

Module 4 (Part 3)

Building Digital Bridges: Media's Power in Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion

Developed by Laura Magan, MMS, Ireland



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M4 Part 3 – Focus Area 3

European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue



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Module 4

Building Digital Bridges: Media's Power in Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion

This Module explores how digital media can contribute to conflict resolution, reconciliation, and facilitate social unity. It highlights the role of storytelling, journalism, and digital platforms in peacebuilding efforts across Europe.

MODULE 4 (Part 1)

Topic 1

Digital Media as a Tool for Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Europe

*Examines how digital platforms help communities **heal from conflict, rebuild trust, and promote dialogue** to support long-term peace and cooperation.*



MODULE 4 (Part 2)

Topic 2

Storytelling for Social Change: Using Digital Media to Promote Peace Initiatives

*Highlights the power of **narrative-driven content** in reshaping perspectives, reducing tensions, and promoting mutual understanding.*



MODULE 4 (Part 3)

Topic 3

European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

*Analyses digital tools and media initiatives that **combat misinformation, encourage balanced reporting, and facilitate respectful conversations.***



MODULE 4 (Part 4)

Topic 4

The Role of Citizen Journalism in Strengthening Social Cohesion

*Explores how grassroots journalism and community-driven reporting **amplify marginalised voices and promote shared narratives** for a more unified society.*

YOU ARE HERE



Module 4 Snapshot



Focus Area: Peace Building in Communities

Aim: How Digital Media Supports Peace and Understanding in European Communities

Emphasises how storytelling and citizen journalism can facilitate peacebuilding and promote **post-conflict recovery** and **social change**. It teaches how digital media can be used as a tool for **empowering communities** in **peacebuilding**, to heal, connect and promote **peace reconciliation**, and **social cohesion** through **inclusive narratives** and **citizen participation**.

Key Words: Post-Conflict Reconciliation, Peacebuilding, Reconciliation, Social Cohesion, Storytelling for Social Change, Promoting Peace, Citizen Journalism, Constructive Dialogue, Post Conflict Recovery, Community Engagement.



Module Overview

This module explores how digital media contributes to conflict resolution, reconciliation, and facilitating social unity. It highlights the role of storytelling, journalism, and digital platforms in peacebuilding efforts across Europe.

Participants will examine how digital storytelling, online discourse, and media initiatives support post-conflict reconciliation, bridge social divides, and promote constructive dialogue.

Through case studies, ethical discussions, and interactive exercises, learners will develop skills to leverage digital media as a tool for promoting peace and social cohesion in diverse communities.

01

Digital Media as a Tool for Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Europe

*Examines how digital platforms help communities **heal from conflict, rebuild trust, and promote dialogue** to support long-term peace and cooperation.*

02

Storytelling for Social Change: Using Digital Media to Promote Peace Initiatives

*Highlights the power of **narrative-driven content** in reshaping perspectives, reducing tensions, and promoting mutual understanding.*

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03

European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

*Analyses digital tools and media initiatives that **combat misinformation, encourage balanced reporting, and facilitate respectful conversations.***

04

The Role of Citizen Journalism in Strengthening Social Cohesion

*Explores how grassroots journalism and community-driven reporting **amplify marginalised voices and promote shared narratives** for a more unified society.*



02

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Module
Overview



04

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Topic 3
European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

Module 4: Building Digital Bridges: Media's Power in Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion



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Module
Snapshot



03

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Learning
Outcomes



Module 4 (Part 3) Interactive Learning Elements

	101 Slides
	02 Exercises
	06 Videos
	06 Case Studies

	10 Digital Tools
	04 Toolkits & Guides
	16 Articles & Reports

Learning Outcomes

Topic 1: Digital Media as a Tool for Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Europe

- Examine how digital platforms help **communities heal from conflict, rebuild trust**, enable and engage in dialogue to support long-term peace and cooperation.
- Understand the role of digital media in **reconciliation efforts** and **truth-telling initiatives**.
- Identify challenges in using digital media for **post-conflict recovery**, including polarisation, misinformation, and media manipulation.

Learning Outcomes

Topic 2: Storytelling for Social Change: Using Digital Media to Promote Peace Initiatives

- Analyse the power of **narrative-driven content** in reshaping perspectives and promoting mutual understanding.
- Explore digital storytelling techniques used to **highlight reconciliation efforts** and **peacebuilding projects**.
- Understand the **ethical considerations** in storytelling for conflict resolution and social cohesion.

Learning Outcomes

Topic 3: European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

- Examine digital tools and initiatives that **support peace journalism and conflict-sensitive reporting.**
- Investigate the role of online platforms in **facilitating dialogue between divided communities.**
- Explore case studies of **European media projects** focused on promoting **understanding and preventing violence.**

Learning Outcomes

Topic 4: The Role of Social Media in Conflict Prevention and Resolution

- Analyses how social media platforms influence **public discourse during conflicts** and **peace processes**.
- Investigate the impact of **online activism** and **grassroots digital campaigns** in promoting peace.
- Learn strategies to **counteract online hate speech** and **digital propaganda** that fuel conflicts.

Topic 3

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue



Overview

European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

Peace journalism seeks to provide balanced, solution-oriented reporting on conflicts, countering divisive narratives and misinformation. This section explores **European digital platforms** and initiatives that support peace journalism, enable **constructive dialogue**, and promote **ethical reporting in conflict-sensitive contexts**.





Key Definitions and Concepts in European Peacebuilding Platforms



- ➡ **Peace Journalism vs. War Journalism:** Shifting from sensationalism to solution-driven reporting.
- ➡ **Digital Platforms & News Aggregators for Peace Reporting:** Tools supporting responsible journalism.
- ➡ **Ethical Media Consumption & Production:** Best practices for journalists and content creators.
- ➡ **Constructive Dialogue Strategies:** How media promotes, supports and nurtures cross-community conversations.

CONCEPT Peace Journalism vs. War Journalism: Shifting from sensationalism to solution-driven reporting.

IMPORTANCE Media influences how we think and feel. Peace journalism nurtures understanding and empathy — essential for long-term conflict transformation. Peace Journalism An Introduction

DEFINITION Peace journalism focuses on solutions, context, balanced perspectives of war and conflict, and human stories — avoiding sensationalism, polarisation, and dehumanisation. It explores the causes and impacts of conflict. Gives voice to all sides

EXAMPLE TransConflict Serbia publishes local reconciliation stories that frame Serbs, Bosniaks, and Croats as collaborators in peace, not just combatants.

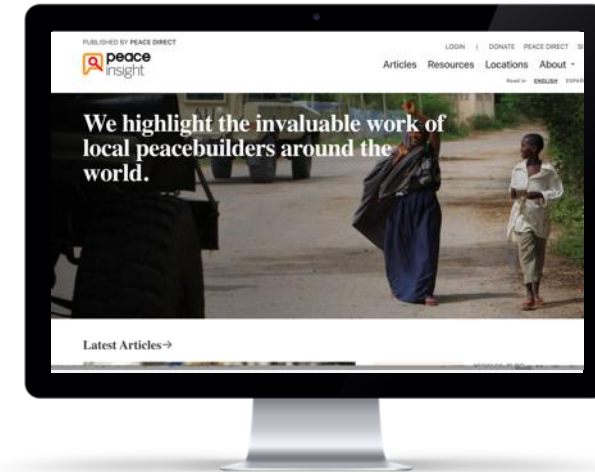
Highlights peace efforts and reconciliation. Uses respectful, non-inflammatory language. **War journalism**, by contrast, tends to highlight violence, 'us vs them' narratives, and dramatic headlines. What is Peace Journalism and its Elements?

CONCEPT Digital Platforms & News Aggregators for Peace Reporting: Tools supporting responsible journalism.

IMPORTANCE These platforms elevate underreported stories, connect journalists globally, and challenge biased or click-driven narratives.

DEFINITION These are online tools and platforms that curate, share, or support responsible, balanced, and diverse news content — often with a focus on peacebuilding, rights, and reconciliation.

EXAMPLE Peace Insight — Showcases local peacebuilding stories from around the world.



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Peace Journalism vs. War Journalism: Shifting from Sensationalism to Solution-Driven Reporting



Peace Journalism is a reporting approach that emphasizes understanding, empathy, and solutions in conflict coverage. It aims to provide balanced narratives, give voice to all parties involved, and focus on the underlying causes and potential resolutions of conflicts. This contrasts with **War Journalism**, which often highlights violence, propagates an 'us vs. them' mentality, and prioritizes sensationalism.

Key Differences:

Peace Journalism:

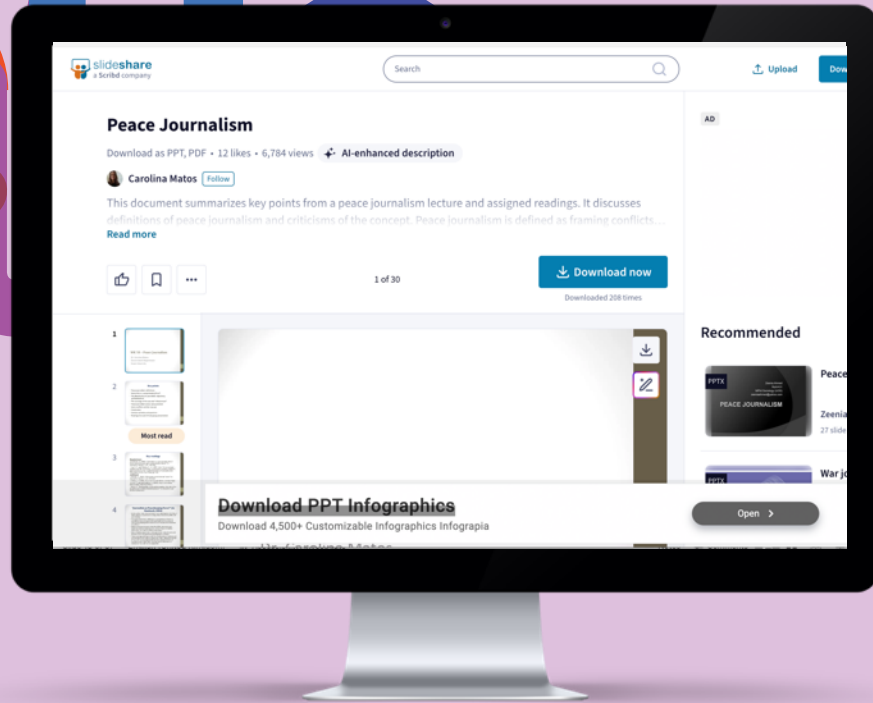
- Proactive in exploring the causes of conflict.
- Gives voice to all parties, especially the marginalized.
- Focuses on solutions and peace initiatives.
- Avoids demonizing language and sensationalism.

War Journalism:

- Reactive, focusing on events as they occur.
- Emphasizes violence and conflict.
- Often supports official narratives and elite sources.
- Uses language that may inflame tensions



Peace versus war journalism



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Peace versus War Journalism

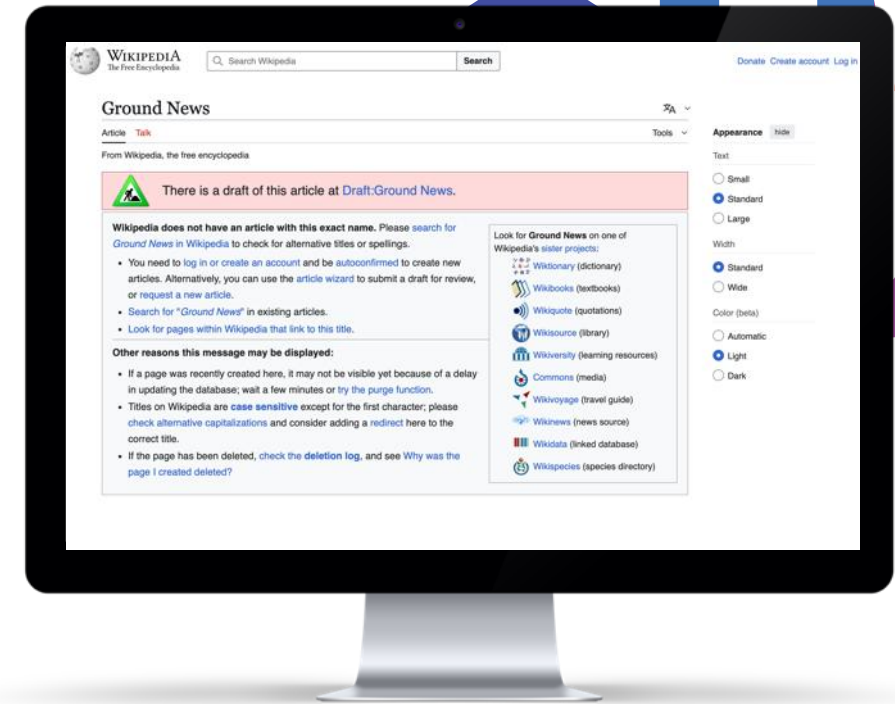
War journalism	Peace Journalism
Reactive (waits for war to break)	Proactive (anticipates, starts reporting)
Reports on visible effects	Reports also on invisible (trauma)
Elite-oriented (leaders as sources)	People-oriented
Focuses on differences	Reports on areas of agreement
Focuses on the here and now	Reports on causes and consequences
Victims versus villains; bad x good	Avoids the "good guy" discourse
Two-party oriented	Multi-party oriented
Partisan (biased for one-side)	Non-partisan (neutral)
Zero-sum game (one goal)	Win-win orientation (many goals)
Stops reporting with the peace treaty	Stays on and reports aftermath
Uses victimizing language	Avoids victimizing language
Demonizing and emotive words	Avoids demonizing and emotive words

Digital Platforms & News Aggregators for Peace Reporting

Digital Platforms and Tools Supporting Responsible Journalism

In the digital age, various platforms and tools have emerged to support peace journalism by promoting balanced reporting and diverse perspectives.

