicians on the issue of homophobic abuse. They consider the reliability of information posted online and develop strategies for their practice.

### Objectives:

- To assess the reliability of information found online
- To explore some of the difficulties faced by young gay people with hate speech online
- To consider their behavior about online content
- Materials: Access to the Internet, Papers and pens, Flipchart and markers
- Group size: 10-20
- Preparation:
- Ensure that there is Internet access for participants
- Make copies of the handouts and monitoring sheet.
- Optional: Ask beforehand for volunteers to carry out the 'monitoring' task. About half the group will be needed as monitors. Show them the monitoring sheet and check they understand the information they will be looking for, and how to fill in the grid.

**Instructions:** Explain that the activity will explore the use of the Internet as an information resource. Ask how much participants use the Internet for this purpose and whether they have 'favorite' sites they use. Give them the following scenario and check that everyone understands the task. Following a number of homophobic attacks against young gays – particularly in online sites and videos – and strong lobbying by NGOs, there is to be a debate in parliament about the issue. The government has proposed draft legislation to allocate money from the budget towards educational efforts to counter homophobic attitudes and provide support for young gays. The main opposition parties are all opposed to the new law. You are to imagine you are working as researcher for a politician who wants to speak in the debate. She has asked you to prepare a briefing for her speech with some key points to be made in the debate. You have 20 minutes to do some preliminary research. Explain that people will work in groups of 4, with 2 people acting as 'researchers' and 2 people observing the 'methodology' of the researchers. Tell them that research demands a proper methodology. Ask if they can suggest some important considerations in carrying out research and make a list of these on a flipchart. Ask for volunteers to act as monitors, if this has not been done

beforehand. Give them copies of the monitors' sheet and make sure they understand the task. Divide the rest of the group so that you have roughly equal numbers working for the government and for the different opposition parties. Give each group a card with their task. Tell participants they have 30 minutes to carry out their research. Suggest that they use the first 20 minutes to find relevant information on the internet and leave 10 minutes at the end to agree on the main points they will present to their parliamentary representative. When groups have finished the task, invite them to move away from the computers. Give them another 5-10 minutes so that the monitors in their group can feed back on some of their key observations. Invite the researchers to present the main points they selected for their member of parliament's speech. These can be presented as 'bullet points': participants are to imagine they are briefing the members of parliament, not making the speech themselves. Allow some time after each presentation for the monitors to present their results and for any questions from other groups on the information presented or the strategy used. Then invite participants to debrief the activity.

### **Debriefing and evaluation:**

- How easy did you find the task? What did you find most difficult?
- How did you decide which websites to use for information? How much were you concerned by the 'trustworthiness' of the sites or the 'truth' of the information you selected?
- Did you give more importance to finding information which would support your representative's position, or to providing an 'objective' account of the issue? Which do you think a real researcher should do?
- Did you search for examples of hate speech against gays? If some groups did not, do they think this would have been relevant?
- Do you think your representative would be happy with your research? Do you think those she represents would be happy?
- Did you find out anything important about using the Internet for research? Would you like to add anything to the list of considerations compiled at the beginning of the activity?
- Were you surprised by the different information that people managed to find? How do you explain this?
- What are some of the ways we can check whether a website is reliable, or whether information can be trusted? Do you normally do this?
- Did you find any examples of discrimination or abuse?
- Do you think you found any information which was 'false' or unfair?
- What are the risks of allowing anyone to post their opinions online? Can you think of things you can do to reduce the risk of other people taking these opinions as 'facts'?

Tips for facilitator: The activity will be more effective if the 'monitors' are briefed beforehand. If this is possible, you could have only one monitor for each small group and increase the number of 'researchers'. The researchers should not feel they are being 'tested' by the monitors. You could tell them that the monitors' task is to look at different research methods and that there are several ways of approaching this task! You may decide not to show the researchers the monitors' sheet: in this case they would not be alerted to some of the key considerations and the results might be more interesting. However, this may also put more pressure on the researchers. Showing them the sheet would give the researchers and monitor a better collaborative working relationship. During the debriefing, you could explore whether research is likely to be biased by the result we 'want' to find. You could use this to ask how participants generally relate to information they see but do not want to believe! One of the dangers of misinformation or strong bias being so prevalent on the Internet is that it can easily be spread as 'fact'. You could explore whether participants think they may have passed on 'facts' they have seen on the Internet, and whether any of this information may have helped to spread prejudices about particular groups or individuals. You could use the checklist in the background information on Internet literacy to supplement participants' suggestions for how they can check the reliability of information posted on the Internet. Emphasize that most of what we see contains an element of 'opinion'. There are many ways of presenting information so that a particular point of view is strengthened. For example, omitting examples of homophobic hate speech gives the impression that this is not a problem! You can do a search about the tracking of Internet hoaxes and discuss with participants how false news contributes to fueling hate speech. You could select a different 'target group' for participants to research, for example, women, Roma or another ethnic minority, asylum seekers, and so on. You could also run the activity without monitors, but with everyone acting as their own 'monitor'. In this case, you should go through the monitors' sheet with the group beforehand and ask them to check their own methods as they research. Participants could refine the list of considerations for carrying out research online and create their own set of guidelines. They could also compile a checklist for sharing information with others, and share this with activists on the No Hate Speech Movement website. A great deal of hate speech is disseminated by people who unthinkingly share opinions which express a bias and are hurtful to others. This can encourage readers to think it is 'acceptable' to abuse these groups. You can find other educational activities to run with your group about strategies of misinformation here:

<http://mediasmarts.ca/sites/default/files/tutorials/facing-online-hate/index.html>

Invite participants to present the websites they use most often to find information online and check together how reliable and impartial these websites are.

## Handout:

**Politician 1:** Your politician is a member of the government. She needs to speak strongly in favour of the new legislation. Do an Internet search to find any information that would be useful to her in making her speech. Then make a list of about 5 key points you think she should address.

**Politician 2:** Your politician is a member of the opposition. He is opposed to allocating money from the budget to address this problem. Do an Internet search to find any information that would be useful to him in making his speech. Then make a list of about 5 key points you think he should address.

**Politician 3:** Your politician is a member of a minority party. Your party has not yet decided whether to support or oppose the legislation. Do an Internet search to find any information that would be useful to your politician in making up her mind. Then make a list of about 5 key points you think she should address.

Search terms used to find information	
<b>FOR EACH SITE VISITED:</b>	
Name of site	
Approx. no of minutes spent on the site	
'Political orientation' (pro-gay, anti-gay, neutral)	
Why was the site chosen?	
'Authority' of the site: – Why should the site be trusted? – Did the group check this?	
For any information extracted, was a source or reference given and did the group check this?	
Anything else relating to how the researchers	

# DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN MEDIA – UNDERSTANDING THE CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN CONTEXTUAL TEXT

THEME: DISCRIMINATION AND HATE  
SPEECH



TIME: 120'

**Overview:** The 'Analysing the Discourses' Workshop is developed to address the issue of the discriminative discourses in the media by using the methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis. Critical discourse analysis (or discourse analysis) is a research method for studying written or spoken language in relation to its social context. It aims to understand how language is used in real life situations. This workshop increases the understanding of the young people concerning how the language impacts our lives and how we construct the language according to our biases. During this phase, the social media texts will be extracted according to the context of the training and the participants will work on the impact of the language on the social practice.

## Objectives:

- To increase the understanding and use of CDA in non-formal education
- To transfer tools for challenging dominant or oppressive discourses on social media

## Materials:

- Social media texts ( Twitter thread or Facebook thread under a news )
- A4 Papers
- Flipcharts
- Board markers
- Pyramid of Hate (Printed as the number of group)

**Group size:** 20

## Preparation:

*Discourse Analysis in Media – Understanding the Critical Discourse Analysis in Contextual Texts* require a previous research by the facilitators to be implemented. The social media texts should be chosen in a way that nurtures the discussion rather than a single thread of hate speech, they should have a controversial structure such as Ukrainian War, Palestinian – Israeli Conflict etc. The facilitator should understand firstly starting to this workshop what CDA is and how it can be used in non-formal educational context. As Fairclough<sup>39</sup> describes the CDA as follows:

<sup>39</sup> Norman Fairclough, *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Language*, Londra: Longman, 1995. Gunther Kress, *Critical Discourse Analysis, Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, Volume: 11, (March 1990).



- Language is a social phenomenon.
- Language is not only a social phenomenon. Institutions and social groups have specific values and these are systematically expressed through language.
- Discourse/language is not only a tool for presenting social practices, but also constitutes practices such as power, sovereignty, prejudice and resistance.
- Discourse gains meaning as a result of the dialectical relationship between texts and social issues.
- Language structures are not arbitrary. Any choices made in regards to language is not done randomly or without knowledge but rather carry a specific meaning.
- The production and reproduction of the relationship between authority and power are and made possible through discourse.
- Critical discourse analysis does not only comment on written text but also explains it.

In this workshop, the participants will work with a principle as *"language is "shaped by the social functions it has come to serve"* so that the narratives in social media how it is constructed and what they provide and how the two sides of the aisle participate in the discussion within this interaction.

### Instructions:

The facilitator provides participants with the CDA Framework and explains the CDA for the participants. During this process, the facilitator says that *"CDA is a research method and we will try to understand the impact of the discourse in social media and how the hate and discrimination is occurred due to construction of the language from real examples."*

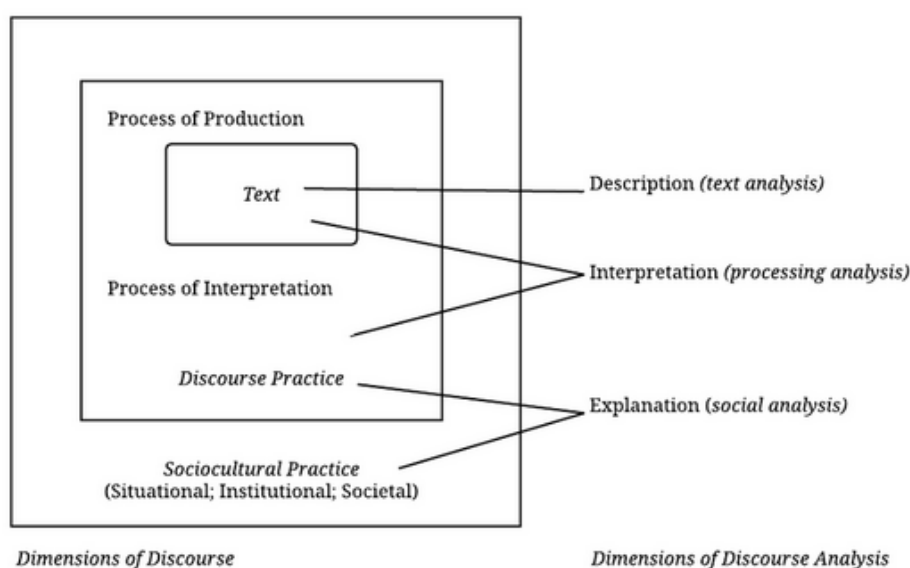


Figure 1 CDA Framework ( Figure 2. Three-dimensional CDA framework (Fairclough, 1995, p.98) )

Then divides participants in four small groups of 5 people. During this process, the facilitator will provide 4 separate texts to the participants (if the number of people is higher, it can be increased).

