



Question what you get. Media education to fight Disinformation

Findings from the Roundtables



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Roundtable results from Iberika

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Questions Block 1	Answer	Answer	Answer	Answer
1.1 What effects can disinformation have on society as a whole?	Disinformation harms society, negatively affecting elections, health, privacy, rights, self-esteem, and freedom. It polarizes, manipulates decisions, and undermines social harmony.	Disinformation impacts health, democracy, and society, causing violence, undermining trust, and targeting vulnerable groups. It also affects human rights and sovereignty, with geopolitical consequences.	Misinformation, spread via social media, confuses decision-making, especially during crises. It erodes trust in institutions, leading to doubts about media, governments, and democratic processes.	Disinformation manipulates people, dividing society and blurring the truth, making it easier to control. However, small doses can help people learn to differentiate and analyze trustworthy information.
1.2 Why is it important for people to consume quality information	Consuming quality information is crucial for informed decisions. It reduces vulnerability to disinformation, makes you more aware, and empowers you to take action and contribute to progress.	Quality information is honest, professional, and free of manipulation, essential for informed decisions. It's vital for democracy, enabling effective participation in decisions that affect individuals.	We constantly consume information through our senses. False information, often emotionally appealing, can deeply affect our thinking. Quality information is essential for building better, more aware societies.	Who owns information holds power. It's crucial for information to be proven and true, as trustworthy information builds confidence and a sense of safety.

Questions Block 2	Answer	Answer	Answer	Answer
2.1 What role do algorithms play in aligning content with our pre-existing beliefs?	Disinformation is personalized, aided by algorithms targeting personal traits and beliefs. Confirmation bias reinforces this, making people more likely to believe information that aligns with their views.	Algorithms reinforce existing beliefs by filtering content based on user behavior. This is concerning in elections, where micro-targeting can manipulate voters, prompting the EU to introduce new rules.	Social media algorithms suggest content based on past behavior, reinforcing preferences and biases. Trending keywords amplify content, making it unlikely to encounter opposing views, reinforcing preconceptions.	
2.2 In your opinion, what characteristics of information can trigger automatic suspicions in people, what can they look for?	To assess information, evaluate the source, check for evidence, and consider the intention. The PANTERA method, created by Learn to Check, helps in this process.	I am not an expert on this matter, but I can pinpoint heavily emotional messages, especially those encouraging fear.	The absence of credible sources or unethical use of authority is a red flag. Information lacking verifiable experts or named sources is likely not well-founded or reliable.	“Big”, “loud” words can usually be a trigger to listen and think a little bit more. Unproven facts or information with lack of sources.
2.3 How can we deal with conspiratorial thinkers?	Dealing with conspiracy believers requires empathy to understand their experiences. Build trust, guide them to question theories, and encourage self-	Critical thinking, explained below.	Conspiracy theories aren't just online phenomena, but the internet amplifies them. It's crucial to consider all aspects of an issue, contrast ideas, and make decisions based	Accept people with conspiracy beliefs, respecting them without fighting their theories. Build trust, encourage critical thinking, and help them

	discovery to recognize why these beliefs are false.		on a complete picture.	analyze information to spot inconsistencies in their beliefs.
Questions Block 3	Answer	Answer	Answer	Answer
3.1 What does Media and Information Literacy consist of and what competences should it include in order to be effective?	UNESCO defines Media and Information Literacy as the skills to seek, evaluate, and critically use information, understand online rights, and combat misinformation and hate speech.	Media literacy should teach how to recognize disinformation, understand quality journalism, and differentiate between information and opinion. It should also promote scientific thinking and critical evaluation of evidence.	Media and Information Literacy helps people analyze and act on information. It should also emphasize contrasting sources, as even reliable ones can be biased, fostering a more truthful and complete perspective.	
3.2 Why is it important for people to acquire media literacy competences in today's world?	It is important to act as a citizen and to have the necessary skills today to work, relate with others, buy and protect our rights, as privacy, security, etc.	Combating disinformation requires a multi-faceted approach. Critical thinking, skepticism, and education on evaluating sources are key to building a society that can identify trustworthy information.	Malicious rumors fuel violence, stigma, and prejudice, escalating conflicts. With constant information overload, it's harder to discern truth, but with the right tools, we can make better-informed decisions.	Media literacy is essential for consuming information wisely. Not all media content is trustworthy, so it's crucial to analyze and verify information before accepting it as true.

3.3 How would you include media literacy in an organisation that has a) Young people of school age b) Seniors c) Migrants (choose the option that fits your target)	Media literacy should be both theoretical and practice. It should be hopeful, continuous and collaborative. It should include disinformation, but also other key topics and cybersecurity, hate speech in internet and digital well-being.	Media and information literacy should be integrated across subjects, teaching students to critically analyze and challenge disinformation in various areas. Critical thinking must be a transversal skill.	Educational institutions, media, and community organizations must work together to equip individuals with tools for navigating today's complex information landscape, especially by demystifying digital culture.	A) Extracurricular activities at school can help to teach young people how to verify information they see on the internet with the help of spectacular examples as well as theoretical materials.
Questions Block 4	Answer	Answer	Answer	Answer
4.1 Why is it important for educators and information professionals to work together to tackle disinformation? What value does each specialism bring and how could they work together?	Educators have the bond with young and other students; journalist and information professional know about information and disinformation. They have to work together to be successful.	Educators should collaborate with journalists to teach quality information, as journalists ensure reliable, fact-checked content. Exposing students to journalism helps distinguish facts from opinions.	Journalists know how to create accurate, engaging information, while educators can teach students to discern truth. Collaboration between media and schools is key to delivering this knowledge effectively.	
4.2 Would it be appropriate to include media literacy content in educational programmes, or to include thematic units	Disinformation can be taught in any subject; it should be a cross approach.	Already responded in Block 3.	I believe that misinformation should be addressed in a general way rather than by areas or specialties. This way, we not only	