→ [Ground News](#): A news aggregation platform that allows users to compare how different media outlets report on the same story, highlighting biases and promoting media literacy.

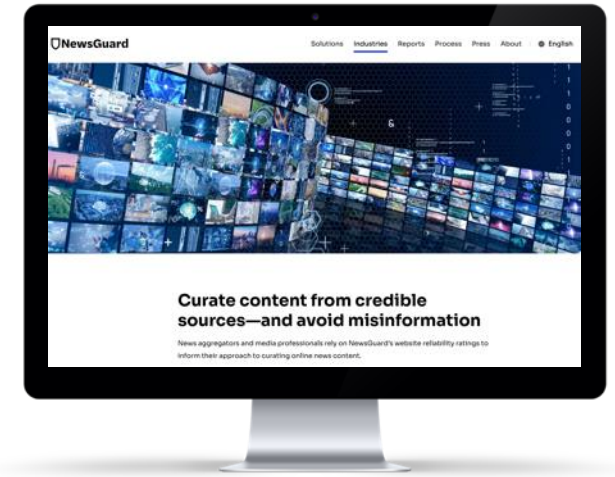


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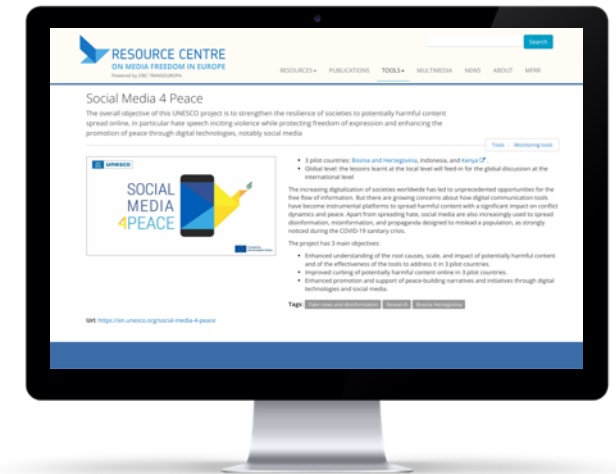
Digital Platforms & News Aggregators for Peace Reporting

- [NewsGuard](#): Provides credibility ratings for news websites, helping readers identify trustworthy sources and avoid misinformation.
- [UNESCO's Social Media 4 Peace](#): An initiative aimed at strengthening the resilience of societies to potentially harmful content spread online, particularly hate speech inciting violence.

These platforms play a crucial role in elevating underreported stories, connecting journalists globally, and challenging biased or click-driven narratives.



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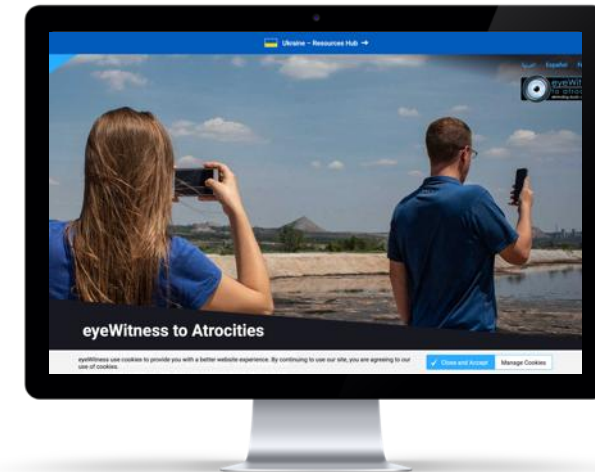
CONCEPT Ethical Media Consumption

& Production: Best practices for journalists and content creators.

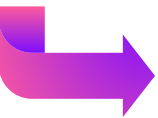
IMPORTANCE Responsible media can protect lives, build trust, and prevent further harm — especially during fragile peace processes or humanitarian crises.

DEFINITION Ethical media consumption means questioning sources, checking facts, and avoiding content that spreads harm or hate. Ethical production means creating media that is truthful, inclusive, respectful, and accurate.

EXAMPLE Eyewitness to Atrocities – A mobile app developed by the International Bar Association that lets users record, verify, and submit human rights violations while protecting identities and metadata.



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CONCEPT Constructive Dialogue

Strategies: How media promotes, supports and nurtures cross-community conversations.



IMPORTANCE Dialogue through media can reduce polarisation, build empathy, and make peacebuilding participatory and youth-led.



DEFINITION Constructive dialogue involves using media platforms — digital or traditional — to facilitate respectful, informed, and inclusive conversations across lines of difference (e.g., political, ethnic, religious).



EXAMPLE The Makers Podcast (Netherlands) brings together people with opposing views to talk through disagreement constructively.

Includes hosting live-streamed debates or Q&As and producing podcasts featuring diverse voices.

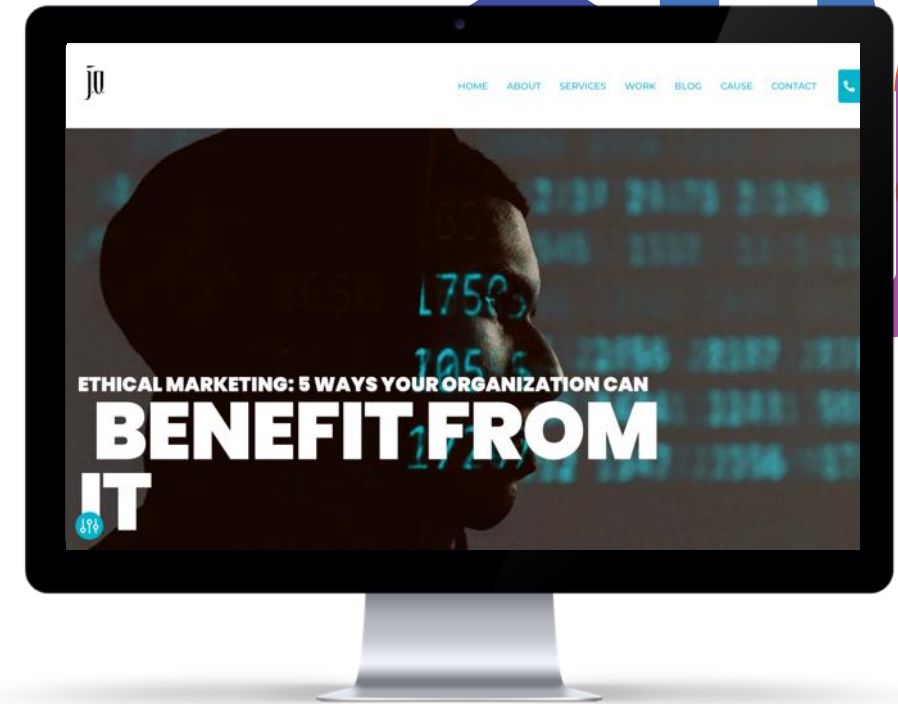
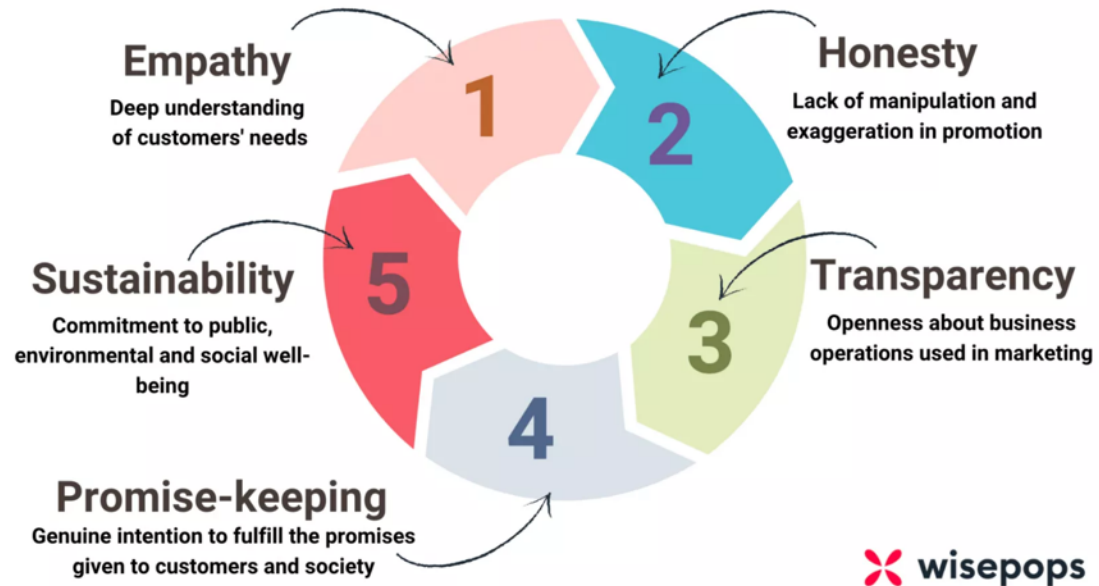
Fostering Dialogue Across Divides

Ethical media practices and constructive dialogue are vital in fostering peace and understanding, especially in post-conflict and polarized societies. Below are best practices and strategies to guide journalists, content creators, and media consumers in promoting responsible media engagement and cross-community conversations.



Ethical Marketing

Ethical Marketing



[Ethical Media and Marketing](#)

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Focus Area 1

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

The role of peace journalism in mitigating media-driven polarisation.

Balanced reporting challenges biased narratives, promoting constructive discourse and informed public debate.

Peace journalism is a media approach that aims to present conflicts fairly and accurately, avoid sensationalism or blame, give voice to all sides, especially those promoting peace and focus on solutions, not just violence.

Coined by journalist and peace researcher Johan Galtung, peace journalism challenges the usual “**if it bleeds, it leads**” style of reporting that often fuels fear, anger, and division.

[Responsible conflict reporting: Rethinking the role of journalism](#), [Peace Journalism Definitions](#), [Peace Journalism: A Tool Within Media Development?](#)



Media Driven Polarisation Explained

Focus Area 1

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

Media-driven polarization refers to how news media, including digital platforms, can contribute to heightened political divisions and reduced social cohesion. This can occur through several mechanisms, including the selective presentation of information, the spread of misinformation, and the encouragement of echo chambers and filter bubbles.

Media-driven polarisation happens when news or social media coverage:

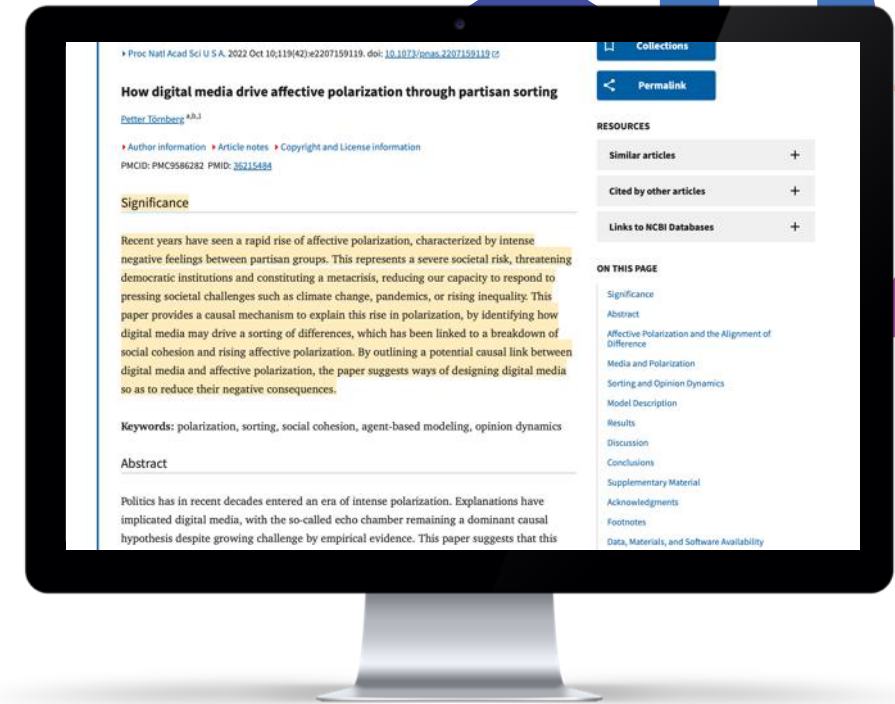
- Reinforces “us vs. them” thinking
- Uses emotional language or selective facts
- Echoes extreme viewpoints
- Spreads misinformation or fear-based narratives

This can escalate tensions, especially in post-conflict societies, or during political unrest or migration crises.

How Media Drives Polarisation

Selective Reporting & Bias:

News outlets, even those with good intentions, may unintentionally or deliberately present information in a way that **favours one side of a debate or ignores counter-arguments**. This can create a **distorted view of reality** for audiences.