**The participants works for 45 mins for the implementation of this segment.**

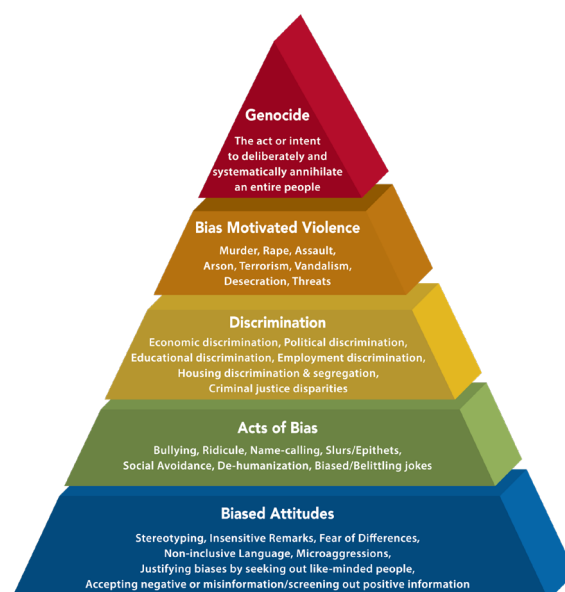
The participants will check the texts by following the structure below :

- Specifying a social problem having a semiotic aspect; locating it outside the text and identifying its semiotic aspects.
- Specifying the obstacles for the problem to be tackled by analysing:
  - the practices in which it is located,
  - the relationships of its semiotic aspects to other elements within particular practices,
  - its semiotic aspects through showing its structural analysis or order of discourse, its interactional analysis, its interdiscursive analysis, and its linguistic and semiotic analysis.
- Judging whether the social order or network of practices needs the problem.
- Identifying possible ways to overcome the problem.

After the participants implements the analysis of the texts, each group explains their analysis and how the issue is occurred and what they see in the text from their perspective and how the interactions occurred especially between the two opposite sides of the discussion. In that process, they will try to answer for each discussion point :

- How the media presented the discriminated group specific to the text?
- How this presentation can be considered as a form of “hate speech”?

In the next phase, from the same texts, the participants focus on the textures and where they fit in the Pyramid of hate. Prior to the start of the discussion, the facilitator provides the Pyramid of Hate as below :



The pyramid of hate is related with the CDA in a way to understand the discriminative speech and how it happens within the social media.

**Participants work for 30 minutes for the implementation of this segment.**

After the classification of the texts or parts of texts by the participants in the hate pyramid, the participants put the flipcharts with the cutted texts in each "Pyramid of Hate" in an exhibition format. **( 15 minutes )**

Each group checks the posters and provides comments with the post-its to the each Pyramid of Hate and it continues with the debriefing and evaluation of the overall process.

**Debriefing and evaluation:**

- During the debriefing and evaluation of this session, you can use the following guiding questions to initiate the discussion :
- How did you feel while reading the texts as a group?
- Did you have disagreements within the group? If yes, why?
- Do you think that the texts that we say sometimes can "*start as a joke*" but "*turn into a genocide*"?
- How is it related with media and social media?
- How was the overall process of discussion and creating hate pyramids and analysing the texts?

After the process, the facilitator closes the discussion by giving an example from the comedians talks (Jimmy Carr example).

**Material for facilitators:** We did not provide any social media threads to implement this workshop due to reason that it could promote, or harm one side and the method should be implemented by understanding the special circumstances of the overall group. That's why, we suggest the facilitators to focus on implementing the method by using real life examples.

Here is one of the examples from a comedian Twitter Thread:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/news/jimmy-carr-netflix-joke-travellers-b2009057.html>

The facilitator should be an at least understanding of ADL Hate Pyramid in a clearer way and CDA from Fairclough's approach.

ADL Pyramid of Hate :

[https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/pyramid-of-hate-web-english\\_1.pdf](https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/pyramid-of-hate-web-english_1.pdf)

Analysing Discourse : Textual Analysis for Social Research :

<https://www.routledge.com/Analysing-Discourse-Textual-Analysis-for-Social-Research/Fairclough/p/book/9780415258937>

# ROOTS AND BRANCHES

THEME: DISCRIMINATION AND HATE  
SPEECH IN MEDIA



TIME: 120'

**Overview:** The 'Roots and Branches' workshop is a journey to deepen awareness of online hate speech and arm participants with critical media literacy skills. Through collaborative exploration, hate speech's interconnected elements in hate speech trees are visually represented, exploring the 'roots' (causes) and 'branches' (consequences). This workshop promotes diverse perspectives, insightful exchanges, and reflections on the complexity of hate speech.

## Objectives:

- To equip participants with critical media literacy skills to analyse and address hate speech in digital spaces.
- To enable participants to identify and document specific elements constituting the 'roots' (causes) and 'branches' (consequences) of hate speech.
- To instil an understanding that each identified root can have deeper causes, and each branch can lead to further outcomes, emphasizing the complexity of the issue.

## Materials:

- Large sheets of paper to facilitate the creation of hate speech trees in groups.
- Markers, coloured pencils, or pastels for participants to visually represent hate speech trees.
- A designated area for groups to present their completed hate speech trees.

## Group size: 15-20

**Instructions:** Participants are divided into smaller groups, each receiving a generously sized sheet of paper along with drawing materials to facilitate work within this session. Facilitators set the stage by introducing the workshop's purpose, emphasizing the exploration of online hate speech and its proactive mitigation through media literacy.

Groups are tasked with the creation of a hate speech tree on their designated sheet. The 'roots' of the tree are intended to represent the factors leading to hate speech online, while the 'branches' symbolize the resulting effects. Participants identify and document specific elements constituting the 'roots' of hate speech (causes) and the 'branches' (consequences). The activity encourages participants to recognize that each root can have deeper causes, and each branch can lead to further outcomes. The groups use an imaginary text as the 'trunk' of their hate speech tree. The text, which participants should envision as content posted on the internet, reads:

"Refugees arriving at the islands and coasts of Europe are terrorists and fanatics, members of the Islamic State. They cross the borders with fake papers and will unleash bloody attacks against us. Chase them out of Europe!"

Each group should be given the 15-minute timeframe to populate their hate speech tree with as many branches and roots as possible. Groups should then present their completed trees, offering insights into the identified roots and branches. Participants articulate connections between different elements on their trees, fostering a rich exchange of perspectives. Completed trees are showcased around the room, inviting participants to meander through the various representations. This phase encourages reflection and the gaining of insights from diverse viewpoints.

Facilitators guide discussions around alternative narratives and counter-narratives to challenge hate speech. Participants explore proactive measures and initiatives that can be taken to address online hate speech effectively. After the discussion, guide participants in finding practical solutions and strategies to address the online discrimination situations highlighted in the case studies. Promote a constructive and collaborative approach to formulating responses.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Ask participants following questions to close the session and draw main conclusions:

- How did your understanding of online hate speech and its impact evolve throughout the workshop?
- What were the most significant insights gained from the creation of the hate speech trees? Did you notice any common themes or patterns in the roots and branches identified?
- Reflecting on the case study provided, how do you think the escalation of tensions in online discussions can contribute to the spread of hate speech? What proactive measures can be taken to address such situations effectively?
- In what ways do you believe media literacy skills can help combat online hate speech? Can you share any specific strategies or approaches discussed during the session that you found particularly useful?
- Looking back on the session, what aspects do you think were most valuable in promoting a deeper understanding of discrimination and hate speech in media? How do you plan to apply what you've learned in your personal or professional life moving forward?

**Tips for facilitator:** Be adaptable and responsive to diverse participant backgrounds. Facilitators should create a welcoming environment that respects different experiences and perspectives. Encourage open communication and active listening to foster inclusivity. Be prepared to manage conflicts diplomatically. Encourage a culture of respectful dialogue within groups. Remind participants of the importance of diverse perspectives and guide discussions toward constructive solutions rather than confrontations.

### **Handout 1:**

A printed template of a tree with designated spaces for roots and branches to guide participants during the hate speech tree creation activity.

### **Handout 2:**

Title: "Online debate heats up over immigration policies"

*"Refugees arriving at the islands and coasts of Europe are terrorists and fanatics, members of the Islamic State. They cross the borders with fake papers and will unleash bloody attacks against us. Chase them out of Europe!"*

In a recent online discussion, tensions escalated as users debated immigration policies. A user with the username "Digital\_Debater\_21" posted the following comment: "Our borders are being overrun by outsiders, draining our resources and causing chaos. It's time to take a stand and protect our own!"

This comment sparked a series of responses, with users expressing a range of opinions. Some defended the importance of immigration for cultural diversity, economic growth, and humanitarian reasons. Others echoed concerns about potential strain on resources and the need for stricter immigration controls.

As the debate unfolded, the language used in responses became increasingly inflammatory, with personal attacks and derogatory comments targeting individuals who held opposing views. The conversation shifted from a discussion of policies to a heated exchange of insults and stereotypes.

A document defining essential terms related to online hate speech, media literacy, and related concepts to ensure a shared understanding among participants.

### **Handout 3:**

Online hate speech:

Online hate speech refers to any expression, conduct, or communication, disseminated through online platforms, that offends, threatens, or insults individuals or groups based on attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender. Hate speech often perpetuates stereotypes, incites discrimination, and can lead to harm or violence.

### **Handout 3:**

#### **Media literacy:**

Media literacy is the ability to critically analyse, evaluate, and create media content in various forms. It involves understanding the influence of media on individuals and society, interpreting messages, and developing the skills to navigate, assess, and create media in a responsible and informed manner.

#### **Cyberbullying:**

Cyberbullying refers to the use of electronic communication to harass, intimidate, or harm others. It includes behaviours such as spreading false information, threats, or insults through digital platforms. Cyberbullying can have severe emotional and psychological effects on individuals.

#### **Trolling:**

Trolling is the act of intentionally provoking or upsetting others online by posting inflammatory, irrelevant, or offensive comments. Trolls aim to elicit strong emotional responses from individuals or groups and disrupt online discussions.

#### **Echo chamber:**

An echo chamber is a situation in which individuals are exposed only to information, opinions, or perspectives that align with their existing beliefs. Online, echo chambers can contribute to the reinforcement of biases and limit exposure to diverse viewpoints.

#### **Filter bubble:**

A filter bubble is a result of personalized online content delivery, where individuals are presented with information based on algorithms that predict their preferences. This can lead to a limited exposure to diverse perspectives and the reinforcement of existing beliefs.

#### **Digital citizenship:**

Digital citizenship refers to the responsible and ethical use of technology and online platforms. It involves understanding one's rights and responsibilities in the digital space, promoting positive online behaviour, and contributing to a safe and inclusive digital community.

#### **Confirmation bias:**

Confirmation bias is the tendency to seek, interpret, and remember information that confirms one's pre-existing beliefs. In the context of online content consumption, confirmation bias can contribute to the reinforcement of existing opinions.