within those subjects that can integrate issues related to disinformation from their area of specialisation (science, history...)?			contribute to more well-rounded professionals in the future but also to members of society who are more rational, empathetic, and logical.	
4.3 What should be included in a manual on media literacy for non-specialist teachers, whether in formal or non-formal education?	They should learn about the subject: how to verify sources, how to detect manipulated images, how to navigate in a secure way in internet... They should learn tips about how to organize a course. It would be very useful for them to include experiences or cases of study.	Examples include journalistic pieces on relevant topics, disinformation cases, and strategies for analyzing false claims. For instance, teaching statistical logic to critically assess misleading data.	Teachers must recognize the importance of media literacy and adapt it to all education levels. Using real-life examples makes the topic more relatable, helping students and teachers engage with it.	Key topics include understanding media, the role of social media, the media-society connection, media literacy, responsibility, combating misinformation, and practical exercises and case studies.

ROUNDTABLE RESULTS FROM CESIE

	VALENTINA NICOLETTI	GIANNA CAPPELLO
Questions Block 1	Answer	Answer
1.1 What effects can disinformation have on society as a whole?	The digital age has amplified the spread of misinformation, posing a serious threat to democracies. With an overwhelming amount of information at our fingertips, it's easy for false narratives to take root. This can undermine trust in institutions, polarize societies, and ultimately threaten the very fabric of democratic societies.	Disinformation, though not new, has accelerated with WEB 2.0 and social media, making it widespread and easily disseminated by individuals. This has led to the erosion of social cohesion, creating echo chambers and polarizing viewpoints. The 24/7 access to misinformation has become an "infodemic."
Questions Block 2	Answer	Answer
2.2 In your opinion, what characteristics of information can trigger automatic suspicions in people, what can they look for?	The first red flag when encountering information is the source. It's crucial to verify details across multiple sources. Social media often fuels outrage, and signs like emotional language or lack of evidence should raise suspicion. Being aware of these red flags helps protect against misinformation.	Algorithms favor disinformation by reinforcing confirmation bias, making meaningful discussion difficult. While self-produced content offers a positive bottom-up trajectory, critical media education and broader general education are essential. This is a shared responsibility of civil society, institutions, and policymakers.
Questions Block 3	Answer	Answer
3.3 How would you include media literacy in an organisation that has a)	For school-aged youth, integrating media literacy in school helps them	Media education should go beyond textual analysis and fact-checking. It must

<p>Young people of school age b) Seniors c) Migrants (choose the option that fits your target)</p>	<p>critically evaluate online content, identify biases, and understand algorithms. For seniors, tailored programs can build confidence in navigating technology and avoiding scams. For migrants, media literacy fosters integration, informed decisions, and intercultural dialogue.</p>	<p>encompass a broader context, including politics, sociology, and economics, while addressing the ethical implications of disinformation. The EU defines media literacy as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media messages. In schools, integrating media literacy into civic education through text production and critical evaluation is essential.</p>
<p>Questions Block 4</p>		<p>Answer</p>
<p>4.3 What should be included in a manual on media literacy for non-specialist teachers, whether in formal or non-formal education?</p>	<p>The manual should focus on key concepts like critical thinking, media analysis, and digital citizenship. It should provide practical guidance for identifying misinformation, analyzing media formats, and creating content. Additionally, it should offer strategies for integrating media literacy into curricula, along with resources and support for teachers, including clear language, examples, and professional development opportunities.</p>	<p>Action should focus on "pre-service" students and teachers, avoiding oversimplified labels like "Digital Migrants vs. Digital Natives." Instead of relying solely on manuals, we should emphasize "trial and error" mechanisms for automating information acquisition. While younger people excel in technical skills, adults are often more practical but lack awareness of the consequences of using these tools. Both groups need to be empowered through a balanced approach to media and education.</p>

ROUNDTABLE RESULTS FROM XLICEUM

	Filip Szulik-Szarecki	Tomasz Komorowski
Questions Block 1	Answer	Answer
1.1 What effects can disinformation have on society as a whole?	Social polarisation can be increased, could influence elections, opinions about wars, refugees etc. Mental health is influenced, conspiracy theories scare people. There will be a crisis of critical thinking.	Agrees, plus, anti-science movements - immediate effects. Disinformation can have long-term disastrous effects - distrust to information, as a consequence people pick information based on their feelings. It can have effects on an individual level - to make informed decisions, our attitudes on choice of jobs, education
1.2 Why is it important for people to consume quality information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consuming quality information is vital because it ensures informed decision-making and promotes critical thinking. Reliable information helps prevent the spread of misinformation, which can lead to harmful consequences. Additionally, an informed populace is essential for the effective functioning of a democratic society. 	To live in a democratic society and make informed decisions, people must consume quality information. This allows them to avoid manipulation, make choices in public life, education, careers, relationships, and security. Quality information is crucial for sustainable development, human rights, dignity, cultural diversity, and biodiversity.
Questions Block 2	Answer	Answer
2.1 What role do algorithms play in aligning content with our pre-existing beliefs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Algorithms play a significant role in aligning content with our pre- 	Confirmation bias is an ancient phenomenon, but digital technology today