[How digital media drive affective polarization through partisan sorting](#)

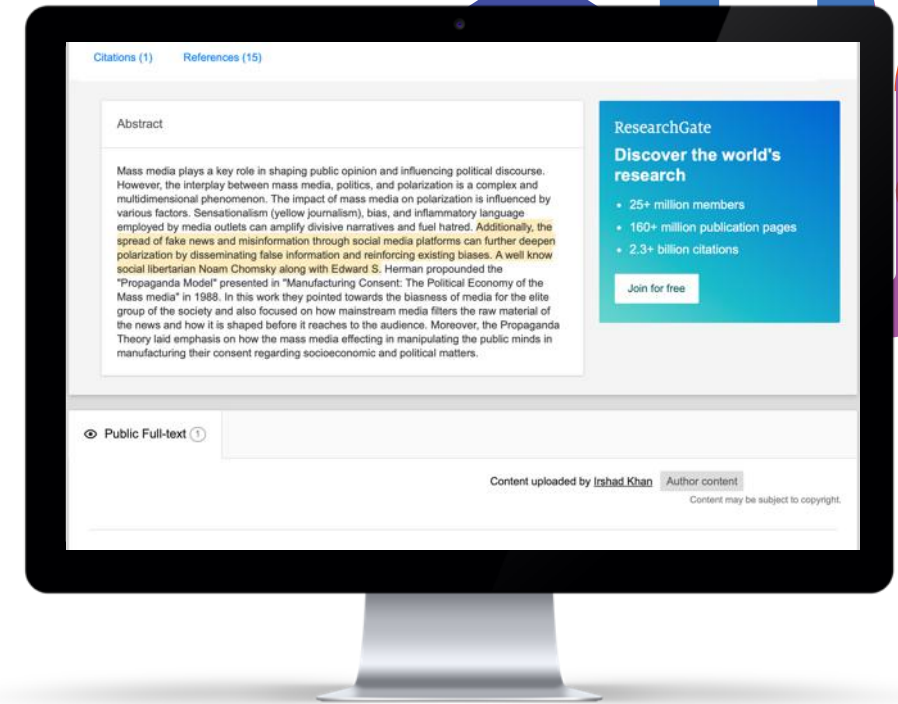
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How Media Drives Polarisation



Misinformation & Disinformation:

The spread of false or misleading information, often through social media, can further polarize individuals and groups by **reinforcing pre-existing beliefs and eroding trust in credible sources.**



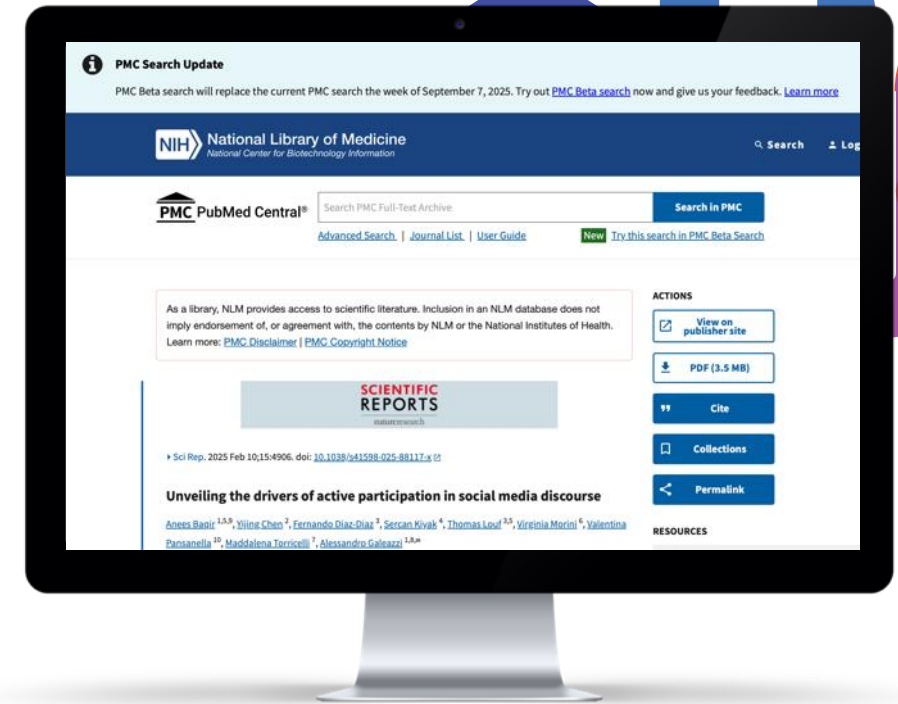
Mass Media and the Politics of Polarization

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How Media Drives Polarisation

Echo Chambers & Filter Bubbles:

Algorithm-driven recommendations on social media and news platforms can create echo chambers, where **individuals are primarily exposed to information that confirms their existing beliefs**. This limits exposure to diverse perspectives and reinforces polarization.



[Unveiling the drivers of active participation in social media discourse](#)

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How Media Drives Polarisation



Emotional Contagion:

Social media's ability to **spread emotions quickly can amplify negative feelings**, particularly anger and outrage, between opposing groups, further exacerbating divisions.



"Us vs. Them" Mentality:

The constant portrayal of political opponents as enemies rather than simply adversaries can **erode civility and hinder constructive dialogue**, further fueling polarisation.

How Media Drives Polarisation



Consequences

1

Reduced Social Cohesion: Increased division and animosity between groups can lead to a breakdown of social trust and cooperation.

2

Vulnerability of Democracy: Severe polarization can weaken democratic institutions by making compromise and negotiation more difficult.

3

Threat to Societal Progress: The inability to address complex issues like climate change or inequality can be hampered by polarization and a lack of consensus.

Why peace journalism is important in mitigating media-driven polarisation.



Challenging the Status Quo: Traditional journalism often emphasizes conflict and violence as news, often leading to a focus on negative events and a tendency to report sensational stories. Peace journalism, on the other hand, encourages a more balanced and constructive approach to reporting on conflict.

Focus on Prevention and Transformation: Peace journalism aims to actively prevent conflicts by promoting dialogue and understanding between different groups, and by highlighting the causes and potential solutions to conflict.

Considering Multiple Perspectives: It emphasises the importance of understanding the perspectives of all parties involved in a conflict, not just the dominant narratives.

Why peace journalism is important in mitigating media-driven polarisation.



Promoting "Win-Win" Solutions: Peace journalism strives to find solutions that benefit all parties involved in a conflict, rather than focusing on a single victor.

Highlighting Non-Violent Responses: It recognises and celebrates non-violent resistance and conflict resolution efforts.

Shifting the Narrative: Peace journalism seeks to shift the focus from conflict to peacebuilding by highlighting the efforts of individuals, organisations, and communities working to create more peaceful societies.

How Peace Journalism Helps Prevent Polarisation



1 **Problem:** Only violent voices are heard

Peace Journalism Response:

Include peacebuilders, mediators, and ordinary citizens in the story

Problem: Sensational headlines create fear **2**

Peace Journalism Response:

Use calm, factual language and context

3 **Problem:** Misinformation spreads

Peace Journalism Response:

Verify facts, share multiple perspectives, encourage critical thinking

How Peace Journalism Helps Prevent Polarisation



4 **Problem:** “Enemy” narratives deepen division

Peace Journalism Response:

Humanise all sides, especially victims and civilians

Problem: Conflict is shown as inevitable **5**

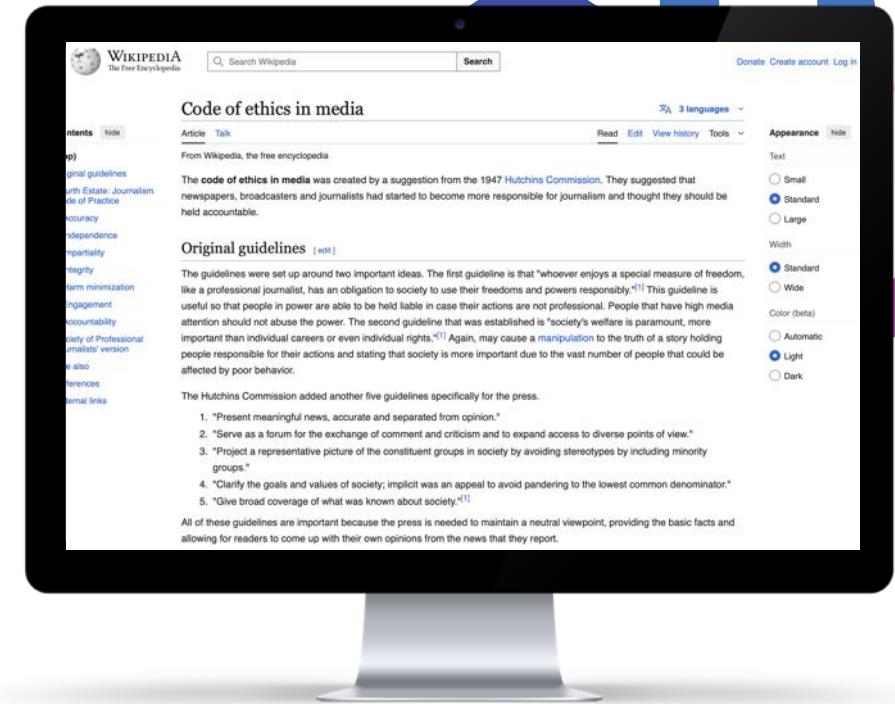
Peace Journalism Response:

Show peace efforts, solutions, and compromise

Best Practices for Journalists and Content Creators

BEST PRACTICE Ensure Accuracy and Context [Code of Ethics in Media](#)

WHY Verify information before dissemination. **Provide comprehensive context** to avoid misinterpretation. Distinguish clearly between **facts**, opinions, and analysis.

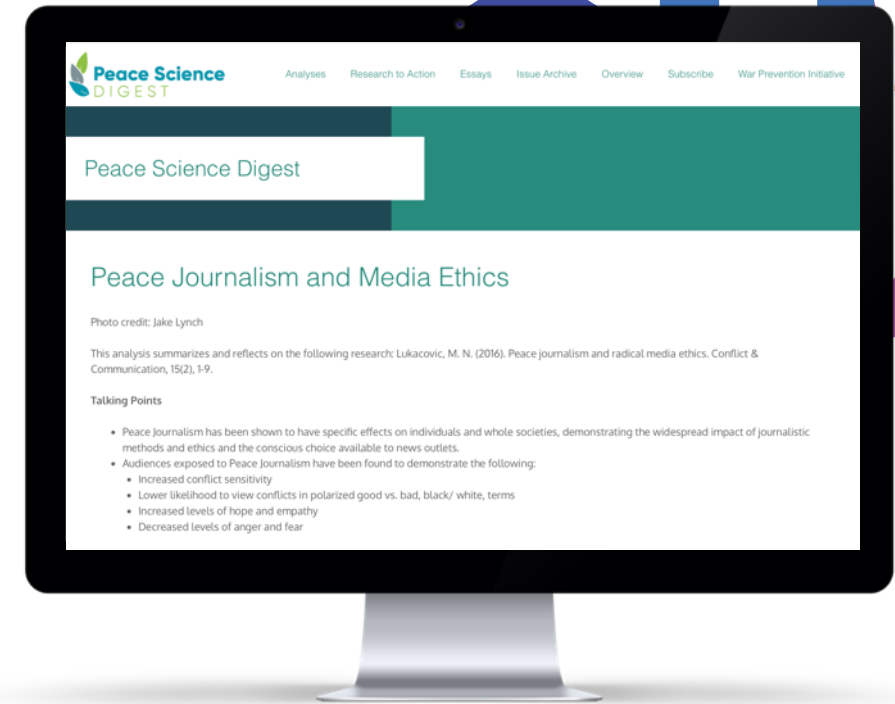


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Best Practices for Journalists and Content Creators

BEST PRACTICE Minimise Harm [Peace Journalism and Media Ethics](#)

WHY Avoid **sensationalism** that could exacerbate tensions. Respect the **dignity and privacy** of individuals, particularly victims and vulnerable groups. Seek **informed consent** when sharing personal stories.



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Best Practices for Journalists and Content Creators

BEST PRACTICE Promote Inclusivity and Diverse Perspectives [Content Creators and Journalists: Redefining News and Credibility in the Digital Age](#)

WHY Amplify **voices from all sides** of a conflict, including marginalised communities. **Challenge stereotypes** and avoid reinforcing biases.

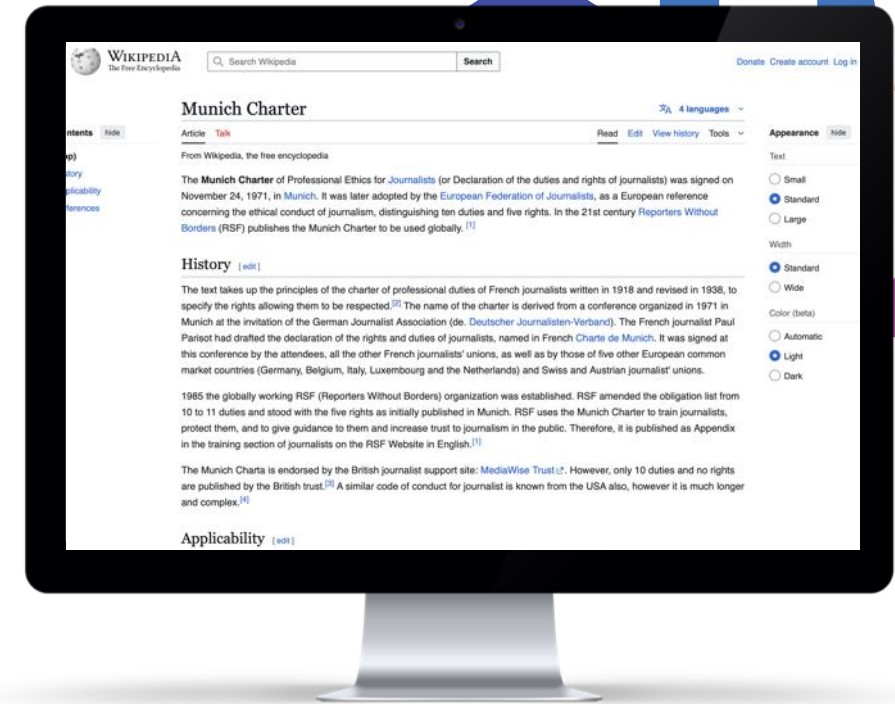


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Best Practices for Journalists and Content Creators

BEST PRACTICE Adhere to Established Ethical Guidelines [Munich Charter](#)

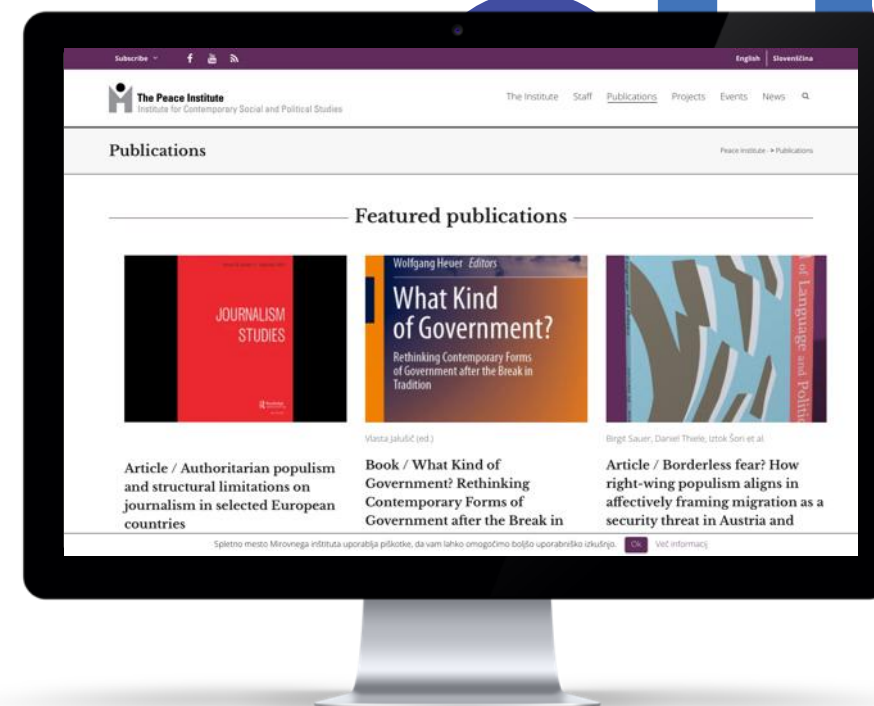
WHY Follow recognised codes such as the Munich Charter and the Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics. As a European reference concerning the ethical conduct of journalism, it distinguishes ten duties and five rights.