#### **Fact-checking:**

Fact-checking is the process of verifying the accuracy of information presented in news articles, social media, or other sources. Fact-checking helps individuals

discern credible information from misinformation or disinformation.

**Material for facilitators:**

**Internet, social media and online hate speech. Systematic review**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1359178921000628>

**Vulnerable community identification using hate speech detection on social media**

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306457318310902>

**HateClassify: A Service Framework for Hate Speech Identification on Social Media**

<https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/abstract/document/9254135>



## FRONT PAGE

THEME: MEDIA MANIPULATION



TIME: 90'

### Overview:

The participants take a role on manipulating the images and use the images to create their own narratives and understand the impact of the images on the manipulation in the media.

### Objectives:

- To better understand media manipulation
- To educate participants about the interplay between media and state concerning freedom of media

### Materials:

- Colour Format Printed Images
- Flipcharts
- UHU Glue
- Board Markers
- Group size: 20

**Instructions:** The participants are divided into 6 groups and informed that they will each receive 6 separate images. They are instructed not to use their mobile phones, computers, or any electronic device connected to the internet for the next 30 minutes. The origin of the images is not disclosed to the participants. The images are provided in color format to ensure visibility of details. The images are selected from "not well-known" but ongoing conflicts such as wars, ethnic conflicts, or militia groups. This allows participants to interpret the images according to their own biases and perceptions rather than their actual context. The images in Handout are provided as examples for the participants to create news stories. They are instructed to develop a one-page article based on their perception of the images. The facilitator will not provide any information about the images during this process. Participants are required to:

- Write a one-page article using the image and a story from their imagination.
- Consider that all the pictures depict real-life stories related to ongoing global issues.
- Avoid using reverse image research in Google to find related topics.
- Not use CHATGPT or any AI tools.

**Handout - example images:**



**Picture 1 Nigerian Conflic**



**Picture 2 FARC Guerillas**



**Picture 3 Rohingya Genocide**



**Picture 4 Unexploded Bombs from Vietnam War in Laos**



**Picture 5 Armenia - Azerbaijan War**



**Picture 6 Noruz Festival**

After 30 minutes, each group presents their outcomes for 2 minutes. Then the facilitator reveals the actual stories related to the news and where they come from and for each group, during the reflections, the facilitator should ask how they have come up with the story and what has been their starting point to understand where the story comes from and how it is constructed. In that way the participants would have an understanding about the themes that have chosen, and they will understand how the pictures in media can be manipulated from this perspective.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Conclude the sessions with short discussion on how media bias can alter peoples' perceptions and affect true information. Ask participants some of the following questions to start the discussion:

- Have you ever experienced similar situation in real life, if yes elaborate?
- Why some media uses pictures or videos that are not related to story they are reporting on?
- Can you understand the connection with photo and other multimedia manipulation and peoples' perceptions of reality?
- Did you learn something new?

## DETECT IT!

THEME: PHOTO MANIPULATION



TIME: 60'

**Overview:** The activity aims to enhance participants' critical thinking skills by focusing on the analysis of visual content (pictures and videos). Participants will be guided to question and consider what elements have been omitted from a given visual representation and understand how these omissions can impact their interpretation of the content. The primary focus is on developing a keen awareness of how choices in visual representation can influence perceptions.

### Objectives:

- To learn to question what has been left out of a picture or video, and how that might change interpretation of the photo or video's meaning;
- To learn to think critically about how the choice of photo can depict a situation in a negative or positive light;

**Materials:** Access to the Internet; photos from handout (either hard copies or projected ones)

**Group size:** 15-30

**Preparation:** Ensure that there is Internet access for participants

**Instructions:** Explain that the activity will explore different kinds of photo and video manipulation, namely cropping and selection. Define how photos can be selectively cropped, and videos can be selectively edited, to leave a false impression. Also, add that this effect is maximized when people deliberately decide to use only certain photos and not others, to better misrepresent a situation. Ask participants to look at the pictures in Handout 1. and to express what they think is happening in these pictures and if there are any other alternative explanations. Explain that the problem with photographing people in action is that a photo catches a split second, or it is taken from a specific angle (which is the case of the examples) which actually may be very unrepresentative. You can try to explain that they may have noticed the same phenomenon when they are pausing a movie they're watching people in mid-speech suddenly have funny facial expressions that one never would have noticed without pausing. And in this case, the situation looks very different when they see the full video or photograph of the whole situation or even from a different angle. Indeed, express that making assumptions not only can we make people jump to the wrong conclusion about isolated photos, but also that headlines and captions can drastically colour the way ones interpret those pictures. Ask participants what other types of manipulation with photos they can think of if necessary, provide the answer to the group: Photo manipulation includes following situations:

- Photos from different actions taken out of context
- Photos taken from different angle to manipulate the real situation

Recycling legitimate old photographs and videos and presenting them as evidence of recent events

Digital manipulation of photos (photoshop, AI generated photography, etc.)

Once these types are listed, divide participants in 4 groups and give them a task to find some examples for each and to find and recommend best tools for detecting photo manipulation. They should also focus on understanding most common areas and purposes for which these manipulations are used. Give them 15 to 20 minutes for work group and invite all groups to present their findings.

**Debriefing and evaluation:**

- What did you learn about the potential for manipulation through photo and video editing, specifically in terms of cropping and selective representation?
- What was your initial interpretation of the photos featuring President Donald Trump and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Prince William? What did you assume?
- How has this activity influenced your understanding of the importance of context in interpreting images and videos?
- In what situations do you think the selective use of visuals might have real-world consequences, especially when it comes to public figures or events?
- How can we, as individuals and consumers of media, be more cautious and critical in our interpretation of visual content in today's digital age?

**Handout - example images: First examples**

<https://pyxis.nymag.com/v1/imgs/8fa/ee9/9f6c9528d6e53ac5ae38f1e5e-41451ac24-13-trump-trudeau-2.h473.w710.jpg>



## Second examples



### Materials for facilitators:

<https://daily.jstor.org/exploring-images-in-and-out-of-context/>

<https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/digital-media-literacy/the-problem-with-photo-manipulation/1/#>

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/out-of-context-photos-are-a-powerful-low-tech-form-of-misinformation>

## SAFEGUARDING MEDIA FREEDOM THROUGH ROLE PLAYING

THEME: EXPLORING AND ADDRESSING MEDIA FREEDOM CHALLENGES



TIME: 60'

**Overview:** This workshop aims to deepen participants' understanding of media freedom challenges and explore creative solutions through role-playing scenarios.

### Objectives:

- To understand the complexities of media freedom challenges journalists and media workers face.
- To engage in creative problem-solving through role-playing scenarios.
- To identify and discuss potential strategies to safeguard media freedom.

**Materials:** Whiteboard and markers, Projector and screen, Flip chart and markers, Role-playing scenario briefs to be suggested, just in case

**Group Size:** 15-30 participants

**Preparation:** Prepare role-playing scenario briefs, set up the room with seating for group discussions, and ensure the audio-visual equipment is working.

**Instructions:** Welcome participants and provide an overview of the workshop's objectives. Discuss the importance of media freedom in a democratic society and the challenges faced by journalists. Divide participants into groups and assign each group a specific media freedom challenge, such as censorship or safety concerns for journalists. Please provide them with scenario briefs and allow time for preparation. Each group performs a role-play, illustrating the challenge and potential solutions. Encourage other participants to ask questions and provide feedback after each role play. These role plays are designed to immerse participants in diverse media freedom challenges, encouraging them to explore and propose strategies to safeguard press freedom in the face of complex real-world scenarios. Facilitate a group discussion to identify and discuss strategies to safeguard and promote media freedom, drawing from the role-playing scenarios. Participants can be engaged in a group discussion to identify and discuss potential strategies to safeguard and promote media freedom, drawing from the insights gained through the role-playing scenarios. The discussion can be structured around various approaches and initiatives aimed at protecting media freedom. Emphasize the importance of legal frameworks that protect journalists and prosecute crimes against them. This can involve discussing the need to end impunity for crimes against journalists and implementing existing standards to ensure their safety and freedom. Highlight the significance of digital security and privacy tools in safeguarding journalists and media workers. This can involve training and resources on the use of digital security and privacy tools to enhance their safety and protect their freedom of expression. Discuss the need for institutional safeguards to prosecute and deter online

abuse against journalists. This can include enacting laws and measures to counter online harassment and intimidation, particularly in the digital environment. Explore initiatives that provide support and capacity building for journalists, such as training, workshops, and resources aimed at enhancing their skills, safety, and freedom of expression.

**Debriefing and Evaluation:** Discuss key insights from the role-playing scenarios, gather feedback on the session, and encourage participants to share their thoughts on the strategies identified.

Tips for Facilitators:

- Encourage active participation and respectful dialogue during the role-playing scenarios.
- Be prepared to provide guidance and support to the groups as they prepare their role-plays.
- Foster a collaborative and inclusive environment for creative problem-solving.

Handout:

### **Censorship in the Digital Age:**

- **Background:** Participants are a team of journalists working for an independent online news outlet in a country where online censorship is on the rise. They are facing pressure to remove or alter a story that exposes government corruption.
- **Task:** The group must prepare and perform a role-play that illustrates the challenges faced by the journalists and potential strategies they could employ to navigate the censorship issue while upholding media freedom principles.

### **Safety Concerns for Journalists Covering Sensitive Topics:**

- **Background:** Participants take on the roles of journalists investigating a sensitive and high-risk topic, such as political corruption or organized crime. They encounter threats to their safety and pressure to drop the investigation.
- **Task:** The group must develop a role-play that portrays the safety concerns and ethical dilemmas faced by the journalists, as well as potential measures to ensure their safety while continuing their investigative work.



# FIGHT THE OPPRESSION

THEME: MEDIA FREEDOM



TIME: 120'

**Overview:** By exploring power dynamics, fostering empathy, and encouraging active participation, this workshop aims to instil a deep understanding of the challenges faced by journalists. Participants will collaboratively construct scenes that vividly portray diverse perspectives within a given case, creating a platform for open dialogue and collective problem-solving.

## Objectives:

- To understand Theatre of the Oppressed principles and its application to exploring power dynamics in society.
- To contextualize and discuss the ethical challenges and pressures faced by journalists in the context of freedom of the press.
- To reflect on the potential of Theatre of the Oppressed to stimulate critical discussion of social injustices and inspire active participation for social change in the context of freedom of the press.

**Materials:** Adequate space for movement and group activities; Sufficient seating for participants during discussions and reflections; Whiteboard or flipchart for illustrating key concepts, noting down thoughts, or facilitating discussions; Markers; Index cards or sticky notes;

**Group size:** 10-20

**Preparation:** Facilitators for the workshop must thoroughly familiarize with the principles of Theatre of the Oppressed, understanding its techniques and how it promotes critical discussions. Simultaneously, they should delve into the chosen case study on freedom of the press, researching its historical context, ethical challenges, and key players.