	existing beliefs by personalizing the information we see based on our past behavior, preferences, and interactions. They often create echo chambers or filter bubbles, where individuals are primarily exposed to viewpoints and content that reinforce their existing opinions. This can limit exposure to diverse perspectives and contribute to polarized views	amplifies it significantly. Media education must help learners develop "algorithmic awareness"—understanding the role of algorithms and AI in communication, empowering them to discern and manage their impact to preserve autonomy and achieve personal goals.
2.2 In your opinion, what characteristics of information can trigger automatic suspicions in people, what can they look for?	Disinformation triggers an emotional response, so it's good to wait 30 min before you repost, separate emotions and opinion bias. So if something appeals to our emotions, it's a trigger.	Cognitive dissonance should trigger suspicion. If the image is inconsistent, the language used.
2.3 How can we deal with conspiratorial thinkers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dealing with conspiratorial thinkers requires engaging with empathy and respect, avoiding ridicule. We can encourage critical thinking by asking questions that challenge the logic and evidence of their beliefs. Provide reliable information and credible sources to counter misinformation patiently. 	Immediate measures include fact-checking, critical analysis, debunking fake content, and crafting counter-narratives tailored to specific audiences. Long-term measures involve promoting science-based knowledge, critical thinking through quality education, fostering media literacy, and supporting professional journalism to combat propaganda and misinformation.

Questions Block 3	Answer	Answer
3.1 What does Media and Information Literacy consist of and what competences should it include in order to be effective?	Media and Information Literacy consists of the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and compare media (and social media). It should include competencies such as critical thinking, digital literacy, and the skills to discern reliable information from misinformation. Effective media literacy also involves understanding the ethical use of information and the impact of media on society.	Media and Information Literacy (MIL), introduced by UNESCO, combines media literacy and information literacy to address the impact of digital communication technologies. It aims to promote sustainable development, democracy, and peace. MIL competences include critical thinking, content analysis, discerning misinformation, seeking verified information, and reacting ethically to disinformation, such as reporting or not sharing fake content. It is closely linked to digital literacy and is vital in countering disinformation.
3.2 Why is it important for people to acquire media literacy competences in today's world?	It enables individuals to critically evaluate the vast amount of information they encounter daily, reducing the risk of misinformation. It empowers people to make informed decisions and engage responsibly in digital and social media environments.	Very briefly: - Security, safety, resilience, sustainability, development – both personal, of everybody, and that of their environments and countries. - Ability to consciously and freely participate in the society (public life, labour market, culture, education, etc.) and preserve one's autonomy and independence as much as possible can be highlighted.

<p>3.3 How would you include media literacy in an organisation that has a) Young people of school age b) Seniors c) Migrants (choose the option that fits your target)</p>	<p>Show the difference between media and social media to young people, between information and unverified information. Show the mechanisms of how it all works. Learning by doing when it comes to young people and the elderly, introduce MIL in curricula in schools, critical thinking in arts, civics, history. Teacher training, because it starts with teachers. NGOs and libraries should focus on misinformation and help the elderly, librarians should be prepared.</p>	<p>Workshops for people, older generations are more polarised, get angry - we need to realise that, show it to the recipients. Younger generations have less experience with traditional media, so we need to show them to them, show the difference between media. Show reverse research to them.</p>
<p>Questions Block 4</p>	<p>Answer</p>	<p>Answer</p>
<p>4.1 Why is it important for educators and information professionals to work together to tackle disinformation? What value does each specialism bring and how could they work together?</p>	<p>Fact-checkers and educators can develop and implement programs that teach students how to discern credible information from falsehoods, fostering a well-informed society. Pedagogical expertise combined with fact-checking experience can yield excellent results with students.</p>	<p>Media professionals and educators have complementary roles in combating disinformation. Media professionals can help teach educators about Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and raise their awareness of disinformation. Educators, in turn, tailor programs to the needs of different target groups, especially minors, and promote disinformation countermeasures in both formal and non-formal education.</p>
<p>4.2 Would it be appropriate to include media literacy content in educational programmes, or to include</p>	<p>Integrating thematic units within subjects like science and history can effectively address issues</p>	<p>Integrating Media and Information Literacy (MIL) into various subjects, rather than teaching it as a</p>

<p>thematic units within those subjects that can integrate issues related to disinformation from their area of specialisation (science, history...)?</p>	<p>related to disinformation specific to those areas, fostering subject-specific critical thinking. This dual approach ensures students develop a comprehensive understanding of media literacy while contextualizing it within various disciplines.</p>	<p>standalone subject, offers multiple benefits. It enhances critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to analyze and create ethical content. It also makes subjects like history, civic education, science, and literature more relevant to students' everyday lives, promoting informed decision-making and responsible behavior. Key subjects, such as history, arts, and philosophy, are well-positioned to address disinformation and help combat misinformation, ensuring MIL becomes a crucial component of students' learning.</p>
<p>4.3 What should be included in a manual on media literacy for non-specialist teachers, whether in formal or non-formal education?</p>	<p>Include scenarios how to include this topic in any subject. Reverse engineering - create misinformation, to understand how misinformation works.</p>	<p>Sensetise educationalists to the different needs of different ages when it comes to content. Teach about the impact of misinformation, about security and safety for minors. List foundations and NGOs that can help. Add a list of competences for teachers to be learnt to be media literate.</p>

ROUNDTABLES RESULTS FROM UPV

	FIRST PERSON Lucía Gómez Aguilera	SECOND PERSON Pedro de Alzaga Fraguas
Questions Block 1	Answer	Answer
1.1 What effects can disinformation have on society as a whole?	Misinformation has always existed, previously controlled by governments or elites. Today, anyone can spread lies, making citizens more vulnerable. Misinformation affects daily decisions, fuels distrust, and harms groups like migrants, feminists, and LGBTQ+. It also impacts health, finances, and public trust.	Societies could survive in an environment of high disinformation, but not democratic societies, which require a high degree of trust and transparency in matters ranging from election results to the operation of state institutions. The uncertainty that would result from a highly disinformed scenario would make it difficult for democratic states to survive.
1.2 Why is it important for people to consume quality information?	It is essential for people to consume quality information to make informed decisions. Any decision (voting, consumption, etc.) should be based on truthful information grounded in data and facts.	Quality information is important for making informed decisions. In the case of democratic societies, it is essential to be able to freely choose those who govern, because if there is no good information about the candidates, the freedom to choose cannot be exercised. In this case, you don't know what or who you're voting for.
Questions Block 2	Answer	Answer
2.1 What role do algorithms play in aligning content with	Confirmation bias, the tendency to believe information that confirms our views, can reinforce false beliefs and	The role of the good press throughout history has largely been to change our minds, or at least to nuance