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Case Study: The Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies

The Institute develops interdisciplinary research, educational and awareness-raising activities in the areas of social science and humanities, in five thematic fields: human rights and minorities, politics, media and journalism, gender and cultural policies. It acts as an ally of vulnerable groups and acts against discrimination in partnership with them.



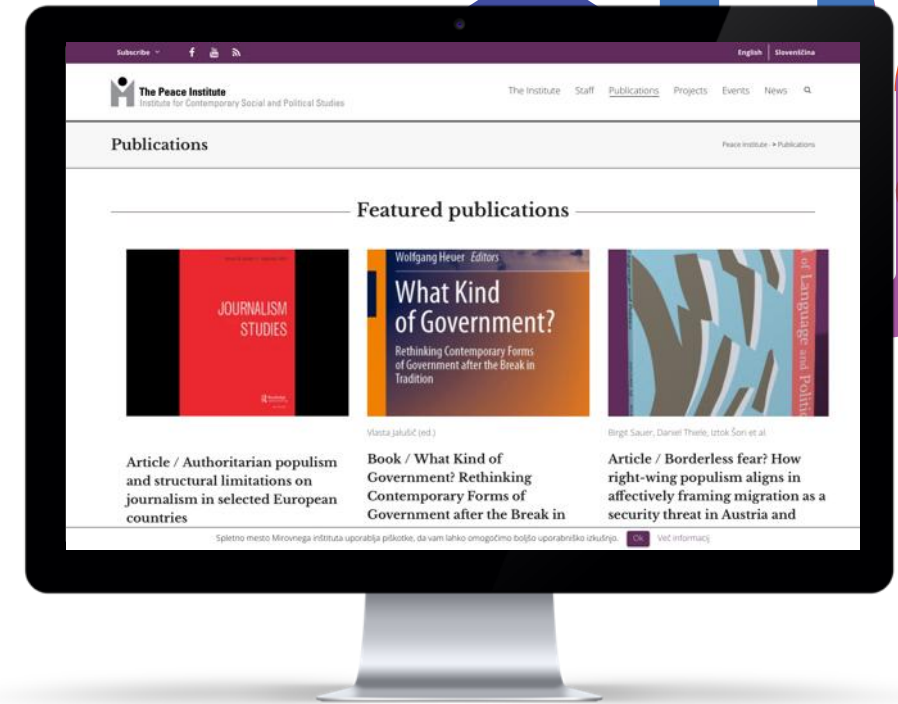
[The Peace Institute](https://www.peaceinstitute.eu/)

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Case Study: The Peace Institute – Institute for Contemporary Social and Political Studies

Strategic Media Focus

- Media and minorities
- Media pluralism
- Access to public information
- Media policy
- Media and information literacy
- Media integrity



[The Peace Institute](https://www.peaceinstitute.org/)

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Case Study: Transconflict – Peace Journalism Preventing Polarisation

Transconflict is a digital platform publishing articles and commentary from conflict zones (e.g., the Balkans) focused on reconciliation, inclusion, and political reform. It reframes polarised issues (like Kosovo-Serbia relations) with factual, solution-oriented language. Examples of work.



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Example: Peace Journalism, Kirthi Jayakumar: I ran a simple search on Google’s news panel with the words “Boko Haram.” In all the results that ensued, I found three common elements: propaganda, us-versus-them, and a conspicuous absence of peace efforts – three factors that feed into the very quintessence of war journalism.

Case Study: Transconflict – Peace Journalism Preventing Polarisation

Example: Pursuit of Peace Journalism Post-paris For a while after the terror attack in Paris, there was outrage: not only at the incident in Paris, but also at the near-absence of media coverage of incidents in Lebanon and, earlier in the year, Kenya.

This led to angered statements that denounced the media's choice in reporting incidents of equal magnitude, intensity and concern, and even led to a sense of exclusion. The Western media was accused of racism.



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European Fact-Checking
Standards Network

Focus Area 2

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

European platforms that promote balanced reporting and fact-based dialogue.

In an age of misinformation, polarisation, and rising hate speech, especially in post-conflict or multicultural contexts, it is crucial that learners **can identify reliable information sources, distinguish between fact, opinion, and propaganda, and engage in constructive digital dialogue rather than toxic debate**

These platforms play an essential role in supporting democratic values, media literacy, and peace-oriented storytelling across Europe, particularly across conflict affected regions

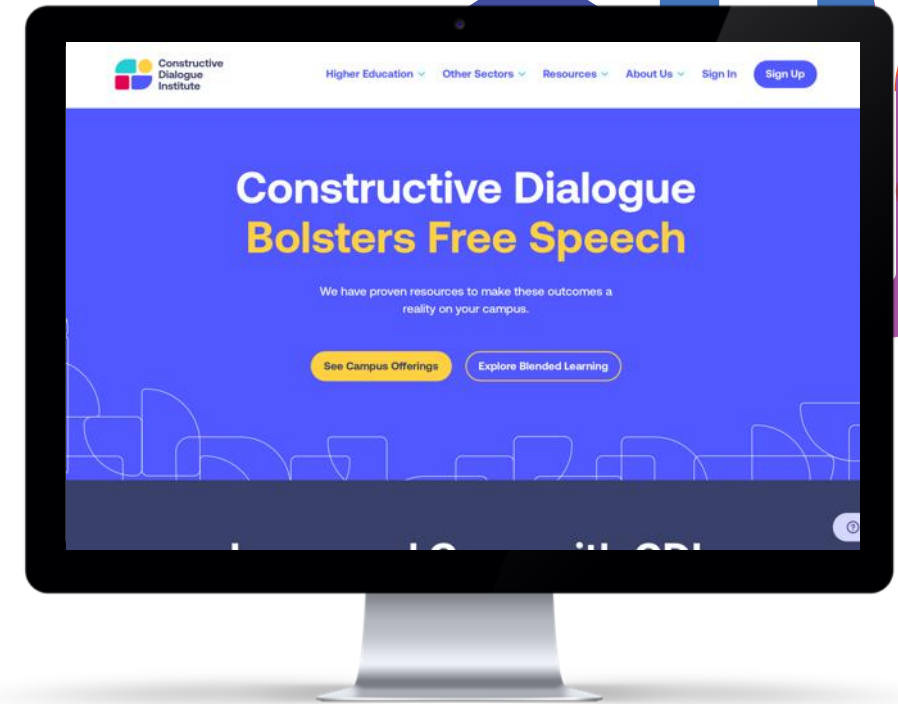
It is worth noting that other independent news platforms and verification projects ensure accurate and responsible journalism in conflict-sensitive contexts.

Constructive Dialogue Strategies

How Media Promotes, Supports, and Nurtures Cross-Community Conversations: Dialogue through media can reduce polarization, build empathy, and make peacebuilding participatory and youth-led.

STRATEGY Facilitate Constructive Dialogue
[Constructive Dialogue Institute](#)

HOW Encourage conversations where individuals with **differing perspectives** seek **mutual understanding** without compromising their own beliefs.



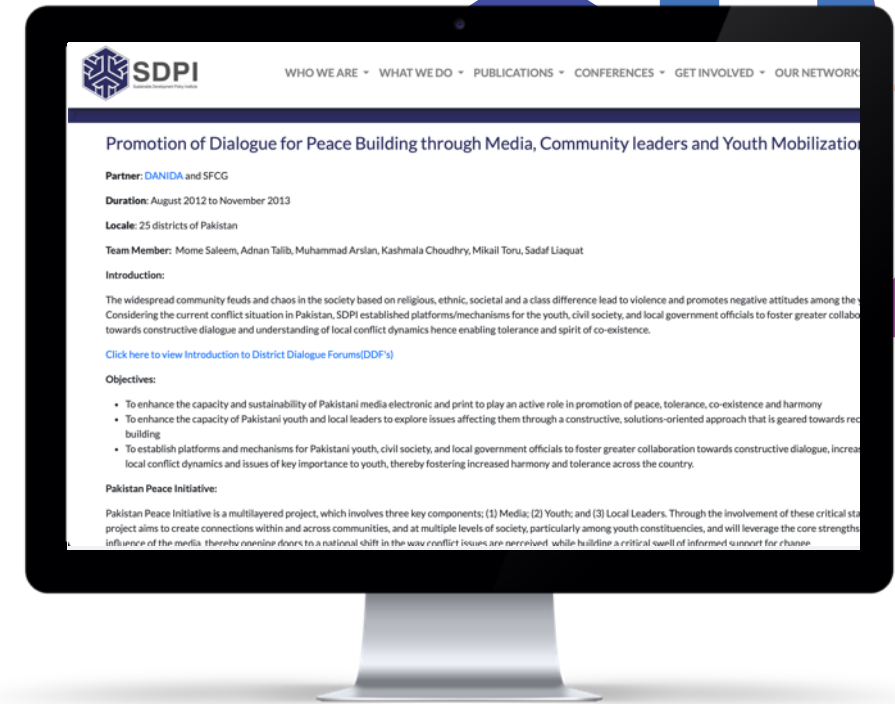
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Constructive Dialogue Strategies

STRATEGY Leverage Community-Based Media Initiatives

Promotion of Dialogue for Peace Building through Media, Community leaders and Youth Mobilization

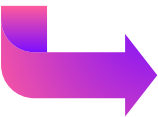
HOW Support local media projects that bring together community leaders and youth to **discuss and address conflict-related issues.**



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Constructive Dialogue Strategies

 **STRATEGY** Implement Dialogue in Peacebuilding Efforts [Community Dialogue Design Manual](#)

 **HOW** Use dialogue as a tool to **build trust and peaceful relations** among communities, **addressing structural causes of conflict.**

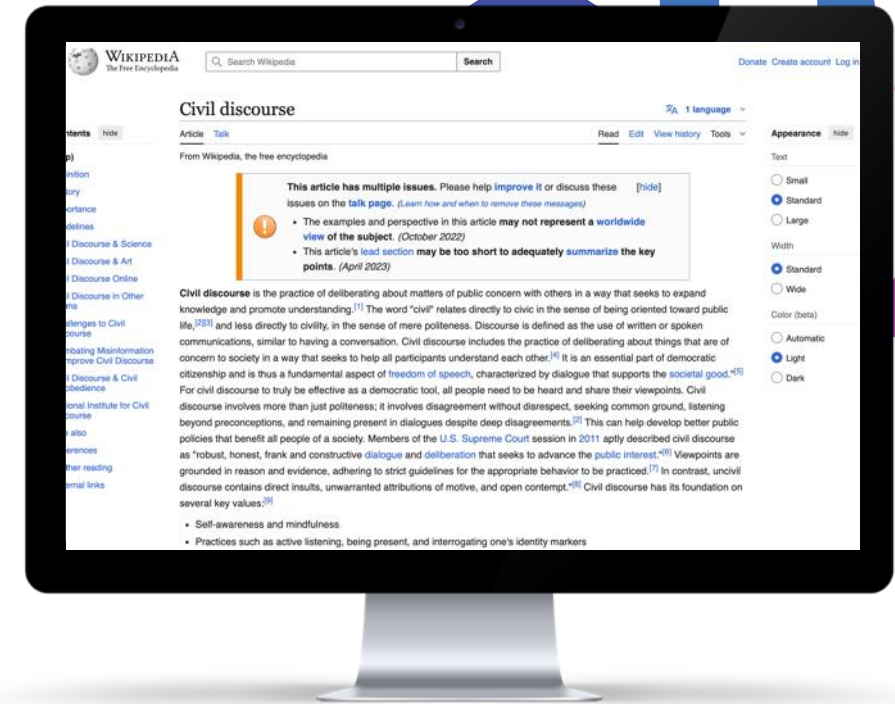


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Constructive Dialogue Strategies

STRATEGY Encourage Civil Discourse
Civil Discourse

HOW Promote discussions that **seek to expand knowledge and understanding**, allowing for disagreement without disrespect.