**Instructions:** Facilitators should begin with warm-up exercises to create an environment of trust and stimulate creativity. Examples include improvisational theatre games, body and vocal awareness exercises (e.g., breathing and mindfulness exercises). Briefly introduce the key concepts of Theatre of the Oppressed, emphasizing active participation and the need to explore power dynamics through this method. Provide context on freedom of the press, presenting the chosen case. Discuss with participants the ethical challenges and pressures journalists may face. Ask participants to share their opinions and reactions to the case, encouraging active participation. Assign groups the task of developing a short script representing their character's point of view with respect to the proposed case. Provide suggestions on character construction, emphasizing the importance of reflecting on the motivations, emotions and

## challenges of each role. Characters could be, for example:

young journalist - oppressed

newspaper editor - oppressor

president "free press" association - oppressed ally

journalist girlfriend, lawyer - oppressed ally

careerist and ambitious journalist - oppressed ally

local lobbyist - oppressor ally

editor-in-chief - neutral

Before the groups begin preparing scenes, participants should know to anticipate the possibility of changes during the Theatre Forum. Facilitators explain that the audience will have the opportunity to intervene, suggest alternatives and influence the development of the scenes. Facilitator should invite participants to consider flexibility and openness to modifications during scene preparation. Participants need to immerse themselves in their roles, exploring the motivations, goals and challenges of the characters they are impersonating. The group works together to develop the scenes, taking into account the power dynamics and tensions in the context of the proposed case. Participants should also be reminded to take in mind that the performance has to be prepared making the oppression increase more and more until it reaches the top level. Only in that moment, the facilitator stops the performance and starts the discussion with the audience

- What did you see in this performance?
- How did you feel as the performance went on?
- How do you think this situation can be improved for the oppressed?

### Realization of the performance:

The whole group performs the scene for the first time, from beginning to end, without interruption. It is important to have a facilitator, because from the second performance, the facilitator will have to mediate the interventions of the audience, who at any moment of the performance can stop the scene and propose solutions, intervening in the behaviours of the oppressed, allies and neutrals (but never the oppressor), even deciding to come on stage and play the part of the character they have decided to intervene on. The spectator-actors are tasked with exploring new possibilities for resolving the conflicts present in the scenes. During the Theatre Forum, facilitate the implementation of changes requested by the audience. Ensure that the discussion is respectful and constructively guided. Groups should be prepared to adapt their scenes based on audience suggestions. This process can occur several times during the theatre forum.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** After the conclusion of the workshop, a structured debriefing and evaluation process will take place to encourage participants to reflect on the key learnings and the significance of the workshop's topic.

- Were the Theatre of the Oppressed techniques effective in conveying key messages about freedom of the press?
- How well did the case study integrate with the theatrical activities?
- Were the discussions and reflections adequately facilitated?
- Were the materials and resources provided helpful in understanding the topic?

**Tips for facilitator:** Developing thought-provoking discussion points aligning with the workshop's objectives is crucial. Facilitators need to comprehend power dynamics within the case, recognizing oppressors, oppressed individuals, and potential allies. Flexibility is key, as the interactive nature of Theatre of the Oppressed may lead to changes during the workshop. Creating a safe and inclusive space is very important, ensuring an atmosphere conducive to open dialogue and trust. Facilitators should practice their techniques, considering timing, group dynamics, and participant engagement. Coordination with co-facilitators, preparation of visual aids, and a thorough review of logistical arrangements contribute to a successful workshop. Encouraging reflective practice helps facilitators adjust their techniques based on ongoing feedback and observations. In sum, a well-prepared facilitator combines expertise in Theater of the Oppressed, a deep understanding of the freedom of the press case, and effective facilitation skills to create a dynamic and impactful workshop experience.

### **Handout 1:**

#### Theatre of the oppressed principles

Theatre of the Oppressed is a dynamic and participatory form of theatre developed by Brazilian dramatist Augusto Boal. It seeks to engage the audience, breaking down the traditional barrier between actors and spectators. Through interactive performances and discussions, Theatre of the Oppressed aims to explore power dynamics in society and stimulate collective action for social change.

#### Key principles:

**Spect-actor.** Definition: In Theatre of the Oppressed, the term "spect-actor" is used to describe individuals who are both spectators and actors. Unlike traditional theatre, where the audience observes passively, spect-actors actively participate in the unfolding drama. They engage in the scenes, share their perspectives, and become agents of change within the performance.

**Forum Theatre.** Definition: Forum Theatre is a central technique in Theatre of the Oppressed. In a Forum Theater performance, a scene depicting a social issue or conflict is enacted. Crucially, the scene is incomplete, presenting a problem without a solution. The spect-actors then have the opportunity to intervene, stop the performance, and suggest alternative actions to change the course of the scene.

**Image Theatre. Definition:** Image Theatre involves creating visual scenes without dialogue. Participants use their bodies and physicality to represent ideas, emotions, or power dynamics. This technique helps explore complex social relationships, allowing spect-actors to collectively construct and analyze images that represent their perceptions and experiences.

### **Material for facilitators:**

**The theatre of the oppressed:**

[https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/55310519/The\\_Theatre\\_of\\_the\\_Oppressed-libre.pdf?1513508299=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DThe\\_Theatre\\_of\\_the\\_Oppressed.pdf&Expires=1702475682&Signature=aFubDhXuFEFevvEo8hWZvAY4lS7SPZxwo4FnVrmP-mNUhxK4Z5WpoVq5RFWpxQ-oqGGalr1~zuFy~XRmgGtXy6HDil-yWMYigrxEoqx1~WM3oyce3dlldXIBLMhUlbc-1qk55vk7wjgzg3pmxlh59rv5dlgewd9jem5nrt4w-cKnml1nkpDaGxA6pmhKA5Z-zq~SEoU13BYVxkCw7hnyYrNsAOBAyCJ6XYInrPlyv2LIs2goXoTGf5hbyOOxK-SeoMV-J6RlvNIYhhl7Yc~up7nGCq1JgHLAfBK9Y-ox507uiNJ76ect7ZEkl7EqDzbc-1qk55vk7wjgzg3pmxlh59rv5dlgewd9jem5nrt4wO6BL5hDLywXA &Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA](https://d1wqtxts1xzle7.cloudfront.net/55310519/The_Theatre_of_the_Oppressed-libre.pdf?1513508299=&response-content-disposition=inline%3B+filename%3DThe_Theatre_of_the_Oppressed.pdf&Expires=1702475682&Signature=aFubDhXuFEFevvEo8hWZvAY4lS7SPZxwo4FnVrmP-mNUhxK4Z5WpoVq5RFWpxQ-oqGGalr1~zuFy~XRmgGtXy6HDil-yWMYigrxEoqx1~WM3oyce3dlldXIBLMhUlbc-1qk55vk7wjgzg3pmxlh59rv5dlgewd9jem5nrt4w-cKnml1nkpDaGxA6pmhKA5Z-zq~SEoU13BYVxkCw7hnyYrNsAOBAyCJ6XYInrPlyv2LIs2goXoTGf5hbyOOxK-SeoMV-J6RlvNIYhhl7Yc~up7nGCq1JgHLAfBK9Y-ox507uiNJ76ect7ZEkl7EqDzbc-1qk55vk7wjgzg3pmxlh59rv5dlgewd9jem5nrt4wO6BL5hDLywXA &Key-Pair-Id=APKAJLOHF5GGSLRBV4ZA)

**Critical Consciousness in Critical Social Work: Learning from the Theatre of the Oppressed** Get access Arrow

<https://academic.oup.com/bjsw/article-abstract/46/6/1776/2422301>

**Driving Social Change Through Forum Theatre: A Study of Jana Sanskriti in West Bengal, India**

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1326365X19864477>

**A Critical Education for 21st Century: A study on Youth and Media literacy**

<https://www.amity.edu/gwalior/jccc/pdf/jccc-12-19-07.pdf>

**'Boosting resilience' and 'safeguarding youngsters at risk': Critically examining the European Commission's educational responses to radicalization and violent extremism**

<https://uclpress.scienceopen.com/hosted-document?doi=10.18546/LRE.18.1.02>

## DIE WELLE RELOADED

THEME: MEDIA FREEDOM



TIME: 90'

**Overview:** Die Welle Reloaded workshop increases the participants understanding about the issues of securitization of the media by using a historical role-based approach leading them to discuss and engage in the meaningful discussion concerning to the media freedom.

### Objectives:

- To understand the role of media and the idea of freedom
- To understand media censorship
- To educate the participants about the interplay between media and state concerning freedom of media

### Materials:

- Role cards
- Papers, Flipcharts and materials around (for Journalists)

### Group size: 20

**Preparation:** The participants are divided to the three separate groups. The facilitator tells the groups that they should not tell their roles to each other unless, until the facilitator reveals it and the participants can act as a group, make a rebellion or change the structure of the activity if they want it. There will be three rounds of newspaper publication. Journalists should ask what is happening around the world and they should try to be creative. The facilitator should prepare the role cards, prior to the activity. (*See Handout*)

**Instructions:** The participants are informed that in this next three hours, they are living in a country called "Monkeyia", in Monkeyia, the people live in peace without any problems. They are always provided with means to live by the state, but there are some citizens disturbing the peace of the country. That's why state takes precautions to prevent the disturbance of the peace, not censor the people, but give them a space. Now, in this process, each person will have one role. The role of citizens to talk and discuss about their daily life with each other. They can talk about the price of a good, or a corruption or something else. But they should come up with the commonalities. The police can come and take everyone away, if they come do not resist, it would not be good for you.

**First Round:** Creating News (Journalists should walk around and listen the citizens and create news), they should have 30 minutes for this.

**Second Round:** In the end of the first round, journalists can deliver the news openly or anonymously. MfS can catch the citizens who disturb the peace or the order. 15 minutes

**Third Round:** The citizens have right to do whatever they want, but they should be careful. 15 minutes

**Last Round:** The citizens, journalists, police and SA can reveal themselves. 10 minutes

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Facilitator can start the discussion during the Last round with question: "What does this process make you realise?", the discussion should take freeform, and participants should come to the point about the reality from the historical standpoint. During this phase, the facilitator can give actual examples from the past.

To initiate the discussion:

- How did you feel while you were in your role?
- Did you have any idea of making an uprising to the state?
- If yes, why? If not, why? (Facilitator tells that yes, we didn't tell you you could but you could. . .)
- Do you think that it reflects the today?
- Have you realised the importance of the free media?

Then the facilitator suggests movies to the participants that are inspired by the method, such as "Das Leben der Anderen" (The Lives of Others). Afterwards, the participants should be provided with examples from state agencies (such as the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit in Germany, or the CSS in Russia) to help them understand how media freedom can be eroded and how the state can play a significant role in this process.

### **Handout:**

**Journalists:** You are the ones who will create news, you have to ask to the citizens about what is happening around to provide information to the other citizens. You have 20 minutes to make the first round of the news from your surrounding. You are as well as a citizen, blend in to get news from them.

**Citizens:** You are an ordinary citizen, you go to work, you come back from work and all your day is consisted of it. You should not say what you think always, otherwise you can have a trouble. Be careful as well with whom you are talking with unless you do not have anything to lose. You can inform on journalists to save your place in the country. Some topics for you to discuss: Raising prices, the inflation, the corruption of politics, the wars, conflicts, etc. Be creative!