<p>our pre-existing beliefs?</p>	<p>weaken critical thinking. Algorithms exploit biases like group bias and availability bias, spreading disinformation tailored to our interests. While social media may increase polarization, some studies suggest it could expose us to differing views.</p>	<p>our beliefs. This allowed for convergence between conflicting positions. Algorithms do the opposite: they reinforce our beliefs and widen the gaps that separate citizens. The result is greater polarization and a public opinion that is increasingly close to exaggeration.</p>
<p>2.2 In your opinion, what characteristics of information can trigger automatic suspicions in people, what can they look for?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Check the publisher. Be cautious if there's no source. 2. Don't just read the headline, especially if it's sensational. 3. Be wary of images; they may be manipulated or out of context. 4. Is it up-to-date or outdated? 5. Watch for fake quotes: photos with quotes aren't always true. 6. Be cautious with fake tweets; check if the account is real or parody. 7. It might be humor or pretending to be. 8. Don't share emergency alerts unless you're sure. 9. Be skeptical of viral voice messages. 	<p>The urgency that information creates in us to share it is one characteristic that should make us suspicious of it. Disinformation is designed to do just that, to spread.</p>
<p>2.3 How can we deal with conspiratorial thinkers?.</p>	<p>Here are the recommendations for engaging with people sharing misinformation:</p>	<p>Convincing conspiratorial thinkers is difficult, if not impossible. The best thing to do is not to give them any more attention than they get. Perhaps using humor could do much more than</p>

	<p>1. Avoid attacking or ridiculing; we don't want to increase polarization.</p> <p>2. The goal is to be helpful, not to win or be superior.</p> <p>3. Understand why the misinformation is shared: fear? Uncertainty?</p> <p>4. Speak positively rather than negatively.</p> <p>5. Correct, but do so with tact.</p> <p>6. Use simple, solid arguments. Avoid too many facts or technical language. Choose trusted sources.</p> <p>7. Correct privately, not in groups; face-to-face, via chat, or phone is better.</p> <p>8. If the person is too polarized and you may lose your temper, wait for another time.</p> <p>Additionally, emphasize prebunking: explicitly warn about the risks of being deceived and believing in conspiracies. Explaining conspiracy thinking patterns and highlighting the work of fact-checkers can help reduce the spread of such theories.</p>	any other strategy to communicate.
Questions Block 3	Answer	Answer
3.1 What does Media and Information Literacy consist of and what competences should it include in order to be effective?	<p>A common definition of media and information literacy is the "ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and communicate messages in various forms." Access requires digital literacy, including technical skills, security, and citizenship. To analyze, evaluate, and</p>	The goal of media and information literacy should be the creation of a critical spirit.

	communicate, students need basic language and communication skills, along with knowledge of how media and online information work. However, being truly media literate also involves cultivating critical thinking, a more complex and subjective task.	
3.2 Why is it important for people to acquire media literacy competences in today's world?	Media education is essential because society today uses various media for work, information, opinions, and decision-making. Knowing how to access truthful information is a fundamental right: when we are lied to or make decisions based on false information, someone else is deciding for us, depriving us of our right to live in democracy.	It is particularly important today. This is because of the avalanche of information and communicative stimuli to which we are exposed.
3.3 How would you include media literacy in an organisation that has a) Young people of school age b) Seniors c) Migrants (choose the option that fits your target)	Media education for people over 60 should address the digital divide and focus on issues where they are most vulnerable. Specific misinformation targeting this age group needs to be tackled, particularly regarding content they are more likely to believe. The educational approach should also consider their cognitive and learning abilities.	In the case of adults, a sense of responsibility should be invoked. It is unwise and unbecoming of a mature person not to have a critical mind.
Questions Block 4	Answer	Answer
4.1 Why is it important for educators and information	We are in a time where changes and innovations in information consumption tools happen	Both educators and informants should provide the same thing: a critical

professionals to work together to tackle disinformation? What value does each specialism bring and how could they work together?	rapidly. A transversal and collaborative approach is necessary, focusing on opening communication channels to understand the challenges and share solutions and resources.	mind. Informants can teach the most common disinformation strategies, and educators can teach how to recognize, explain, and refute them.
4.2 Would it be appropriate to include media literacy content in educational programmes, or to include thematic units within those subjects that can integrate issues related to disinformation from their area of specialisation (science, history...)?	Yes, this would make it easier for teachers to work on Media and Information Literacy (MIL) as a transversal competency by choosing the most relevant and adaptable topics for their subjects and needs. For example, a science teacher could emphasize the importance of selecting reliable sources while teaching the scientific method. A history teacher could use lateral reading to verify narratives, myths, or stories. In mathematics and language, teachers could evaluate surveys published in the media, analyzing how the sampling is done and whether the headline matches the actual results. These are just a few examples that show how MIL concepts can be integrated into various subjects, encouraging students to critically search, select, and evaluate the sources of information they use.	In my opinion, there is no need for specialization in literacy, because in general, both science and history are about the same thing: a critical mind.
4.3 What should be included in a manual on media literacy for non-specialist teachers, whether in formal or non-formal education?	Here's a brief summary of the topics you provided: 1. Media and Information Literacy (MIL): Understanding the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media and information across platforms.	Perhaps sharing practical cases of misinformation and discussing their implications as a group is a good learning technique.