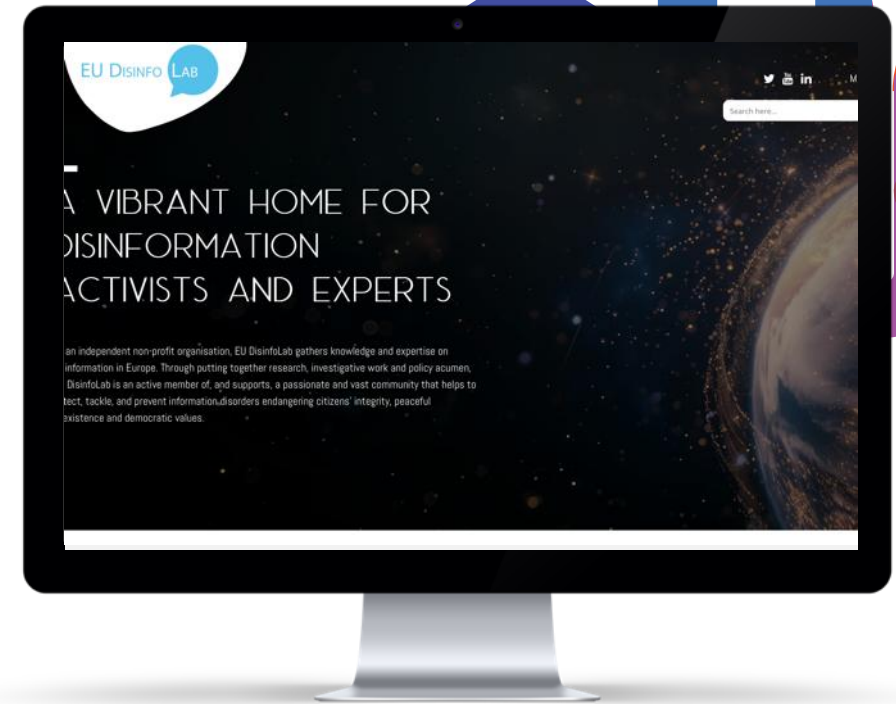


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The Role of Independent & Ethical Media Platforms

 **STRATEGY** EU DisinfoLab
<https://www.disinfo.eu>

 **HOW** Monitoring and investigating
disinformation campaigns across
Europe.

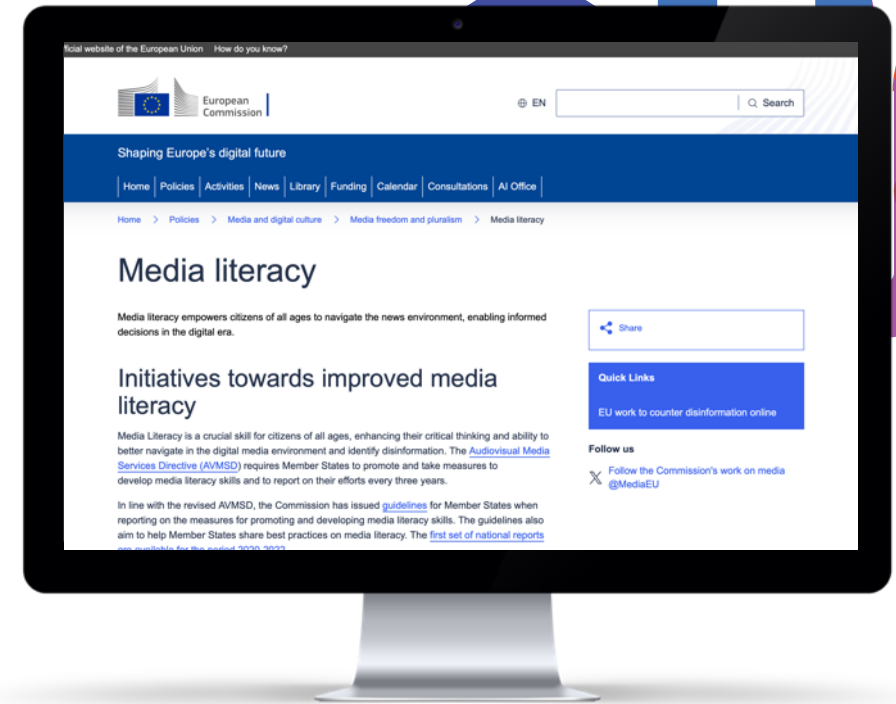


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The Role of Independent & Ethical Media Platforms

➔ **STRATEGY** Media Literacy for All (EU initiative) <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/media-literacy>

➔ **HOW** Promotes critical thinking and responsible media engagement among European citizens.

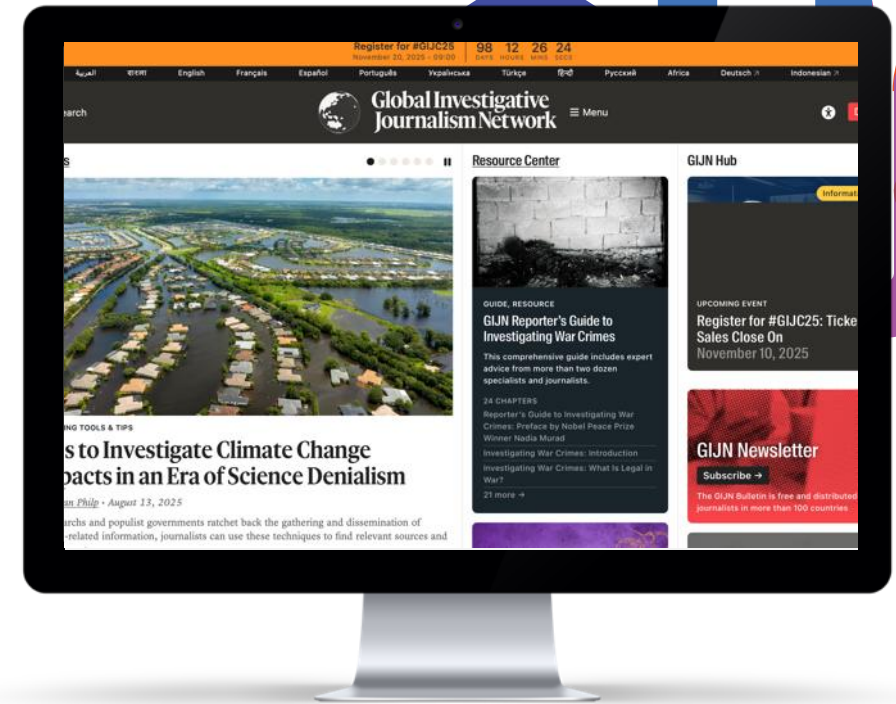


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The Role of Independent & Ethical Media Platforms

STRATEGY Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN) <https://gijn.org>

HOW Offers resources for investigative journalists working in **complex and conflict-sensitive environments**.



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The Role of Independent & Ethical Media Platforms

 **STRATEGY** First Draft News (now part of the Information Futures Lab) <https://iflab.org>

 **HOW** Offers toolkits to spot **misinformation** and improve online verification skills.



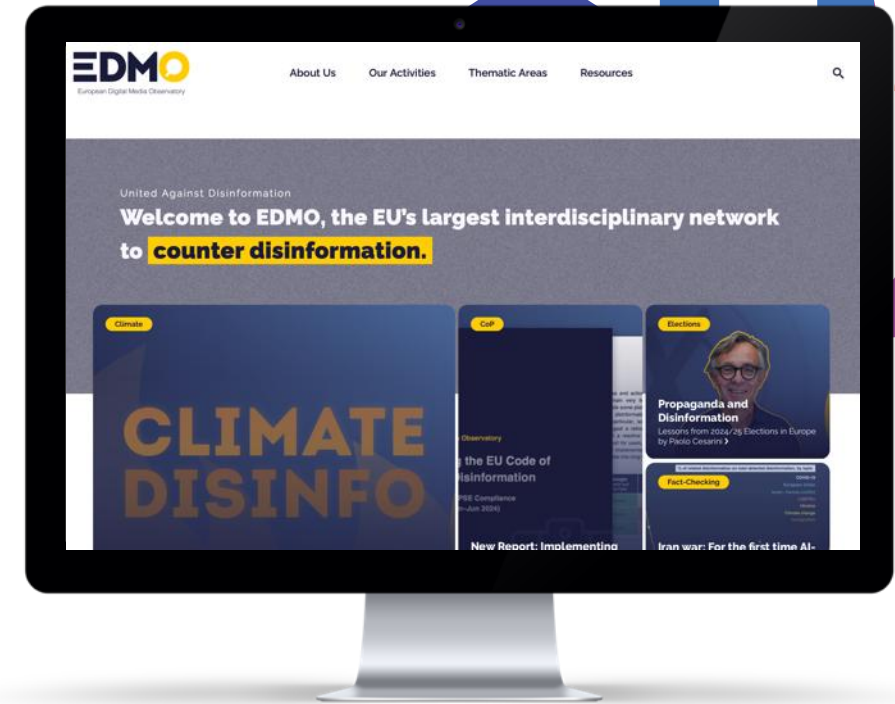
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Examples: European platforms that promote balanced reporting and fact-based dialogue.

European Digital Media Observatory.

It is an EU-funded hub that monitors misinformation, supports media literacy, and connects fact-checkers, academics, and civil society across Europe. It empowers educators, students, and citizens to spot fake news and engage with trustworthy, well-sourced content. Its features include:

- Fact Checking Map
- Real-time misinformation monitoring
- Education resources for schools and journalists
- Regional hubs across the EU



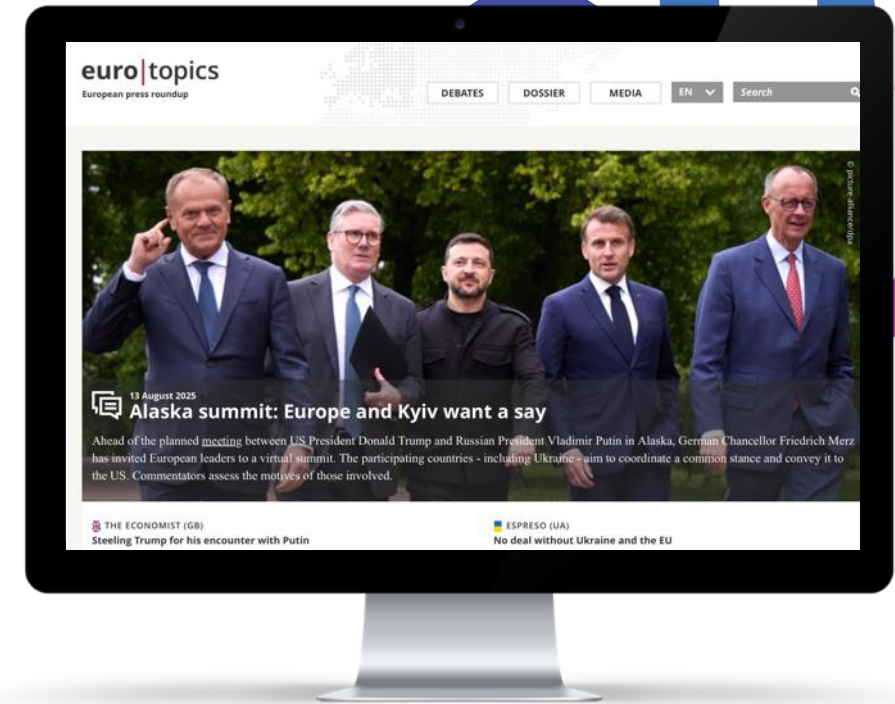
[Click To View](#)

Examples: European platforms that promote balanced reporting and fact-based dialogue.

Multilingual Press Review Platform

A multilingual press review platform that curates diverse, fact-based opinions from over 500 European media sources. It enables cross-cultural understanding and counters information bubbles. Its features include:

- Translates and compares perspectives from 30+ countries
- Helps users see how different societies interpret the same issue
- Great for teaching media bias and balanced opinion



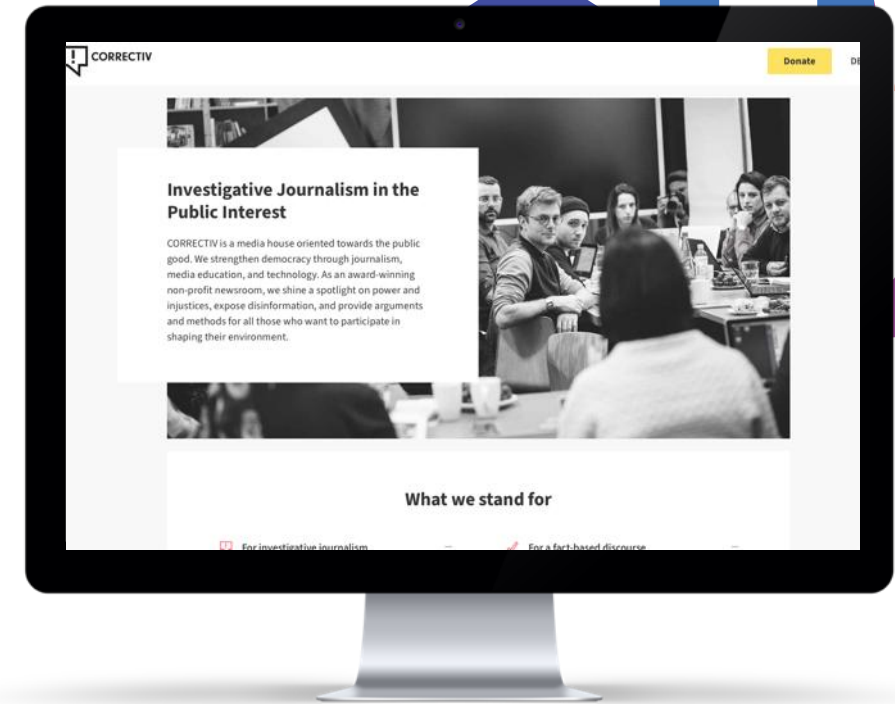
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euro|topics
European press roundup

Examples: European platforms that promote balanced reporting and fact-based dialogue.