SA: You are trying to find the unlawful citizens and kick them out of country or imprison them, you can take journalists or citizens away, if you think they have a right to talk, they do not. You can take their houses, their work, their money above all their freedom. Unless you say, they are free, they are not free. You just have to show your role card, if you want to take an action. If they don't keep in the line, tell them to come with you to Room A. Find your comrades, before starting to take an action. You are as well as a citizen, blend in to get news from them and keep a close relation with policia.

Policia: The police has a right to come and get everyone. They take their orders from SA. As a police, you do not need to deal with the journalists or the citizens, just execute the orders.

FRM: You are the only free newsletter, nobody knows who you are and what you are writing. Hide yourself as long as possible, ally with some citizens to deliver the news to them. You should not show you are delivering news to the people, but you should be able to do that. Be creative!

### **Material for facilitators:**

The facilitator should have knowledge of the historical context concerning to the questions can be received by the participants.

Lessons from the Stasi – A cautionary tale on mass surveillance

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/03/lessons-from-the-stasi/>

A Media Framing Approach to Securitization

<https://acla.overdrive.com/media/9200316>

## ESCAPE ROOM

THEME: INTERNET LITERACY; NEWS  
ON SOCIAL MEDIA;



TIME: 45'

**Overview:** This method aims to deliver information about the CRAAP methodology to the participants and put it into practice. The objective is the development of key competencies activities that stimulate critical thinking and correct information through the solving of interactive and logical puzzles. The activity is based on group work and the comparison between the participants to tackle the riddles.

**Group Size:** 3-6

**Time:** 45 minutes

### Objectives:

- To deliver information about the CRAAP methodology to the participants and put it into practice;
- To develop key competencies and critical thinking through the solving of interactive and logical puzzles.

**Materials:** All materials will be listed in the “Materials for facilitators” section.

**Group size:** 6-10

**Preparation:** Ask the participants if they know what an escape room is. Explain it to the group, specifying that the escape room in which they will take part and will play will not be a classic one but an educational escape room. After that, divide them into different groups of up to 6 people. The groups will take part in the escape room one after the other. During the implementation of the escape room players are alone inside the room. The escape room should be implemented in a large room, which is not empty, preferably with an additional door inside that leads to another room. The activity can be implemented by an evaluator / facilitator / trainer or by a group of them. During the implementation of the escape room there must be only one contact person who will have to help the participants when they need it.

**Instructions:** To implement the escape room you must follow the instructions in the following order:

- Read the following story outside the room first and before the players start playing.

Good morning, you are investigative journalists, and you are part of an investigation against fake news. Nowadays because of the COVID 19 and vaccines, the fake news has multiplied. 30 minutes ago, you got a call from your colleague Sarah Black, she told you that she had obtained very important information to the case, that she wants to show you and it will turn the course of the investigation. When you show up in



her office, she is not there!! You have concrete suspicions that police have interfered with the call and arrested her, however you have arrived at the office before the police, so you don't have much time to find that information, publish it, unravel the conspiracy and save Sarah Black.

- You should clarify that it is a linear game, each tool can be used only once but there is only a central element (computer) that should be used many times.
- When entering the room, you find just a computer on the table and a piece of paper with a message: "The Police are coming! Check my computer! SB.". In the original game this message is hidden on the air conditioner blades. The room is extremely warm, and you have to turn on the air conditioner. If this message does not appear, the game suffers no changes.
- After that, the game consists of 8 puzzles and continues with solving. The example of puzzles can be found in the section "HANDOUTS".
- To find the key piece of information that Sarah had found, then call the publisher and give it to him. Closing/Analysis (explain how it is done and include any framework/link): [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2017/599386/EPRS\\_ATA\(2017\)599386\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/ATAG/2017/599386/EPRS_ATA(2017)599386_EN.pdf) The document above shows 8 steps to follow in order to spot when news is fake.

The solution for the puzzle number 5 is CRAAP, a method posted by Sarah Black. She is also the journalist that has contacted the players to go to her office.

- In puzzle number 6 the participants must use the CRAPP method learned in the puzzle before in order to find the document with the correct password. We think that maybe a note from Sarah is useful in this step. i.g. "You don't have enough time before the police arrive! Use the method used to open this box to check which of these news is real! S.B"
- Discuss with the participants if they used to check the news before sharing them on the internet.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** As already mentioned above, at the end of the escape room there is a closing analysis, the same will be the exit activity that can be carried out as soon as the escape room is concluded so that the participants do not remain in the game mindset.

**Tips for facilitator:** Include some space for feedback. Prepare a feedback method that can be used to find out how the process was felt by the participants and make use of this tool to improve or adapt the method described. Discuss with the participants to collect as much feedback as possible by asking their impressions of the activity carried out. The following questions can be used:

Was it fun and did you feel involved in the activity?

Have you learned anything new? If so, what?

Were there any activities which you found rather difficult? If so, how would you make them easier?

What are your impressions of the group carrying out the activities?

Did all the participants contribute to the solution of each riddle?

Will you apply what you have learned through the escape room in your daily life?

## Material for facilitators:

### Material & restart list

Lock Type:	Puzzle Description	Code/Answer:
Computer Password	2 puzzles Columns <u>leter</u> Rows numbers	COV19
3 Numbers Lock	Morse Code	539 In the original recording. It could be changed
Computer Password	Photos in a correct order	VIRUS
5 Letter Lock	Text with an acronym <u>hiden</u>	CRAAP
Computer Password	Light pen in a text	FAKENEWS
4 Numbers Lock	Cypher + Letters in a wall B C D H	2348 In the original game. It could be changed.
Computer Password	Shadows with a candle.	2481 In the original game. It could be changed.

### Restar list

1	Check the extra room. Locate the lighter besides the paper on the floor. Close and lock the door. Put inside the box the rest of the elements: candle, glue, instructions, and the key of the room.
2	Put the box under the chair or hide it close to the investigation board on the wall.
3	Put the fake news docs and the real one inside the box. 5 letters lock. Puzzle 6.
4	Put the box with the fake news inside a bigger one. Also put the light pen and the acronyms text. Use the key lock.
5	Place this box near the clock and put the key behind the clock. (Key lock).
6	Put politicians' pictures inside the box. Lock with a 3 numbers code lock. Puzzle 3. Locate the box near the computer, on the same desk.
7	Place the sudoku and battleship coordinates inside the computer folder with the computer inside.
8	End session of Sarah user on the computer. Check that the folders inside are also closed.

9	Put the small piece of paper with Sarah's message in the air conditioner.
10	
11	* We used the term Box, but it could be any office element like a pencil case or just Sarah's wallet.
12	

## AT A GLANCE How to spot when news is fake – Closing Analysis

'Fake news' and disinformation – information deliberately manipulated with the aim of fooling people – have become an increasingly visible global phenomenon. Social media and their personalisation tools have made it easier to spread bogus stories. They often use emotions to capture attention and generate clicks, for economic or ideological reasons. Even young, digital-savvy people find it difficult to identify manipulated news. Significantly, six in ten news items shared on social media were not even read first by the user who shared them. Some 85 % of Europeans see 'fake news' as a problem in their own country, and 83 % view it as a problem for democracy in general. This compass will help you navigate the ocean of information, and find your way through waves of lies and disinformation.

1) Get the plugin from the InVID project.

2) For example, follow @EUvsDisinfo/@EUvsDisinfo, @DFRLab/@DFRLab or @StopFakingNews/@stopfakeukraine *This is a revised version of an 'at a glance' note published in March 2017.*

EPRS | European Parliamentary Research Service

Author: Naja Bentzen; Graphic: Samy Chahri, Members' Research Service

PE 599.386 – February 2019

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## 8. JOIN THE MYTH-BUSTERS<sup>(2)</sup>

Keep on top of the latest tricks and narratives used by those spreading disinformation. Report fake stories. Tell your friends.

## 7. QUESTION YOUR OWN BIASES

Sometimes a story is just too good or entertaining to be true. Take a deep breath, compare with reliable sources and keep a cool head.

## 6. THINK BEFORE YOU SHARE

The story could be a distortion of real or old events – or it could be satire. The headline could be designed to spark strong emotions. If an event is real, reliable media will cover it.

## 1. CHECK THE CONTENT

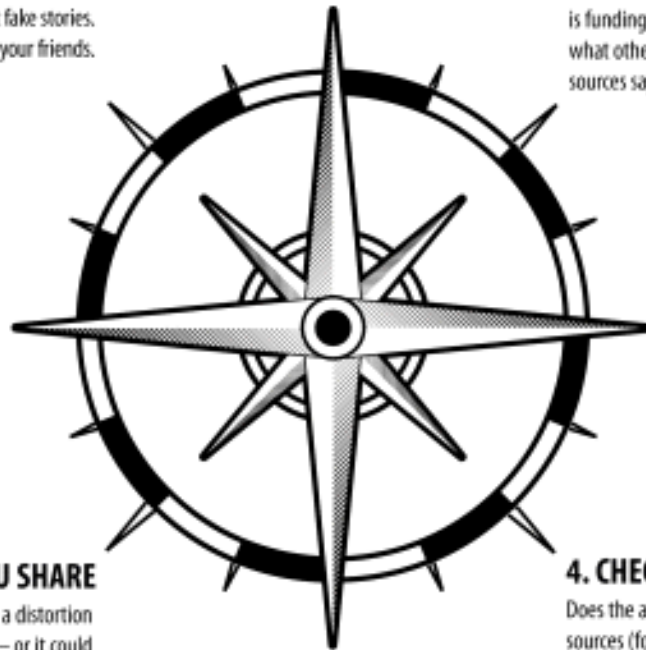
Are the facts and figures accurate? Is the article biased? A credible media outlet keeps one-sided opinions where they belong – in op-eds, not in news articles.

## 2. CHECK THE OUTLET

Do you know it? Does the URL look strange? Check the 'about' section. Who is behind it? Who is funding it? Double-check what other (trustworthy) sources say.

## 3. CHECK THE AUTHOR

Does this person even exist? A well-respected journalist always has a track record. If the author has made up his or her name (or does not mention it), the rest is also likely to be fake.



## 4. CHECK THE SOURCES

Does the author use reliable sources (for example, well-established and respected media outlets)? Are the quoted experts real specialists? If the story uses anonymous (or no) sources, it could be fake.

## 5. CHECK THE PICTURES

Images are powerful, and it is easy to manipulate them. An image search can show if it has been used before in a different context. The InVID plugin<sup>(1)</sup> can help you detect manipulation of videos or pictures.