	<p>2. Is the medium the message?: Exploring how smartphones and social media are transforming communication and influencing how information is delivered.</p> <p>3. What is information?: Learning how to find reliable sources and understanding the work of journalism in presenting information.</p> <p>4. What is disinformation?: Analyzing the rise of false information and its impact on society, and why it's an ongoing issue.</p> <p>5. Critical thinking and biases: Developing the skills to question information and recognize personal and cognitive biases.</p> <p>6. Disinforming narratives: Investigating how false or manipulated stories are created and spread.</p> <p>7. The architecture of disinformation: Understanding how algorithms and AI amplify disinformation and shape information flow.</p> <p>8. Social networks and content platforms: Evaluating how digital platforms shape the way we access and consume content.</p> <p>9. Digital security and health: Learning about the importance of privacy, data protection, and how to navigate digital spaces safely.</p> <p>10. Advertising and data – a business model: Understanding</p>	
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	<p>how personal data is used for targeted advertising and the business behind it.</p> <p>11. Representation, stereotypes, and new narratives: Examining how media shapes perceptions of identity, culture, and social issues.</p> <p>These topics address key issues in today's digital age, focusing on understanding, navigating, and critically engaging with the information we encounter.</p>	
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ROUNDTABLES RESULTS FROM STIMMULI

	Interview- Greek expert: Irene Andriopoulou, PhD Cand. UAB,	Interview- Greek expert: Anthi Baliou, PhD Cand.
Questions Block 1	Answer	Answer
1.1 What effects can disinformation have on society as a whole?	<p>We live in the era of information overload towards meta-media environments. This plethora of information on a massive scale, directly related to the age of digital convergence, leads to an «information chaos» that David Shenk described early on (1997). Although talking about traditional media platforms, Shenk highlighted the need for the emergence of a critically thinking active citizen, a citizen who dives into the information cloud and learns how to swim, recognizing the opportunities and guarding against the risks from the emerging digital age.</p> <p>The effects of disinformation on the transformation of societies and influence of public opinion are not new, of course, but are further magnified in the digital era, though the inhibited, holistic access to online media and social media platforms.</p>	<p>Disinformation can have profound consequences on society, especially in the digital age, where its amplification is unprecedented. First, lack of trust, disinformation undermines trust in the media, government and other bodies. Also, disinformation often targets sensitive social, political or cultural issues, inflaming divisions into the society. By spreading extreme or biased views, disinformation can deepen polarization. This division can manifest in increased hostility between different social groups. On the other hand, democracies can rely on informed electorate to function properly. Disinformation campaigns, especially during elections, can manipulate public opinion, spread confusion. This can result in the election of leaders who do not truly represent the will of people and can weaken democratic institutions, making them more susceptible to</p>

	<p>Disinformation is part of information manipulation phenomena and societal pathogenies, widely spread in times of crisis, with the recent example of the Covid 19 pandemic, that was described by WHO as “infodemic”. UNESCO points out that especially in times of crisis, our desire to believe, especially when it is pleasant, can outweigh the desire to be properly informed, i.e. the process of filtering, critically analyzing and cross-checking media content and multiple sources that are focal elements of media literacy.</p> <p>But that's where the problem lies, exactly. Media literacy is a dynamic, fluid, constantly changing set of skills and competences that call for long-term solutionism and familiarization with the media, filtering and questioning media content and context, especially regarding news language and the medium from which news originate / is shared. According to the European Commission and EKOME, media education as a lengthy process that leads to media literacy, is not only a moral duty but also, a social imperative for a society to thrive and take full advantage of the opportunities of the</p>	<p>authoritarianism. In the context of public health, disinformation can have life-threatening consequences. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, false information about vaccines, treatments and the virus itself led to widespread public confusion, vaccine hesitancy and the spread of harmful behaviors. In summary, the digital age has amplified the spread and the impact of disinformation, posing significant risks to democratic societies. The effects range from trust in institutions and deepening social divisions to threatening public health, economic stability and even international relations. Addressing these challenges requires an effort to promote media literacy, enhance transparency of information sources and strengthen democratic institutions.</p>
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	digital age. Through media literacy in news agenda, we can fight the ephemeral nature of news and disinformation and hence, understand that we live in “consciousness societies” that media play the most active, influencing, societal transforming role.	
1.2 Why is it important for people to consume quality information	<p>Disinformation is strongly associated with the lack of quality information and the spread of fake news. According to a report by the Council of Europe, there are three types of information disorder:</p> <p>§ <i>Disinformation.</i> Information that is false and deliberately created to harm a person, social group, organization or country.</p> <p>§ <i>Misinformation.</i> Information that is false, but not created with the intention of causing harm.</p> <p>§ <i>Mal-information.</i> Information that is based on reality, used in a tricky way to inflict harm on a person, organization or country.</p> <p>So, we need to understand</p>	<p>o Informed Decision-making: quality information provides individuals with accurate and reliable information necessary to make informed decisions in various aspects of life, such as health, finances and civic responsibilities. When people have access to factual and well-sourced information, they can make choices that are in the best interests and align with their values.</p> <p>o Preservation of Democracy: A well-informed electorate is the foundation of a healthy democracy. Quality information enables citizens to critically evaluate political candidates, policies and</p>