Investigative Journalism based on Fact Based Discourse

CORRECTIV.Europe brings together European media outlets and journalists to strengthen local journalism through data-driven reporting, capacity building and community-focused technology. We envision a Europe where local journalists are empowered to investigate European issues together, from their doorstep, and add to informed, active citizenry and a resilient local democracy.



[Click To View](#)



Examples: European platforms that promote balanced reporting and fact-based dialogue.

European Fact Checking Standards Network

The EFCSN is the voice of European fact-checkers who uphold and promote the highest standards of fact-checking and media literacy in their effort to combat misinformation for the public benefit.



[Click To View](#)

EFCSN
European Fact-Checking
Standards Network



Focus Area 3

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

Media ethics and journalistic responsibility in conflict-sensitive environments

Ethical journalism minimises harm, respects sources, and avoids sensationalism in reporting on conflicts.

Media ethics are the principles and guidelines that journalists and media producers follow to act responsibly, especially when reporting in fragile, divided, or post-conflict settings. Conflict-sensitive journalism is journalism that **recognises how media can influence conflict (positively or negatively)**. It strives to **report accurately, fairly, and with care**. It works to **avoid making tensions worse or reinforcing harmful narratives**.

It's important because without ethics, the **media can fuel fear, hatred, and misinformation**. With responsibility, it can **build understanding, empathy, and social healing**.

[Media Literacy in the Time of Disinformation, Ethical Issues and Challenges in Social Media](#)



Risks of Unethical Journalism in Conflict Areas



- 
- **Spreading hate speech** or ethnic blame
 - **Amplifying propaganda** or fake news
 - **Silencing minority or peacebuilder voices**
 - **Triggering fear, violence, or trauma** through images or headlines
 - **Normalising** violence or revenge narratives

Safety of Journalists in crisis and conflict-situations

The Perils and Practices of Reporting from Conflict Zones

Conflict Reporting : Challenges Encountered

What's at Stake: the Ethics of War and Conflict Journalism

What's at Stake: the Ethics of War and Conflict Journalism



 **PRINCIPLE Accuracy**

 **WHAT IT MEANS** Verify all facts before publishing

 **WHY IT MATTERS** False claims can fuel rumours or panic

 **PRINCIPLE Impartiality**

 **WHAT IT MEANS** Give space to different sides and voices

 **WHY IT MATTERS** Avoids reinforcing “us vs. them”

What's at Stake: the Ethics of War and Conflict Journalism



 **PRINCIPLE Human Dignity**

 **WHAT IT MEANS** Don't exploit suffering or trauma

 **PRINCIPLE Do No Harm**

 **WHAT IT MEANS** Consider the impact of the report

 **WHY IT MATTERS** Respects those affected and prevents re-traumatisation

 **WHY IT MATTERS** Prevents media from escalating conflict

What's at Stake: the Ethics of War and Conflict Journalism



➡ **PRINCIPLE** Context Matters

➡ **WHAT IT MEANS** Situate the story in history and complexity

➡ **WHY IT MATTERS** Avoids misleading or dehumanising simplifications



Case Study: Rwandan Genocide 1994

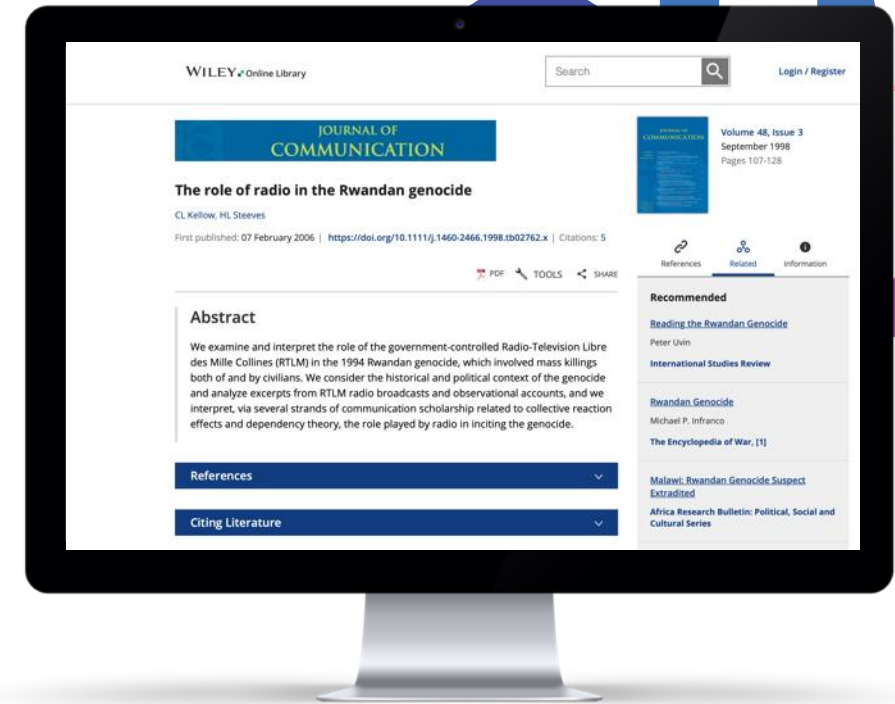
'The truth is not believable to someone who has not lived it in his muscles'.

Jean Hatzfeld

This demonstrates how unethical journalism can literally incite genocide.

Dig into the history of the Rwandan Genocide of 1994, during which over one-tenth of the country's population was killed. Media outlet RTLM broadcasted hate speech encouraging violence against the Tutsi population.

LESSON: Journalists are not neutral bystanders in conflict—they carry real influence and must use it responsibly.

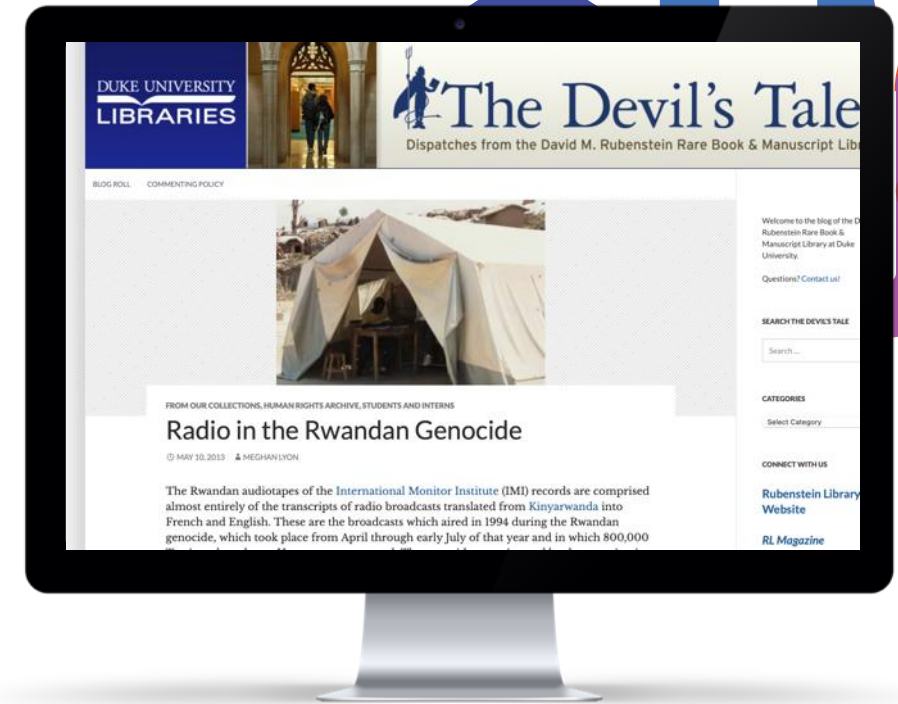


[The role of radio in the Rwandan genocide](#)

[Click To View](#)

Case Study: Rwandan Genocide 1994

Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM) became a powerful weapon used to incite and direct the Rwandan genocide. These are the broadcasts which aired in 1994 during the Rwandan genocide, which took place from April through early July of that year and in which 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred.



Radio Télévision Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM)

[Click To View](#)

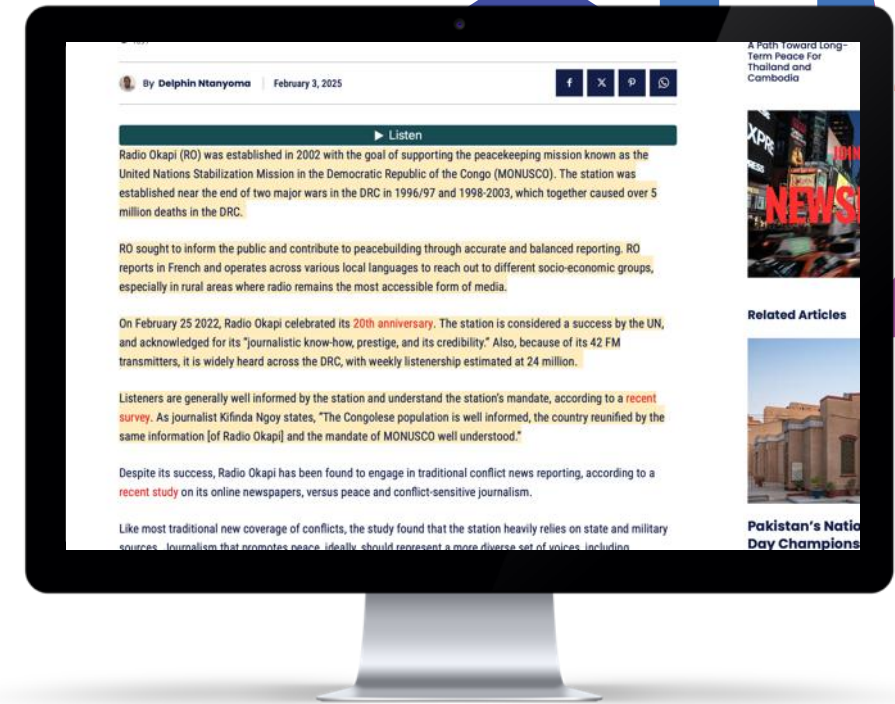
Case Study: Radio Okapi (Positive Side)

Democratic Republic of Congo

A peace-oriented radio network co-managed by the UN and Congolese journalists. It promotes constructive dialogue, balanced news, and reconciliation efforts in conflict zones.

[Radio As Peacebuilder: A Case Study Of Radio Okapi In The Democratic Republic Of Congo](#)

[Can Media Effectively Support U.N. Peacebuilding Missions? A Review of Radio Okapi](#)



[Can Media Effectively Support U.N. Peacebuilding Missions? A Review of Radio Okapi](#)

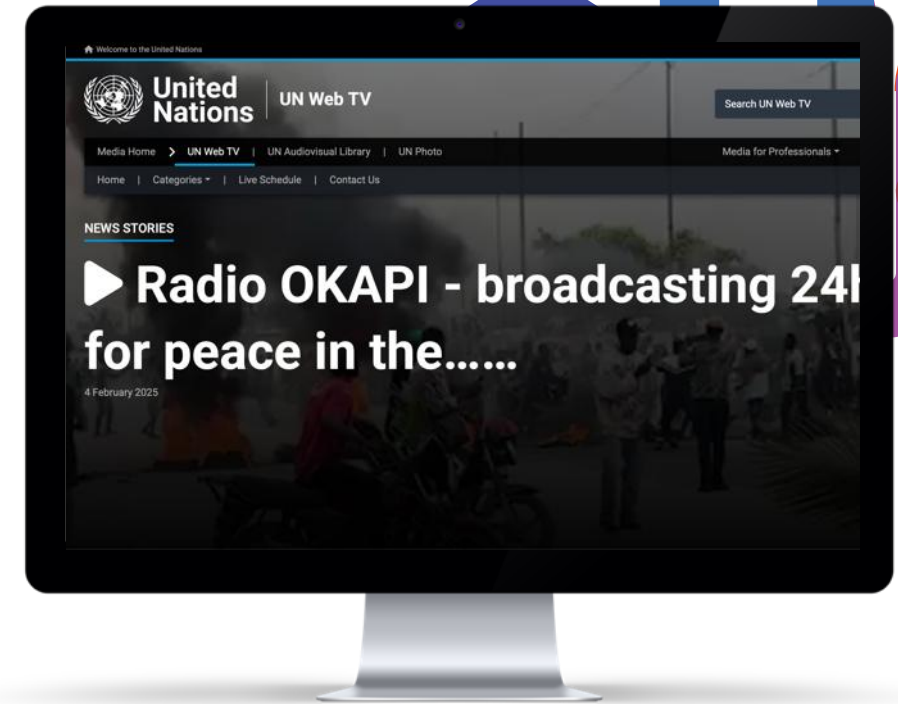
[Click To View](#)

Case Study: Radio Okapi (Positive Side)

Democratic Republic of Congo

Managed by MONUSCO, the UN peace operation, this radio station operates 24h a day, 5 days a week, from 20 cities in the country, as well as in parts of the Central African region with 145 staff. In times of crisis, it delivers credible and primary information and hosts famous debate programs by and for all Congolese citizens.