## Folder 2 – On the computer

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

## Folder 3 – On the computer

THERE IS A PENDRIVE WITH ALL YOU NEED INSIDE THE BOX! PASSWORD 9734

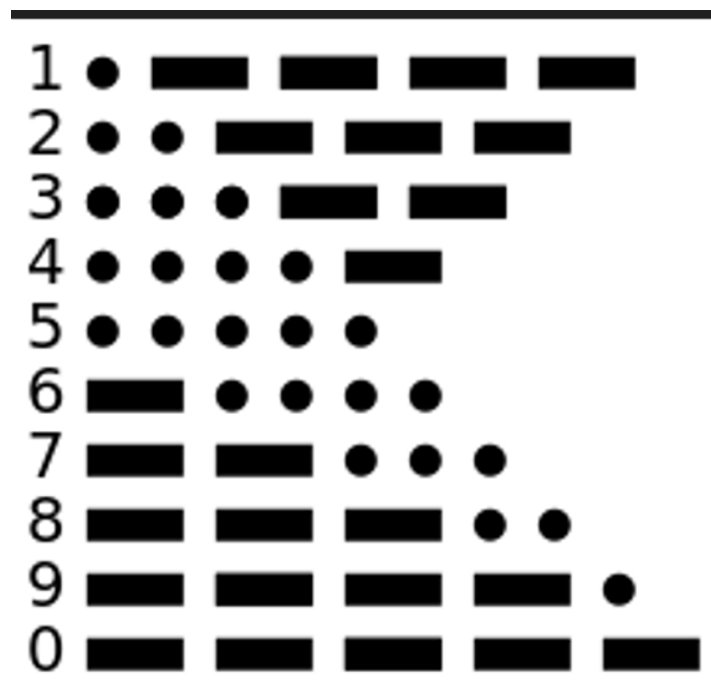
PLEASE CONTACT THE PUBLISHER AND GIVE HER THE PENDRIVE!!  
+351 918822140 (it should and could be changed)

### Puzzle 1

2	3		6			9	4	
9	7	5			1		6	
4		8	3		7			
1		6				2	8	
			4	1		6		
					6			
8			5	6	4	7		3
5		3	9	7		8	1	6
6					3	4		

- First select a number/operator and then apply it to a sudoku cell.

### Puzzle 1



## Puzzle 5

### How to check the objective reliability of information sources?

"...Then suddenly, with all due respect to "The Waste Land" and T.S. Elliot (because I had not ceased in exploration at the end of all my exploring), I arrived where I had started and discovered what I had initially been looking for on our own library handout. With some reordering of words and one synonym, I saw it. I had my acronym. Not only was it memorable due to its associative powers, but it also meant something in the context in which it would be used. For every source of information, we would now have a handy frame of reference to inquire.

So, when was the information published or posted? The currency of the information it is the first evaluation criteria to consider.

Relevance could be the second one, linked to the importance of the information for your needs.

Next, the source of the information, who is the author? Is it the author qualified? This step could be named as authority.


Subsequently, the next step must include if the information is supported by evidence or if it has been reviewed or refereed. Personally, I think that accuracy could be used as a word to tag this step.

Lastly, to answer questions like; do the authors make their intentions clear? Or, if it is the information a fact, opinion, or propaganda. We can use purpose.

Definitely, we have a good acronym to use!!!

Sarah Blakeslee

## Puzzle 6.1



24/07/2021 How does the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine work and who will get it? | Coronavirus | The Guardian

News Opinion Sport Culture Lifestyle

04:43

▲ Is the new Covid vaccine our way back to normality? - video explainer

**Coronavirus**  
How does the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine work and who will get it?

**Nicola Davis** Science correspondent  
@NicolaSDavis  
Wed 2 Dec 2020 07:16 GMT

The Pfizer/BioNTech Covid vaccine, which has an efficacy of almost 95%, **has been authorised** by the UK medicines regulator, making the UK the first western country to license a vaccine against the disease. The UK has 40m doses of this vaccine on order.

**Remind me how this vaccine works ...**  
The Pfizer/BioNTech Covid jab is an mRNA vaccine - a cutting-edge technology. The vaccine works by introducing into the body genetic material, called mRNA, that contains the instructions to make the so-called "spike" protein of the coronavirus.

In response to these proteins, the body's immune pathways are activated - a response that offers protection should we encounter the virus itself.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/dec/02/how-does-the-pfizer-biontech-covid-vaccine-work-and-who-will-get-it>

1/4

## NAVIGATING THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE

THEME: SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEW SOURCE OF INFORMATION



TIME: 120'

**Overview:** Participants gain insights into the pervasive influence of social media platforms on shaping perspectives and perceptions.

**Objectives:**

To increase awareness about the importance of media literacy in the context of social media.

To emphasize the role of social media in shaping perspectives and information consumption.

To foster an understanding of how information is disseminated and received on different platforms.

**Materials:** Projector and screen, laptop or computer for presentations, pre-prepared slides outlining key points, platform analysis, and exercises, whiteboard or flipchart for visual aids, brainstorming, and capturing key insights, pens, pencils, markers for participants to use during exercises and note-taking;

**Group size:** 20-25

**Preparation:** The preparation process for facilitators of the workshop involves several key steps. Facilitators should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the workshop content, including concepts related to social media, media literacy, and specific platforms. Facilitators should also gain practical experience with the social media platforms covered and participate in fake workshop sessions to simulate the actual event.

**Instructions:** Facilitator can start this session with short introductory discussion on importance of media literacy. The facilitator provides a brief overview of key social media platforms, emphasizing their impact on information consumption. The heart of the workshop delves into an in-depth analysis of major social media platforms—Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and TikTok. Participants engage in discussions about the unique characteristics of each platform, exploring how they provide for different target demographics. The goal is to foster a qualified understanding of how information is disseminated and received on these diverse channels. Following are the steps and tasks for participants:

### **Practical exercise 1 – Creating target profiles. 45 min**

In this exercise, participants are divided into smaller groups, and each group is assigned a specific social media platform. The objective is to dive into the particulars of the platform and develop a comprehensive demographic profile for a target audience that aligns with the platform's user base.

- *Platform exploration:*

Participants start by exploring the assigned social media platform. They analyse the types of content that perform well, the prevalent communication style, and the overall user experience. They consider the platform's features, such as algorithms, hashtags, and trending topics, that shape content visibility.

- *Target audience definition:*

Each group identifies a specific target audience based on the platform's characteristics. For example, on Instagram, the focus might be on a visually-driven and younger audience, while on LinkedIn, the emphasis could shift towards a more professionally-oriented demographic. Demographic factors, including age, interests, and location, are carefully considered to create a detailed and realistic profile.

- *Creating the profile:*

Participants compile their findings into a detailed demographic profile. This includes creating personas that represent the target audience, complete with fictional names, ages, professions, and interests. The exercise encourages participants to think critically about how different types of content will resonate with their identified target audience on the assigned platform.

## **Practical exercise 2 – Media literacy campaign. 45 min**

Building on the insights gained from the first exercise, participants now transition to the development of a media literacy awareness campaign tailored to the specific target audience and social media platform assigned to their group.

- *Campaign objectives:*

Groups define clear objectives for their media literacy campaign. These objectives may include raising awareness about the importance of fact-checking, promoting critical thinking online, and debunking common misinformation.

- *Content creation:*

Leveraging their understanding of the target audience and the assigned social media platform, participants create engaging and impactful content for the campaign. This may involve designing visually appealing graphics, crafting persuasive messages, and developing a cohesive narrative that aligns with the platform's tone.

- *Multimedia integration:*

Groups are encouraged to utilize various media formats, such as short videos, infographics, and interactive content, to maximize the reach and effectiveness of their campaigns. This step challenges participants to think creatively about how to convey complex concepts in a digestible and shareable format.

- *Implementation plan:*

Each group outlines a plan for implementing their media literacy campaign on the assigned social media platform. This includes considerations for posting schedules, engagement strategies, and methods for measuring the impact of the campaign



## **Presentation and peer feedback:**

Groups present their media literacy campaigns to the entire workshop, explaining the rationale behind their choices and strategies. The session includes constructive feedback and discussions on the strengths and potential improvements of each campaign.

**Debriefing and evaluation:** Facilitators should lead group discussions to encourage participants to share their reflections with their peers, fostering a collaborative learning environment.

- What specific insights did you gain about social media platforms and their influence on information consumption?
- How did the practical exercises, such as creating target profiles and media literacy campaigns, enhance your understanding of social media dynamics?
- Were there any surprising discoveries or challenges during the workshop that stood out to you?
- How do you envision applying the skills and knowledge acquired in this workshop in your personal or professional life?
- In what ways has your perspective on social media as a source of information evolved throughout the workshop?

**Tips for facilitator:** Facilitators should be encouraged to measure the participants' understanding during the workshop and adjust their approach accordingly. This involves being flexible with the depth of content coverage based on the participants' familiarity with social media concepts. Emphasize the importance of creating an inclusive environment. Facilitators should be trained to be mindful of diverse perspectives, encourage participation from all attendees, and address any potential cultural sensitivities that may arise.

Facilitators should be equipped with post-workshop resources, such as additional reading materials, links to relevant online content, or a forum for continued discussion. This provides participants with ongoing support and resources to reinforce their learning.

### **Handout:**

#### **Media Literacy:**

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyse, evaluate, and create media in various forms. It involves critical thinking skills to navigate the complex information landscape.

#### **Social media:**

Social media refers to online platforms that enable users to create, share, and engage with content. It plays a significant role in communication, information sharing, and community building.

### Target audience:

The target audience is the specific demographic group for which a message or content is intended. Identifying and understanding the target audience is crucial for effective communication.

### Algorithm:

An algorithm is a set of rules or procedures for solving problems or accomplishing tasks. In social media, algorithms determine content visibility based on user behavior and preferences.

### Hashtags:

Hashtags are words or phrases preceded by the “#” symbol. They are used to categorize content, making it discoverable and facilitating conversations around specific topics.

## Media literacy campaign instructions

### Campaign objectives:

- Define clear objectives for your media literacy campaign. Consider the following objectives as a starting point:
- Raising awareness about the importance of fact-checking.
- Promoting critical thinking skills in online information consumption.
- Discredit common misinformation prevalent on the chosen platform.

### Content Creation:

Leverage your understanding of the target audience and the unique characteristics of the social media platform. This step involves:

- Crafting engaging and impactful content for the campaign.
- Designing visually appealing graphics that capture attention.
- Crafting persuasive messages that resonate with the identified audience.
- Developing a cohesive narrative that aligns with the tone and style of the platform.

### Multimedia integration:

Explore various media formats to maximize the reach and effectiveness of your campaign. Consider incorporating:

- Short videos that convey key messages effectively.
- Infographics to present information in a visually accessible format.
- Interactive content that encourages audience engagement.

### Implementation plan

Develop a plan for implementing your media literacy campaign on the assigned social media platform. Consider:

- Posting schedules to optimize visibility and engagement.
- Strategies for encouraging audience interaction, such as contests or discussions.
- Methods for measuring the impact of the campaign, such as tracking metrics like shares, comments, and overall reach.

### **Presentation and peer feedback:**

Each group will present their media literacy campaigns to the entire workshop. During the presentation:

- Explain the rationale behind your creative choices and strategic decisions.
- Engage in constructive feedback and discussions with fellow participants on the strengths and potential improvements of each campaign.
- Feel free to unleash your creativity during this exercise! The goal is not only to inform but to create campaigns that genuinely resonate with the target audience.