	<p>the whataboutism context: information that is not accurate, missing or poor is even more dangerous for decision making towards digital informed citizens than mal-information, since it can lead to "pseudo-educated" citizens, as Greek poet D. Christianopoulos pointed out. In the same context, information overload is confusing human brain operation with processes similar to that of the PC brain: when overloaded with data, both brains need some time to "digest" it in order to distinguish between essential and non-essential elements (factual vs nonfactual information). The main element for this cognitive procedure is to develop critical media literacy skills, both as pre-bunking as well as de-bunking mechanisms.</p> <p>They say that content is the king, and this finds a good application to social media content. Quality media content consumption is closely related to democratic mechanisms safeguarding basic human rights, such as freedom of expression, freedom to access (quality) information, media pluralism, social activism and information management for public good. Quality media</p>	<p>events. This empowers them to participate meaningfully in democratic processes such as voting and to hold leaders accountable to their actions.</p> <p>o Protection against manipulation: in an age of widespread information, consuming quality information helps individuals build resilience against manipulation and falsehoods. By relying on credible sources, people can better distinguish between truth and deception, reducing the likelihood of being misled by false narratives, propaganda, or biased content.</p> <p>o Public health and Safety: access to inaccurate information is vital for public health and safety. During health crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic, consuming reliable information about prevention, treatments and risks can save lives. Quality information ensures that individuals and communities adopt safe practices based on scientific evidence rather than myths or misinformation.</p>
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	content consumption can lead to modern-day, critical thinking “prosumers”, main features of our meta media societies.	
Questions Block 2	Answer	Answer
2.1 What role do algorithms play in aligning content with our pre-existing beliefs?	Algorithms are the core of Artificial intelligence (AI) ecosystems, displaying intelligent behavior by analyzing a complex media environment and taking actions – with some degree of autonomy – to achieve specific goals (EC COM, 2018/237). In this context, Generative AI (G-AI) refers to computer algorithms that can generate new outputs that resemble human-created content in response to a prompt. These outputs can be either text, images, audio, video and code. G-AI technologies can perform tasks that would otherwise require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition, and language translation in a human-resembling format.	Algorithms play a significant role in shaping their information we encounter online, and they can amplify the effects of disinformation by aligning content with our pre-existing beliefs. Filter bubbles and echo chambers: algorithms are designed to maximize user engagement by showing content that is most likely to resonate with individual preferences and behaviors. To do this, they analyze vast amounts of data, such as past clicks, likes, shares and searches to predict what content a user will find interesting or agreeable. This creates a “filter bubble” or “Echo chamber” effect, where users are exposed to information that aligns with their existing beliefs and biases. As a result,

	<p>The challenge lies when these outputs are not biased-free but rather generate data and sources that reinforce pre-existing social perceptions and media stereotypes, overlooking internet neutrality mechanisms. This is clearly indicated by the European Commission when outlining AI technologies among the “critical technologies” that require considerate regulation and co-regulation with the creative media industries and Member-States for empowered EU economies. More recent examples are the EU AI Act and EU Digital Service Act in 2024.</p>	<p>people may become more insulated from diverse perspectives and less likely to encounter information that challenges their views.</p>
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<p>2.2 In your opinion, what characteristics of information can trigger automatic suspicions in people, what can they look for?</p>	<p>There is a variety of characteristics in an information text (news item) that can make us suspicious of false or misleading content in online environment and media platforms. Here are some basic tips to have in mind (before, during and after steps):</p> <p>§ Under which medium is the news story posted? Is it a reputable one, owned by a mainstream or alternative media company?</p> <p>§ Start with the headline of the news story: excessive headlines, such as capital letters, colors and excessive punctuation, irrational titles (click-baits) are usually sign of false and misleading information.</p> <p>§ On reading the article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate your own emotional reaction: does it evoke strong (negative) feelings, such as anger, frustration, deep sadness? • Does the news story attract interest on a major issue for society and the future of mankind? Does it refer to scientific evidence to support its arguments? For example, it could be an article on climate crisis, environmental disaster, a pandemic disease, human evolution or life in other planets / galaxies. Is it easy to find evidence for these claims? Does it cite popular theories or 	<p>Information that uses exaggerated headlines, emotionally charged language or dramatic visuals to provoke a strong emotional response, such as fear, anger can trigger suspicion. Sensationalism is often used to grab attention quickly but may lack substantive content. Also, information that do not cite credible, verifiable sources or relies on anonymous or unnamed sources can raise suspicions. The absence of links or references to original research, official statements or reputable news outlets is a common red flag. Information that aligns with or promotes conspiracy theories can trigger suspicion. Information that uses scientific-sounding jargon, pseudoscience or technical terms incorrectly to create a veneer of legitimacy can be misleading. Also, anonymous or untraceable authors, information that seems to perfect, shocking, too good, too bad to be true.</p>
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	<p>famous names?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it easy to recognize whether it is a news article or a public opinion feature? Is it signed by its author / journalist? Is it a social media post by a credible news organization or a meme? How easy is to share it with others? How funny and attractive is it? These are important parameters when evaluating a news post or news story e.g. the easiest a story is being instantly shared does not necessarily mean that it is true. • Is the media company hosting the news a trusted flagger or a red flag? The EU according to its recent regulation, DSA (2024) has enforced as trusted flaggers, national entities designated for detecting potentially illegal content and alert online platforms. • Always check the source and other signs that may intentionally or unintentionally lead to disinformation: is the news story being signed by a reputable author, blogger, media outlet, media company, website? Does it have current date and links to scientific evidence? Do the links actually work? Is it an odd domain name, maybe (.co instead of .com)? <p>§ When in doubt, conduct a similar search for the same news item in other media platforms and</p>	
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	<p>sources. Do not forget to cross-check with fact-checking websites and networks in your country / territory, by submitting the title/link of the story. Check, also whether the images / videos accompanying the text are sourced.</p> <p>§ Check for excessive use of banners, ads and pop-ups, they are usually a sign of not credible information.</p> <p>As a rule, if you are unsure about the content or the origin of the article, do not share it.</p>	
<p>2.3 How can we deal with conspiratorial thinkers?.</p>	<p>Conspiracy thinkers are most often, avid spreaders of false and misleading information, since they are trying to reinforce their own beliefs and ideologies and to receive positive feedback from the others. When trying to deal with this group of conspiratorial thinkers, you have to encourage an open debate instead of putting forward strong arguments.</p> <p>§ If you appear too strong-willed or too irritated about the issue on discussion, they may shut</p>	<p>We can deal by approaching with respect the conspirational thinkers who often feel misunderstood or marginalized. This way we help them build trust and making them more receptive to dialogue. Also, we ask open-ended questions which encourages critical thinking and self-reflection. Find areas of agreement can reduce defensiveness and create a more productive dialogue. Finally, real world examples can help</p>