[Radio OKAPI - broadcasting 24h for peace in the Congo | United Nations](#)

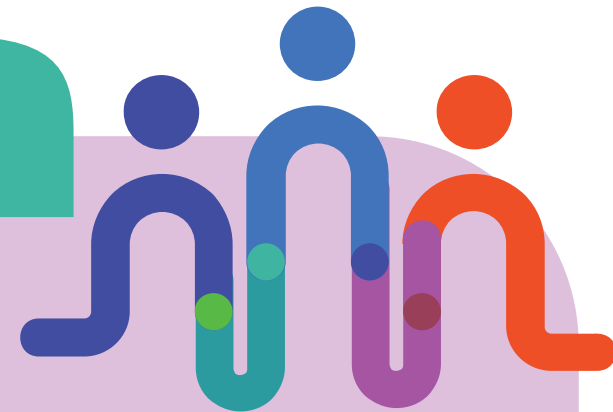


[Portrait of the largest UN peacekeeping radio, embedded in the Peace Operation in the DRC.](#)

[Click To Watch](#)



The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict



The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict

- 1 Media in conflict areas must prioritise **truth, balance, and care**
- 2 Ethics in journalism is not just about accuracy—it's about **protecting people and preventing harm**
- 3 Youth journalists, creators, and educators can play a huge role in **enabling peace through ethical media**



Focus Area 4

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

Strategies for countering hate speech and misinformation in digital reporting.

In today's digital world, **hate speech** (content that attacks or incites violence against people based on race, religion, gender, identity, etc.) and **misinformation** (false or misleading content shared without intent to deceive) can **spread rapidly and cause real harm**—especially in **post-conflict or divided communities**.

Digital reporters, storytellers, and content creators need specific tools, strategies, and ethical approaches to **recognise** these threats, **challenge them**, **prevent further harm** and **promote inclusion and truth**.



Focus Area 4

European Digital
Platforms Supporting
Peace Journalism and
Constructive Dialogue

Strategies for countering hate speech and misinformation in digital reporting.

Why its important!

In societies emerging from conflict or experiencing deep division—whether due to war, political instability, migration, or systemic injustice—**digital media plays a powerful role**. It can either be a tool for healing or a weapon that deepens wounds. Unchecked **hate speech** and **misinformation** don't just mislead—they actively **undermine peace efforts** and **threaten social stability**.

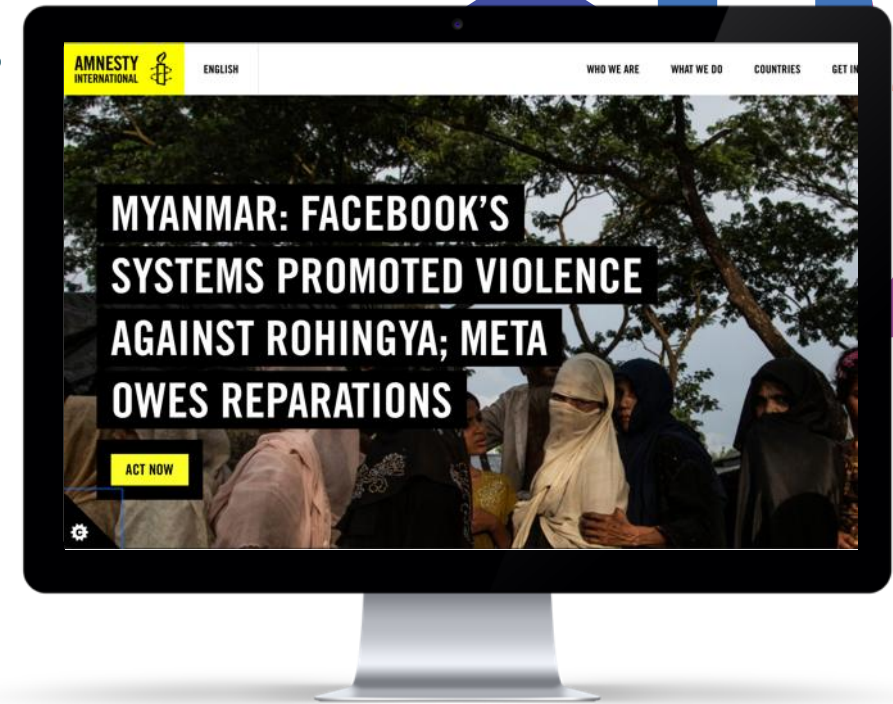


Why Countering Hate Speech & Misinformation Matters for Peacebuilding...

PROBLEM Fuels Violence, Polarisation, and Fear.

When digital platforms spread inflammatory content (e.g., ethnic blame, religious slurs, conspiracy theories), it can provoke anger and even violence—especially where trauma or unresolved tensions already exist.

EXAMPLE In Myanmar, online hate speech against the Rohingya minority (spread largely via Facebook) contributed to mass displacement and violence.

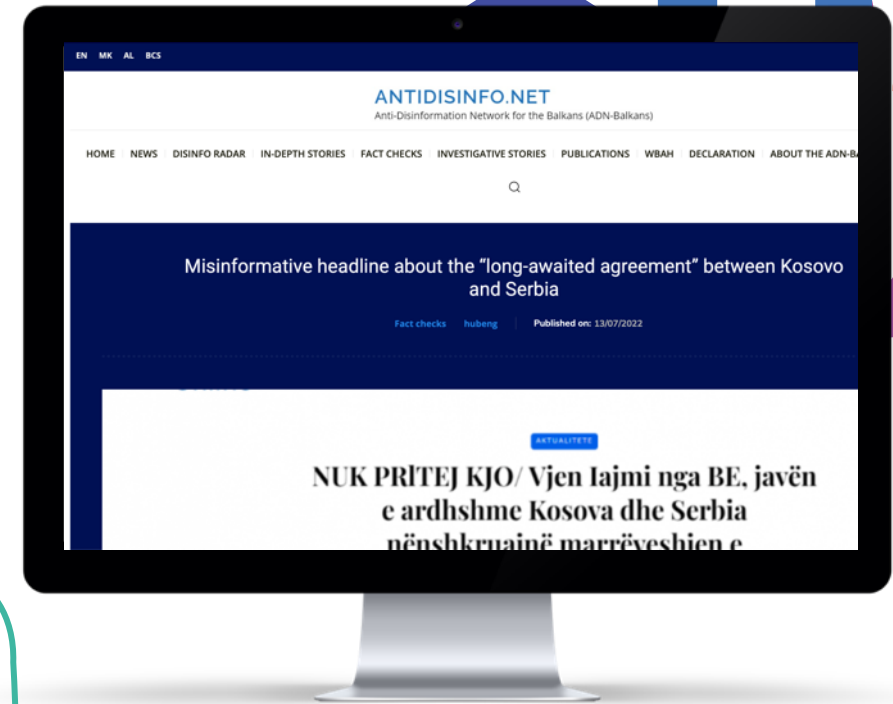


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Why Countering Hate Speech & Misinformation Matters for Peacebuilding...

PROBLEM Undermines Trust in Institutions. Misinformation about government corruption, NGOs, elections, or peace agreements can cause people to reject legal, democratic, or reconciliation processes—even when they are functioning fairly.

EXAMPLE Kosovo–Serbia Brussels Agreement. Misinformation framing the 2013 Brussels Agreement as a “sell-out” circulated via media and social platforms in Serbia, sparking protests and undermining trust in both the EU and local institutions.



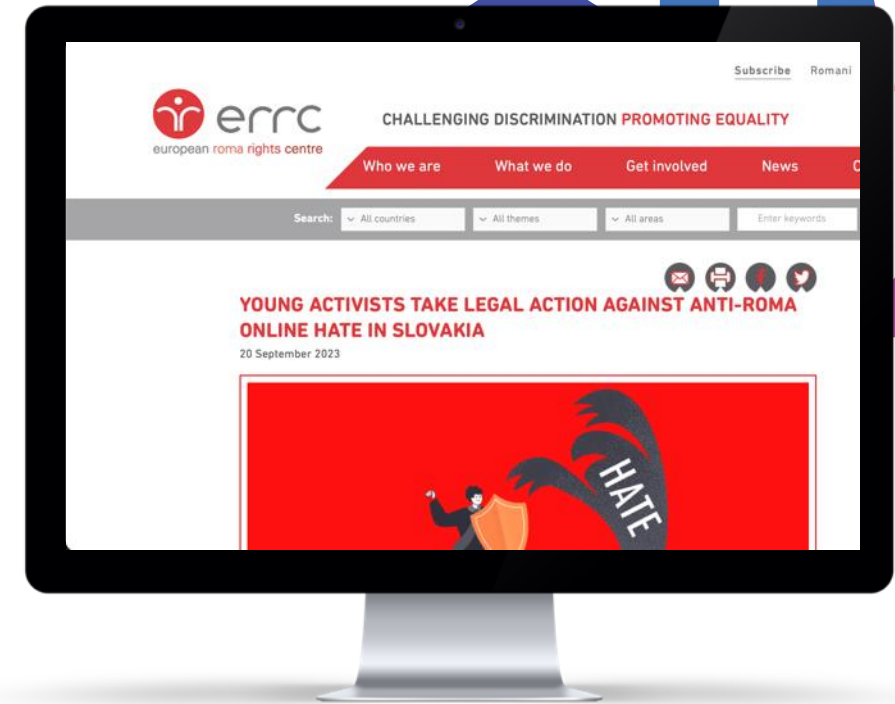
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Why Countering Hate Speech & Misinformation Matters for Peacebuilding...

PROBLEM Silences Marginalised Voices.

Online abuse, trolling, or hate speech directed at minorities, women, or peace activists often forces them to withdraw from public platforms—reducing diversity in digital dialogue.

EXAMPLE Roma youth activists in Hungary and Slovakia have reported being targeted with racist comments when sharing peacebuilding content, pushing many to stop publishing altogether.

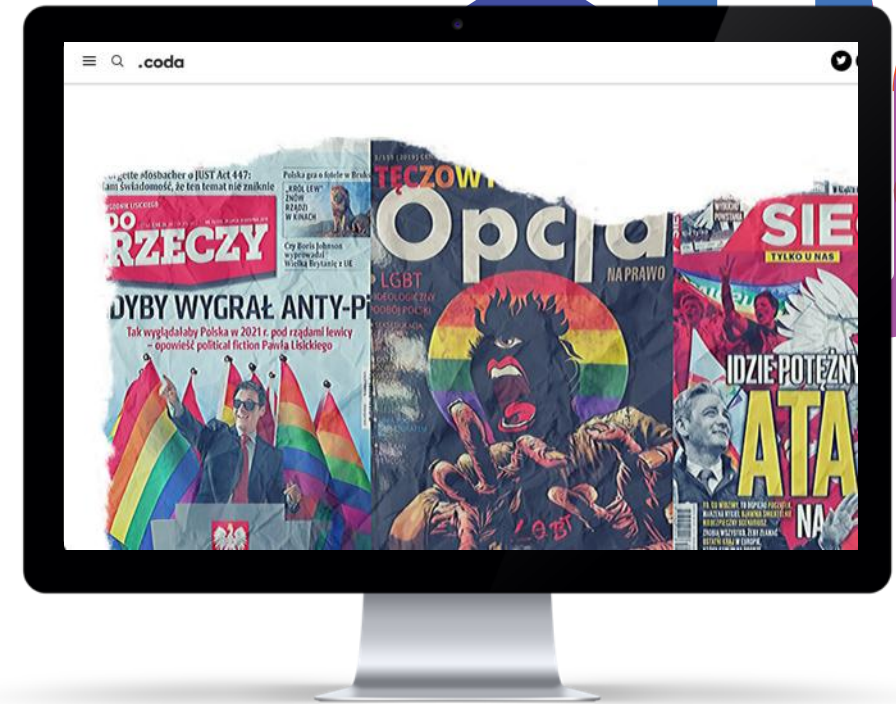


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Why Countering Hate Speech & Misinformation Matters for Peacebuilding...

PROBLEM Erodes Democratic Dialogue. When people consume only polarising or fake content, it becomes harder to **have respectful, informed debates**. Society becomes more fragmented and less capable of solving problems together.

EXAMPLE During election campaigns in Poland, misinformation around refugees and LGBTQ+ communities circulated on Facebook, leading to hostile protests and social media echo chambers.



[Click To View](#)



The Threat of Hate Speech & Misinformation in Post-Conflict Societies



→ The Role of Digital Reporters & Storytellers Need Support to do this.