### **Material for facilitators:**

Social Media Information Environments and Their Implications for the Uses and Effects of News: The PINGS Framework

<https://academic.oup.com/ct/article-abstract/32/2/223/6335765>

Evaluating credibility of social media information: current challenges, research directions and practical criteria

<https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IDD-03-2020-0033/full/html>

Social Media as a Gateway to Information: Digital Literacy on Current Issues in Social Media

<https://www.webology.org/data-cms/articles/20220129034326pmWEB19167.pdf>

Social Media and Teens: A Needs Assessment Exploring the Potential Role of Social Media in Promoting Health

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2056305119886025>

3.

CREATI-  
VE WOR-  
KSHOPS

# 4. CREATIVE WORKSHOPS

## Concept Photography

1

THEME: CREATION OF THE TOOLS – CONCEPT PHOTOGRAPHY FOR PROMOTION OF MEDIA LITERACY



120'

**Overview:** Concept photography workshops consist of 4 separate workshops in which participants are introduced gradually to the topics we are dealing with and the way in which they would present this topic through photo content. The first workshop in this set is dedicated to presenting the project, getting to know the participants, and presenting the topics we are working on.

**Time:** 60'

### Objectives:

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

### Materials:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers
- Group size: 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups in the follow up workshops)

**Preparation:** Before the workshop starts, prepare flipchart paper and markers.

**Instruction:**

If the facilitators organize creative workshops as a part of the training, thematic workshops on media literacy have already been implemented and participants gain knowledge on the respective topics. Moreover, participants know each other, but it is possible that they do not know facilitator (s).

If this is the case, the facilitators start the first workshop by presenting himself/herself and that his/her role will be to transfer them the skills and competences on using photography as a concept tool for promotion of media literacy.

After the introduction of facilitators, the facilitators introduce the method of photography and how it can be used as a concept tool for promotion of media literacy. Facilitators explain in detail why photography is beneficial, why it is effective and point out the popularity photos have among young people.

Facilitators then ask the participants to present themselves (name, something about themselves). Facilitators also discuss with participants if they have any experience in the creation of concept photos and if yes what kind, what equipment they used, what type of photos they created and similar.

The next activity concerns the topic that will be covered during this set of workshops. Facilitators should do the brainstorming on the topic of media literacy, what participants first think of when they hear this term. Facilitators write down all the answers on flipchart paper and discuss their answers. Facilitators conclude this part with giving examples of how some of the things mentioned through brainstorming can be presented through photography.

**Evaluation and debriefing:**

Facilitators finish the workshop with debriefing and evaluation. They ask following questions:

- What do you think about today's session?
- How do you feel, do you feel comfortable with each other in the group?
- How much were you aware of all the information you heard during this session?
- How can the photography contribute to promotion of media literacy?
- How much do you feel confident to develop concept photography?

At the end of the session, facilitators should explain that from the next workshop onwards they will start with the creative process of making the Concept Photo products.

**Tips for facilitators:**

Facilitators of creative workshops on photography should have knowledge and experience in using photography.



**Overview:** Through the second workshop the entire creative process of creating a concept photo and available photo equipment will be introduced to the participants. This workshop will cover the research of the participants about topics they want to use as a theme in their photos. They will come up with the storyboard and detail plan on creating their concept photos.

**Objectives:**

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

**Materials:**

- Blank papers
- Pens
- Markers
- Photo equipment (cameras, lights, phones and similar)
- Laptops / computers for editing

**Group size:** 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

**Preparation:** Before workshop starts, prepare available photo recording equipment for presentation.

**Instructions:**

This workshop starts with the presentation of the creative process of creating a concept photography. Explain that this process has 5 steps:

1. Vision and Conceptualization: Each participant is tasked with conceiving a photo idea, considering its content, target audience, emotional impact, and intended message.
2. Idea selection: Participants share their brainstormed ideas, and as a group, they collectively choose and refine the most suitable concepts for development.
3. Storyboarding – Working in pairs, participants create a comprehensive plan for their

selected concept photos. Facilitators assist in detailing every scene, including location, actors, and post-production elements like effects or slogans.

4. Photography session – Participants execute their planned photo sets, with facilitators assisting in camera operation and participants assuming roles as actors in the scenes. If specific individuals are needed, participants can invite willing collaborators.

5. Postproduction – In this final phase, participants are introduced to photo editing softwares. With facilitators guidance, they select and edit their chosen photos to realize their conceptualized images.

After introducing the photo process, facilitators will provide an overview of the photo equipment. Participants will receive information about cameras, lenses, lighting, and other essential gear to understand the capabilities of the available equipment. Conceptual products can be captured using various devices such as digital, analog, polaroid cameras, mobile phones, and any cameras or phones brought by participants specifically for the workshop.

The workshop will focus on the initial phases of the creative process: vision and idea generation, selecting a preferred concept, and creating the photo scene. In the “Vision and Conceptualization” phase, each participant will receive a blank sheet of paper and a pen. They will have 30 minutes to brainstorm ideas for concept photos related to various aspects of media literacy. Participants are encouraged to use online platforms like Pinterest to explore existing concept photos and gather inspiration. They should consider the target audience, desired emotions, and intended message for their concept photo.

Facilitators will remind participants to write down their ideas on paper for easier presentation. If any participant struggles with generating ideas, facilitators will showcase additional concept photo examples to spark creativity.

Moving to the “Idea Selection” phase, participants will share their photo ideas, and others will provide feedback and suggestions. Collaboratively, they will refine each other’s concepts and explore potential enhancements or variations. In the next step, participants will work closely with facilitators to refine and select the ideas that will be transformed into actual concept photos. If disagreements arise among participants during this selection process, facilitators will facilitate a brief discussion to allow participants to find a mutual agreement and merge their ideas into a cohesive concept photo.

Moving on to “storyboarding” participants will be paired up to choose and develop the selected concepts further. Their task involves creating a comprehensive plan for each concept photo, including the overall visual appearance, shooting techniques, location scouting, costumes, props, casting of actors (other members of the group), and post-production considerations. Facilitators will maintain regular communication with each pair, offering guidance and addressing any technical challenges or limitations in their plans to ensure modifications can be made promptly.



## **Evaluation and debriefing**

During this phase of the workshop, participants will showcase their plans to the entire group. Facilitators will encourage others to share their thoughts on the presented ideas and ask them the following questions:

- How do you feel about your progress today?
- What challenges did you encounter, and what came naturally?
- How was the process of developing your photo idea?
- Are you excited about the upcoming photo shoot?

## **Tips for facilitators**

Participants often begin with ambitious ideas and detailed plans. Facilitators should guide them to focus on clarity and simplicity, choosing straightforward methods to effectively convey their intended message through photos.



**Overview:** This workshop is all about organizing and executing the shooting of the photos according to the plans created in the previous workshop.

### Objectives:

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

### Materials:

- Photo equipment
- Props

**Group size:** 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

**Preparation:** Facilitators should make sure that batteries on all electronic equipment are fully charged, props for all photos should be ready.

### Instruction

The initial task in this workshop involves preparing all the props and equipment required for the photo shoot. Collaboratively, participants and facilitators assemble these materials, set up the scene, and position the camera appropriately within the space. Prior to the shoot, there's a discussion with the participants who will act in the photos, clarifying their roles and expectations.

Depending on the composition of the participants, photo shooting can be carried out either individually or in group. Participants with prior photography experience may take on leadership roles and capture multiple photos simultaneously. Facilitators play a logistical role in supporting each group, organizing the set, and providing guidance on efficient photo shooting techniques. Attention is given to ensure that each photo adheres to the planned scene and meets the established criteria. Shots are taken patiently and repeated as needed to achieve the desired outcome.

## **Evaluation and debriefing**

Facilitators should encourage participants to share their photo shooting experiences. They can inquire about any challenges encountered during the shooting, gather opinions on the overall shooting process, and assess whether participants feel the photo material meets their requirements for creating the planned concept photos.

## **Tips for facilitators**

Facilitators should motivate and assist participants in capturing photos according to their plans, encouraging them to repeat the shooting process as needed until they attain the desired results and are content with the photos produced.



**Overview:** The fourth workshop is covering the selection of created photo material, photo editing and presentation of final concept photo products.

### Objectives:

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

### Materials:

- Laptops
- Smartphones
- Photo editing software

**Group size:** 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

### Instruction

Participants will begin this workshop by receiving all the photo materials they created, tasked with choosing the best shots for use in the final concept photography products. Once the top photo material is identified, participants, assisted by facilitators, can start with the photo editing process. If there are participants within the group with expertise in photo editing, they can assume leadership roles and begin post-production work together with facilitators.

Photo editing can be done on either laptops or smartphones, depending on the technical requirements of each concept photo. Various photo editing software options exist, with Adobe Photoshop being a recommended choice. The selected software will be introduced to participants, and facilitators will cover basics such as exposure correction, cropping, blemish removal, text addition, color adjustments, and focus manipulation. For tasks requiring advanced knowledge, facilitators or experienced participants will guide the editing process, while others monitor progress to ensure adherence to the plan. As per visibility guidelines, facilitators will remind participants to include logos of the donor and the project itself in the final concept products. Additionally, a slogan relevant to the concept photo and backed by official statistics may be integrated to convey a clear and impactful message to the target audience.

Upon completing the editing of all concept photos, a presentation will follow. All produced photos will be gathered and showcased on a large screen such as a video projector or monitor. Each concept photo will be displayed to participants, with the group responsible for its creation explaining it, and the rest of the group engaging in discussion about its effectiveness and message clarity. Participants will share their opinions on the photos, assessing whether the intended message was effectively conveyed.

### **Evaluation and debriefing**

Facilitators can engage participants with the following questions:

- How do you feel about photos you created?
- Reflecting on your work, what aspects are you satisfied with, and what would you change if you had the chance?
- In what ways has this workshop enhanced your skills or knowledge in photography and editing, and how do you plan to apply these newfound insights in the future?
- What are your thoughts on the overall experience and the learning journey?
- Did you find this creative process enjoyable and fulfilling?

### **Tips for facilitators**

Facilitators play a crucial role during the post-production phase by guiding participants through the technical aspects of the software being used. They should actively listen to participants' ideas and suggestions, incorporating them into the editing process. Encouraging participants to leverage available resources, such as smartphones, reinforces the notion that effective concept photos can be created without the need for expensive equipment.

### **Examples of creative tools developed through Concept Photography Workshops**



SCAN ME

# Concept Graphics

1

THEME: CREATION OF THE TOOLS — CONCEPT GRAPHICS FOR  
PROMOTION OF MEDIA LITERACY



60'

## Objectives:

To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media

To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content

To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

## Materials:

- Flipchart paper
- Markers

**Group size:** 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

**Preparation:** Before the workshop starts, prepare flipchart paper and markers.

## Instruction

If the facilitators organize creative workshops as a part of the training, thematic workshops on media literacy have already been implemented and participants gain knowledge on the respective topics. Moreover, participants know each other, but it is possible that they do not know facilitator (s).

If this is the case, the facilitators start the first workshop by presenting himself/herself and that his/her role will be to transfer them the skills and competences on using graphics as a concept tool for promotion of media literacy.

After the introduction of facilitators, the facilitators introduce the method of graphics and how it can be used as a concept tool for promotion of media literacy. Facilitators explain in detail why graphics is beneficial, why it is effective and point out the popularity graphics have among young people.