	<p>down immediately and will not argue anymore.</p> <p>§ Try to be more receptive to their opinion and thesis and ask, instead, what are the scientific arguments that can best support their claim.</p> <p>§ Ask detailed questions to trigger self-reflection on their supporting claims.</p> <p>§ Show empathy and try to understand why they have such strong attitude towards the issue. For example, for anti-vaxxers, are they driven maybe by their own fear, stress, by family opinions or just lacking accurate knowledge?</p> <p>§ Go step by step and try not to change all their beliefs at once: focus on details and facts first.</p> <p>§ Do not put too much pressure, leave them some time for self-reflection and revisit the issue on a second time.</p>	<p>illustrate how conspiracies are often less plausible than they appear.</p>
Questions Block 3	Answer	Answer
3.1 What does Media and Information Literacy consist of and what competences should it include in order to be effective?	<p>According to the EU bodies (EC, Council of Europe, EAO) and global stakeholders (UN-UNESCO, OSCE, NORDICOM, NAMLE), Media and Information Literacy is a fundamental human-rights based, civic education competence and life skill for the 21st-century citizen - a citizen, who needs to have a voice, a choice and strong presence in the public</p>	<p>MIL is an essential set of skills and knowledge that enables individuals to effectively navigate, critically analyze and engage with media and information in today's digital and interconnected world. To be effective MIL should encompass several key components and competencies:</p> <p>a. Understanding the Media Landscape: awareness of different</p>

	<p>media sphere. According to the EU definition “media literacy is the ability to access the media, to understand and critically evaluate different aspects of the media messages and media contents and to create communications in a variety of contexts”. It is thus, part of an informed and active citizenship, combining a set of technical and cognitive skills, knowledge and understanding that allow citizens to use media critically, effectively and safely. According to EU regulation (AVMSD 2018/1808), media literacy should not be limited to learning about tools and technologies but should aim to equip citizens with the critical thinking skills required to exercise judgment, analyze complex realities and recognize the difference between opinion and fact in the news agenda.</p> <p>In the digital environment of the 21st century where media act as social catalysts that play a structural and pivotal role in communication, information sharing and interaction among users-viewers-consumers, it is more than imperative to set up a long-term sustainable media literacy</p>	<p>Media types and formats</p> <p>b. Critical Thinking analysis: critical evaluation of information, critically assess the credibility, accuracy, and bias of information. Analyze sources, check for evidence and distinguish between fact, opinion and propaganda.</p> <p>c. Recognize bias and Propaganda: identify bias misleading information and propaganda techniques</p> <p>d. Ethical use and creation of media: understand the ethical implications of consuming, sharing and creating media content.</p> <p>e. Understand the role of algorithms: recognize how algorithms shape the media and information we consume. How personalized content recommendations work and the importance of protecting personal data online</p> <p>f. Effective communication skills: ability to communicate information effectively and responsibly</p> <p>g. Information literacy: ability to locate, access and use information effectively. Also, ability to conduct research, assess the relevance and reliability of information sources and organize and present information</p> <p>h. Media production skills:</p>
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	policy, reinforcing all media with advanced educational mechanisms against disinformation towards a digital citizenship, a prerequisite for democracy.	basic skills in creating and producing media content
3.2 Why is it important for people to acquire media literacy competences in today's world?		It is important first because we need to navigate the information overload. Media literacy help individuals sift through this overload, identify trustworthy information and avoid being misled by false content. Also, disinformation (deliberately false information) and misinformation (false information spread without harmful intent) are prevalent in today's media landscape. ML equips individuals with the skills to critically evaluate information, fact check claims and avoid spreading falsehoods. Also, in a democratic society, informed-decision making is essential for participating in civic life. ML helps individuals recognize the persuasive techniques of advertising, making them less susceptible to

		manipulation by marketers, politicians and other influencers.
3.3 How would you include media literacy in an organisation that has a) Young people of school age b) Seniors c) Migrants (choose the option that fits your target)	<p>Since we talk about information pathogenies mainly online, we need to take into account that children from a very young age are the digital natives and we, as adults, are the digital immigrants in the new media landscape. It is imperative thus, that we start inoculating them with critical media and digital literacy skills from early childhood. Children and young people are indeed avid users of the new media, plus they are being screen-affected almost from the very first minutes they are born (first social media posts by their parents at the hospital).</p> <p>Public discourse on media impact is decades long however with the new media and social media platforms, it has exploded and highlighted new challenges and problematics. Today's Media Literacy course in the curriculum should definitely include all new</p>	<p>It is important to conduct a survey from the beginning to know their current media usage habits, challenges they face with technology and their level of comfort with digital tools. Also, we can perform basic digital literacy training using digital devices and accessing online information. Workshops on evaluating online information, some of them could focus on online safety and privacy. Also, promote critical discussions, encourage critical thinking through discussion groups where people can talk about current events, share what they have read online and critically evaluate different perspectives.</p>

	<p>forms of digital media communication and User Generated Content and develop critical attitudes towards their use: eg. how to have a filtering stance against media content, how to understand and respect media ethics and copyrights, how to understand advertising and attention- seeking techniques online especially by new groups, such as media influencers, how to better protect personal data and digital identity online, and most importantly, how to create quality media content for self-expression and self-development in an alternative audiovisual media language, with an emphasis on aesthetics and media norms. In other words, integrating media literacy into the curriculum need not focus only on a protectionist approach but also, engage into a creative aspect of it. We have to meet them in their own media environments and take advantage of their media enthusiasm. Both students and teachers can benefit through the abundant educational resources online through a learn by doing approach: eg. game-based learning, film education, news literacy, social media learning, co-creation of content that may cultivate a digital emotional intelligence</p>	
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	<p>among youth. Alongside children and youth, senior citizens are also another target-group that should be systematically addressed. Driven by FOMO – Fear of Missing Out - they are often anxious to get constantly connected, to stay relevant and to interact with others, ignoring significantly the potential risks of spreading disinfo and misinfo online, mainly through social media platforms. Their social and political beliefs and ideologies acquired in their whole life are also, a strong impediment that adds to information pathogenies.</p> <p>And then, there are the social minorities, the digital deprived communities that again strive to keep up with the new trends, to achieve social integration, not being fully aware of all the risks, such as leaving their digital print unattended and spreading continuously false information.</p> <p>To better address their needs, we need to design interventions for each target-group per se. According to my recent survey “State of Play of Media Literacy at National Level (AUTH, 2023), exploring the target groups that media literacy actions are being</p>	
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	addressed globally, most actions concerns middle-aged citizens (65+), vulnerable social groups (immigrants, refugees, Roma), students and young people, the disabled and young girls and women. **	
Questions Block 4	Answer	Answer
4.1 Why is it important for educators and information professionals to work together to tackle disinformation? What value does each specialism bring and how could they work together?	Journalists and media professionals are focal human sources for empowering citizen's media literacy skills. They are in the service of citizens for shaping and influencing public opinion based on truth and neutrality (ideally). They are engaged with developing professional media literacy skills such as providing an accurate news agenda, practicing investigative journalism, data journalism, Big Data,	This joint effort is essential to equip individuals, especially students and the public with the skills and knowledge needed to critically engage with the media and make informed decisions. 1. Combine educational expertise with media literacy. Educators are experts in pedagogy and curriculum design. They know how to effectively media literacy into the educational curriculum,

	<p>surveillance journalism, and promoting basic social rights (inclusion, diversity, intercultural dimension) through their public reporting. They are also, in charge for developing a new Media Literacy Intelligence (meta-cognitive learning, bots, echo chambers, personal data, algorithms) for serving public good and strong Knowledge Societies.</p> <p>To better integrate media literacy among the school community and educators, it is essential for journalists to work together with school educators into a multi-stakeholder, interdisciplinary collaboration. They can bring their day-to-day experience, present global paradigms and adjust them to local settings – considering cultural school particularities in an intercultural dialogue. They can offer practical examples of spreading disinformation offline and online, talk about how to detect fake videos and deep fakes, how to find fact checking websites and urge students into creating their own projects on combatting disinformation online.</p>	<p>ensuring that students develop the critical thinking skills needed to assess the credibility of information. Information professionals are skilled in information management, source evaluation and dissemination of accurate content.</p> <p>2. Develop critical thinking skills. Educators teach students how to question assumptions, analyze arguments and draw conclusions. Information professionals contribute by providing access to a wide range of resources and tools that can be used to fact-check information and verify sources.</p> <p>3. Promote ethical information consumption. Educators can instill ethical values and responsibility in students. Information professionals bring an understanding of the ethical standards in journalism and information sharing.</p> <p>4. Enhance access to reliable resources. Educators guide students toward credible academic resources, teach them how to use scholarly resources in their research. Information professionals curate and provide access to a wide array of reliable resources, including news archives, databases and fact-checking websites.</p>
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<p>4.2 Would it be appropriate to include media literacy content in educational programmes, or to include thematic units within those subjects that can integrate issues related to disinformation from their area of specialisation (science, history...)?</p>	<p>There is yet not an agreed consensus globally on the best workable format to integrate media literacy into the school curriculum. There are two main schools of thought: those who believe that there should be an autonomous unit on media literacy as a separate (capsule) course based on spiral curriculum teaching model and those who believe that media literacy should be present in all school themes and levels, engaging a cross-curriculum approach. I personally believe that both approaches are needed in a combining scheme, but if had to choose among one, it would be the first one, a holistic and multi-level approach on media literacy education in the classroom.</p> <p>UNESCO, working in the field for 40 years, offers a wide range of school resources on media and information literacy, most notably two open-source handbooks a) UNESCO Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Teachers (2011) and b) Media and Information Literate Citizens: Think critically, Click Wisely (2021, Second Edition), with a plethora of resources and modules to begin with, in both formal and non-formal education.</p>	<p>Both approaches offer valuable benefits. The choice between them should be guided by the educational goals, available resources and the needs of students. A combined approach, where media literacy is both taught explicitly and applied within various subjects, can provide a practical education in navigating in the media and information landscape.</p>
<p>4.3 What should be included in a manual on media literacy for non-specialist teachers, whether in formal or non-formal education?</p>	<p>1. Introduction to Media literacy 2. Understanding the media landscape: types of media, media ownership and bias 3. Key Media Literacy concepts: source evaluation, understanding media messages 4. Integrating media literacy into the curriculum 5. Practical activities and lessons plans 6. Tools and resources: fact-checking tools, educational resources 7. Addressing common challenges 8. Evaluation and assessment</p>	





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