Facilitators then ask the participants to present themselves (name, something about themselves). Facilitators also discuss with participants if they have any experience in the creation of concept graphics and if yes what kind, what equipment they used, what type of graphics they created and similar.

The next activity concerns the topic that will be covered during this set of workshops. Facilitators should do the brainstorming on the topic of media literacy, what participants first think of when they hear this term. Facilitators write down all the answers on flipchart paper and discuss their answers. Facilitators conclude this part with giving examples of how some of the things mentioned through brainstorming can be presented through graphics.

### **Evaluation and debriefing**

Facilitators finish the workshop with debriefing and evaluation. They ask following questions:

- What do you think about today's session?
- How do you feel, do you feel comfortable with each other in the group?
- How much were you aware of all the information you heard during this session?
- How can the graphics contribute to promotion of media literacy?
- How much do you feel confident to develop concept graphics?

At the end of the session, facilitators should explain that from the next workshop onwards they will start with the creative process of making the Concept graphics products.

### **Tips for facilitators**

Facilitators of creative workshops on graphics should have knowledge and experience in using graphics.



**Overview:** Through the second workshop the entire creative process of creating a concept graphics and available material will be introduced to the participants. This workshop will cover the research of the participants about topics they want to use as a theme in their concept graphics. They will come up with the ideas and detail plan on creating their concept graphics.

**Objectives:**

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

**Materials:**

Concept graphic methods can be collage, digital collage, drawing, painting, linocut, digital painting, etc.. Depending on concept graphic method facilitators want to do with the participants various kinds of material can be used.

- Fundamental material:
- Blank papers
- Pens
- Markers
- Laptops / computers for editing
- Graphics material (Depending on the group experience decide the graphics method)



**COLLAGE**  
(difficulty: simple)

Various types of paper for the base and collage elements

Printed newspaper and photographs that can be cut and arranged within the collage

Adhesive materials such as glue sticks, liquid glue, double-sided tape, or spray adhesive to attach collage elements to the base.

Scissors or Craft Knife

Paint and Markers for adding details to the collage

Cutting Mat

Scanner

**DIGITAL COLLAGE**  
(difficulty: simple)

Laptops / computers

Image editing software (Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program), Procreate, Canva...)

Digital images (Free No Copyright Photos, personal images)

Free No Copyright photos can be downloaded from websites such as Pexels / Vecteezy / Freepik / Morguefile / Pixabay / Stockvault / Rawpixel

**DRAWING**  
(difficulty: complex)

Graphite pencils of various grades (e.g., 2H, HB, 2B, 4B, 6B) for different levels of hardness and darkness in lines.

Pencil sharpener

Eraser

Drawing paper (e.g., smooth paper for pencil drawings, textured paper for charcoal or pastel drawings)

Coloured pencils

Soft or oil pastels

Alcohol-based markers or water-based markers for bold lines

Watercolour Pencils

**PAINTING**  
(difficulty: moderate)

Paintbrushes (Various sizes and types of brushes for different techniques)

Palette

Painting surface (canvas panels/various kinds of painting paper)

Paint (acrylic paint / oil paint / watercolour paint / tempera etc.)

Drawing materials (pencils, eraser, pencil sharpener)

Masking tape

Water containers

**LINOCUT**  
(difficulty: simple)

Paintbrushes (Various sizes and types of brushes for different techniques)

Palette

Painting surface (canvas panels/various kinds of painting paper)

Paint (acrylic paint / oil paint / watercolour paint / tempera etc.)

Drawing materials (pencils, eraser, pencil sharpener)

Masking tape

Water containers

**DIGITAL PAINTING**  
(difficulty: moderate)

Laptops / computers / graphics tablet

Digital painting software (Adobe Photoshop, Corel Painter, Clip Studio Paint, Procreate, Krita, Autodesk Sketchbook, Canva...)

GRAFFITTI ART / STENCILS  
(difficulty: simple)

Printed stencils / Mylar for stencil drawing  
Utility knives / Precision knives  
Cutting surface  
Spray paint  
Masking tape  
Stencil surface (Natural cotton, linen, paper)

**Group size:** 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

**Preparation:** Before workshop starts, prepare available graphics material for presentation.

### Instruction

This workshop starts with the presentation of the creative process of creating a concept graphics. Explain that this process has 5 steps:

1. **Vision and Conceptualization:** Each participant is brainstorming graphics ideas, considering its content, target audience, emotional impact, and intended message.
2. **Idea selection:** Participants share their brainstormed ideas, and as a group, they collectively choose and refine the most suitable concepts for development.
3. **Graphics session** – Facilitator explains the chosen concept graphic method and methods' techniques. Participants are doing their concept graphics with material provided.
4. **Edit** – In this final phase, participants are introduced to graphics editing softwares. With facilitators guidance, they edit their concept graphics in order to add more colours, messages and project logos.

After introducing the graphics process, facilitators will provide an overview of the equipment and material. Participants will receive information about pencils, canvases, types of paper, coloring equipment and other material.

The workshop will focus on the initial phases of the creative process: vision and idea generation, selecting a preferred concept, and discussing about help they will need from the facilitator in order to manage doing their concept graphics. In the "Vision and Conceptualization" phase, each participant will receive a blank sheet of paper and a pen. They will have 30 minutes to brainstorm ideas for concept graphics related to various aspects of media literacy. Participants are encouraged to use online platforms like Pinterest to explore existing concept graphics and gather inspiration. They should consider the target audience, desired emotions, and intended message for their concept graphics.

Facilitators will remind participants to write down their ideas on paper for easier presentation. If any participant struggles with generating ideas, facilitators will showcase additional concept graphics examples to spark creativity.

Moving to the “Idea Selection” phase, participants will share their graphics ideas, and others will provide feedback and suggestions. Collaboratively, they will refine each other’s concepts and explore potential enhancements or variations. In the next step, participants will work closely with facilitators to refine and select the ideas that will be transformed into actual concept graphics. If disagreements arise among participants during this selection process, facilitators will facilitate a brief discussion to allow participants to find a mutual agreement and merge their ideas into a cohesive concept graphics.

Moving on to “Graphics session” participants will be provided with material for the concept graphics and start enjoying the creative process. Facilitators will maintain regular communication with each participant, offering guidance and addressing any technical challenges or limitations in their plans to ensure modifications can be made promptly. If any additional help is needed facilitator will guide them through concept graphics process (facilitator will provide knowledge on how to draw concrete details, how to properly cut stencils in order not to have holes, how to do linocut in a safe way or to send to the participants additional digital materials such as fonts/brushes/icons for digital concept products).

### **Evaluation and debriefing**

During this phase of the workshop, participants will showcase their plans to the entire group. Facilitators will encourage others to share their thoughts on the presented ideas and ask them the following questions:

- How do you feel about your progress today?
- What challenges did you encounter, and what came naturally?
- How was the process of developing your graphics idea?
- Are you excited about the upcoming concept graphics process?

### **Tips for facilitators**

Participants often think that high artistic knowledge is needed for concept graphics workshop. Facilitators should encourage participants to enjoy the creative process and should guide them to focus on clarity and simplicity.



**Overview:** The third workshop is covering the scanning created concept graphics, editing and presentation of final concept graphics products.

**Objectives:**

- To develop new methods of youth work using creativity in the field of media literacy and combat against oppressive content in media
- To equip youth workers, teachers and educators with set of new educational tools in the field of media literacy and combat against negative effects of media content
- To raise the awareness about fake news in the time of COVID-19 pandemics among young people in 3 countries

**Materials:**

- Laptops
- Scanner
- Photo editing software (Adobe Photoshop, Canva...)

Group size: 5-12 (if group is bigger, division into smaller groups)

**Instruction**

Participants will begin this workshop by receiving all the scanned graphics they created. Assisted by facilitators, participants can start with the graphics editing process. If there are participants within the group with expertise in photo editing softwares, they can assume leadership roles and begin post-production work together with facilitators.

Concept graphics editing can be done on either laptops or smartphones, depending on the technical requirements of each concept graphic. Various photo editing software options exist, with Adobe Photoshop being a recommended choice. The selected software will be introduced to participants, and facilitators will explain basics such as colour correction, cropping, digital coloring, text addition. For tasks requiring advanced knowledge, facilitators or experienced participants will guide the editing process, while others monitor progress to ensure adherence to the plan. As per visibility guidelines, facilitators will remind participants to include logos of the donor and the project itself in the final concept products. Additionally, a slogan relevant to the concept graphics and backed by official statistics may be integrated to convey a clear and impactful message to the target audience.

Upon completing the editing of all concept graphics, a presentation will follow. All produced graphics will be gathered and showcased on a large screen such as a video projector or monitor. Each concept graphic will be displayed to participants, with the group responsible for its creation explaining it, and the rest of the group engaging in discussion about its effectiveness and message clarity. Participants will share their opinions on the graphics, assessing whether the intended message was effectively conveyed. If possible small live exhibition will be organized during the digital presentation.

### **Evaluation and debriefing**

Facilitators can engage participants with the following questions:

- How do you feel about graphics you created?
- Reflecting on your work, what aspects are you satisfied with, and what would you change if you had the chance?
- In what ways has this workshop enhanced your skills or knowledge in concept graphics method and editing, and how do you plan to apply these newfound insights in the future?
- What are your thoughts on the overall experience and the learning journey?
- Did you find this creative process enjoyable and fulfilling?

### **Tips for facilitators**

Facilitators play a crucial role during the post-production phase by guiding participants through the technical aspects of the software being used. They should actively listen to participants' ideas and suggestions, incorporating them into the editing process. Encouraging participants to leverage available resources, reinforces the notion that effective concept graphics can be created without the need for expensive materials and previous knowledge.

### **Examples of creative tools developed through Concept Video Workshops**



**SCAN ME**

5.

EXAMPLE  
OF THE  
TRAINING  
COURSE:  
AGENDA

# 5. EXAMPLE OF THE TRAINING COURSE: AGENDA

Day 1	
10:00-13:00	Introduction to the training course/ Introduction of the participants / Expectations and fears/Rules Team building
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch break
15:00 – 18:00	Team building Debriefing/Evaluation of the day
Day 2	
10:00 – 13:00	Reflection of the day Thematic workshop: Introduction to the narratives Thematic workshop: Quiz on media literacy
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch break
15:00 – 18:00	Thematic workshop: Situation analysis Thematic workshop: Understanding manipulative media narratives Debriefing/Evaluation of the day
Day 3	
10:00 – 13:00	Reflection of the day Thematic workshop: Safeguarding Media Freedom Through Role-Playing Thematic workshop: Detect it!
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch break
15:00 – 18:00	Creative workshops: Negative media narratives – case studies Creative workshops: Concept photos and graphics
Day 4	
10:00 – 13:00	Reflection of the day Creative workshops: Concept photos and graphics
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch break
15:00 – 18:00	Creative workshops: Concept photos and graphics Debriefing / Evaluation of the day
Day 5	
10:00 – 13:00	Reflection of the day Presentation of creative products What's next – Planning of the local activities
13:00 – 15:00	Lunch
15:00 – 18:00	Presentation of the local activities Final evaluation