Digital reporters, citizen journalists, and content creators require:

- **Ethical frameworks** to ensure they do no harm
- **Verification tools** to identify misinformation
- **Moderation strategies** to manage toxic content
- **Storytelling approaches** that promote truth, dignity, and inclusion

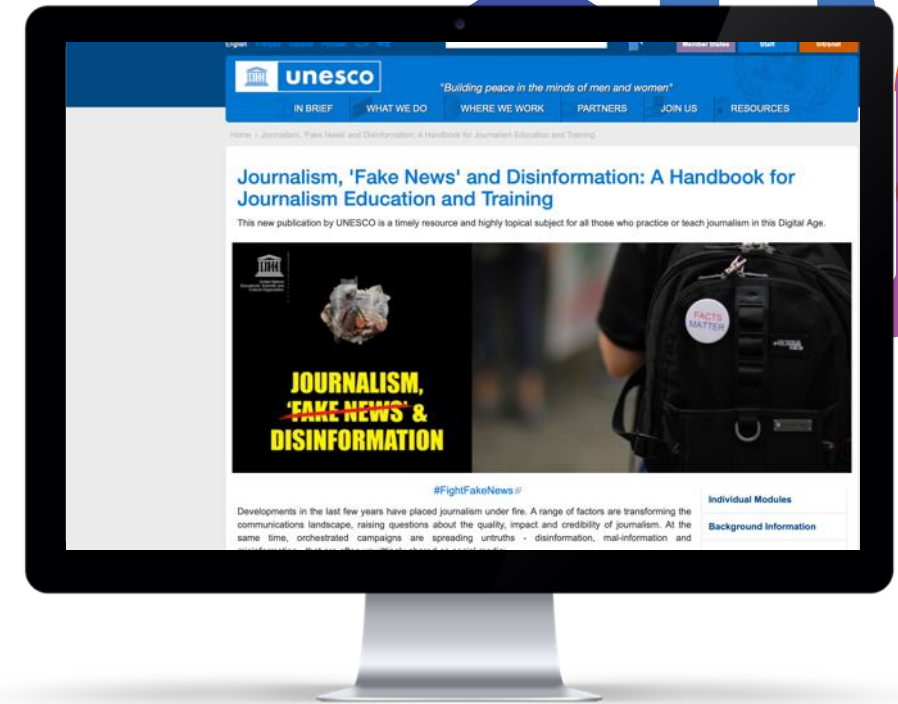
The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict

ETHICAL MEDIA PLATFORM

[UNESCO – Guidelines for Tackling Disinformation](#)

IT'S ROLE

Practical tools for identifying and preventing the spread of false information



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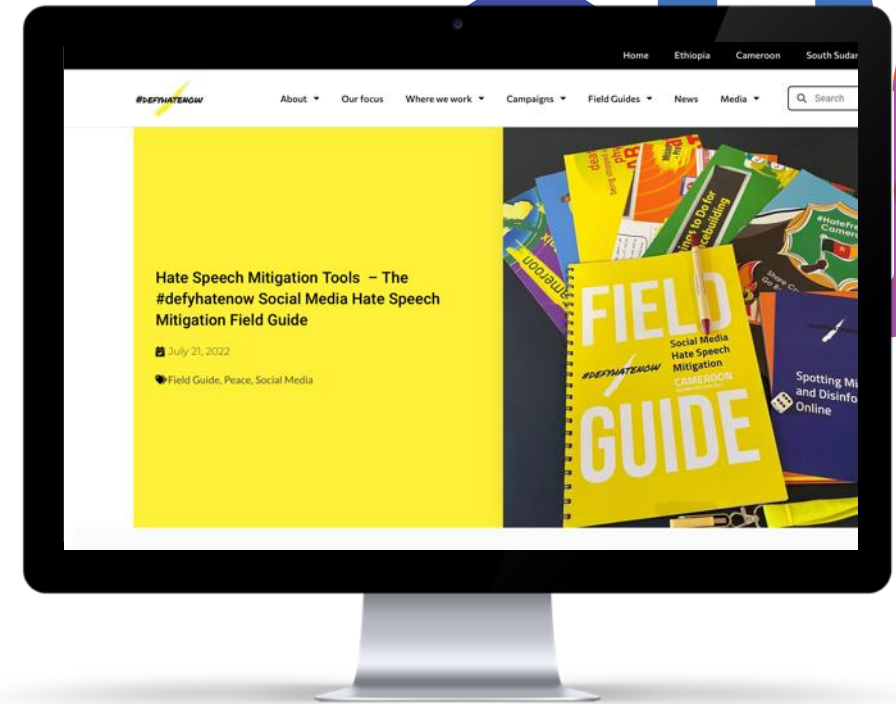
The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict

ETHICAL MEDIA PLATFORM

[#defyhatenow – Social Media Hate Speech Field Guide](#)

IT'S ROLE

Community-based approaches for **recognising and countering hate online**



[Click To View](#)

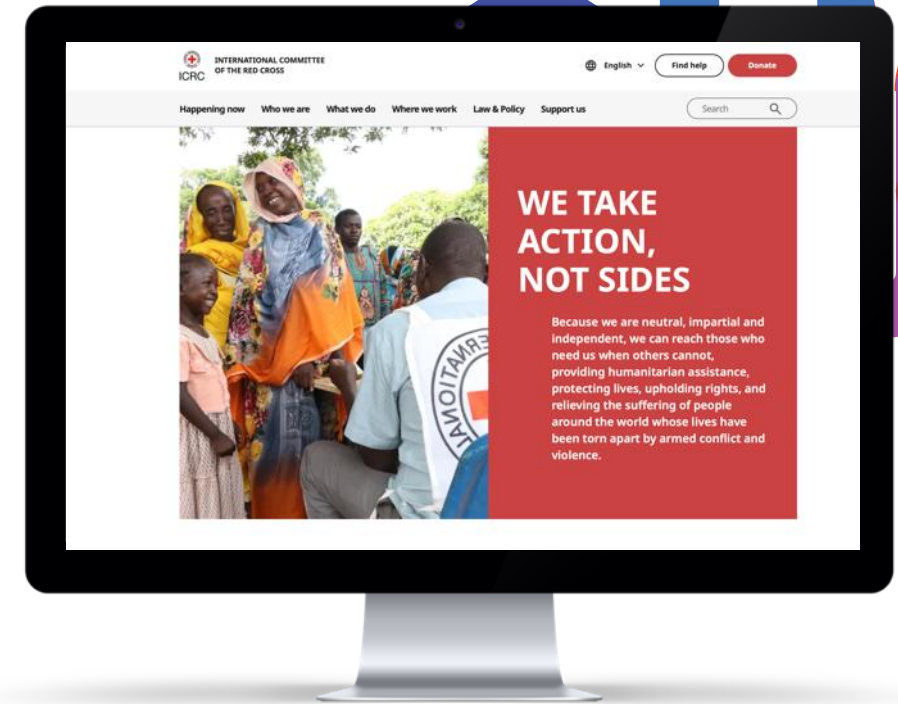
The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict

ETHICAL MEDIA PLATFORM

[ICRC – Misinformation During Armed Conflict](#)

IT'S ROLE

The humanitarian
**consequences of online
falsehoods** in crisis areas



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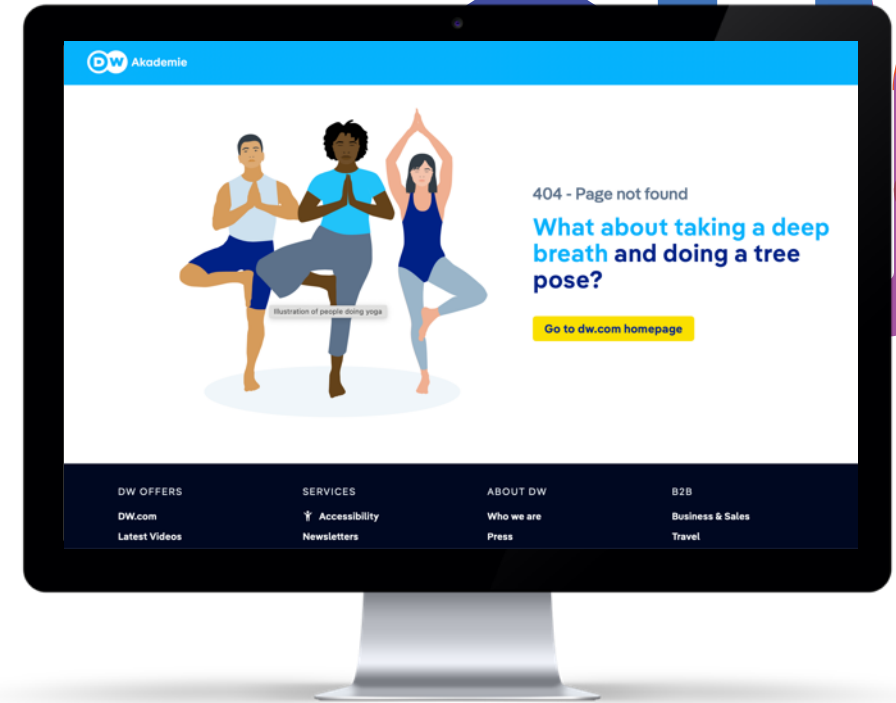
The importance of journalistic ethical standards in times conflict

ETHICAL MEDIA PLATFORM

DW Akademie – Digital Safety and Ethics for Journalists

IT'S ROLE

A comprehensive toolkit to help media professionals **report ethically and safely in sensitive environments**



[Click To View](#)

Putting it Into Action!

Supports Inclusive Storytelling

and peace-oriented digital storytelling:

- Debunk harmful stereotypes
- Show shared humanity
- Present conflicts with nuance—not black-and-white blame



EXAMPLE The “Ordinary Heroes” series in Bosnia shows Muslims, Serbs, and Croats who saved each other during war, undermining hate narratives through real stories.



[Click To View](#)

Putting it Into Action!

Challenges Divisive Narratives: Ethical

TIP Fact-checking tools and AI-driven moderation help reduce the spread of harmful content and digital propaganda.

EXAMPLE Migrants of the Mediterranean is a platform that collects and shares personal stories of migrants arriving in Europe. By documenting their journeys, challenges, and aspirations, it humanises the migration experience and counters negative stereotypes. Migrants of the Mediterranean



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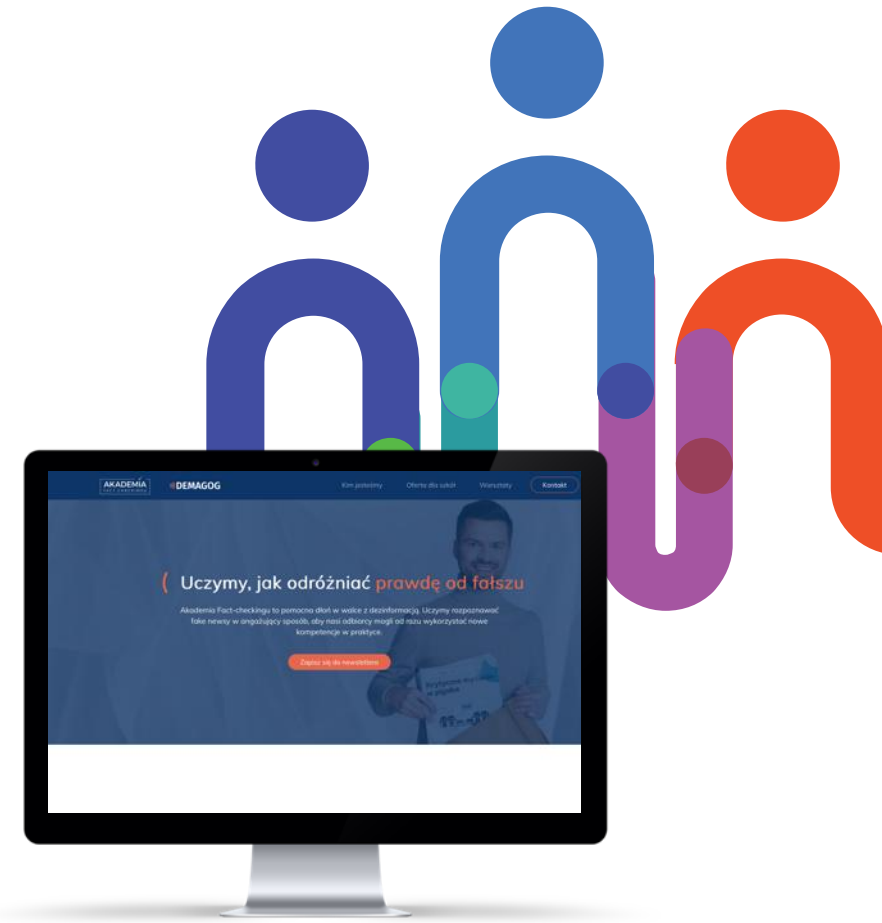
Putting it Into Action!

Builds Resilient, Informed Communities.



EXAMPLE In Poland, the Demagog Association runs the Fact-Checking Academy, providing resources and training to educators and students to enhance media literacy and combat misinformation. Example services to communities.

The Fact-checking Academy a flagship educational initiative where they conduct both in-person and online workshops and training sessions in searching and verifying information, evaluating source credibility, and utilising online tools effectively to fight against fake news.

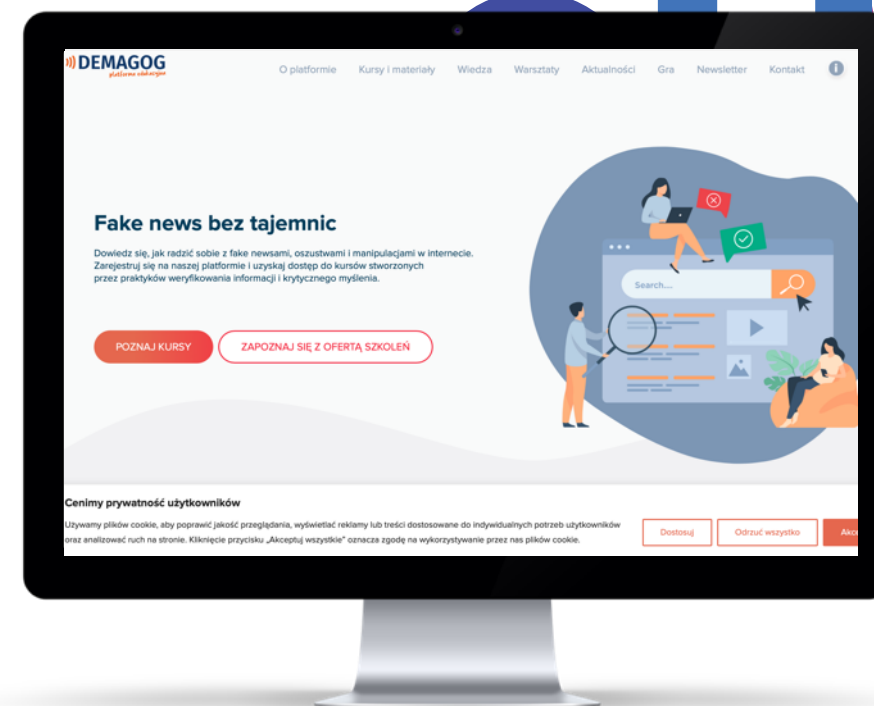


[educational initiative](#)

[Click To View](#)

Putting it Into Action!

An educational platform with a dedicated e-learning space crafted by the Demagog Association team. Online courses, curated by experts, assist users in recognizing false information online, differentiating truth from falsehood, and accessing reliable sources of information.

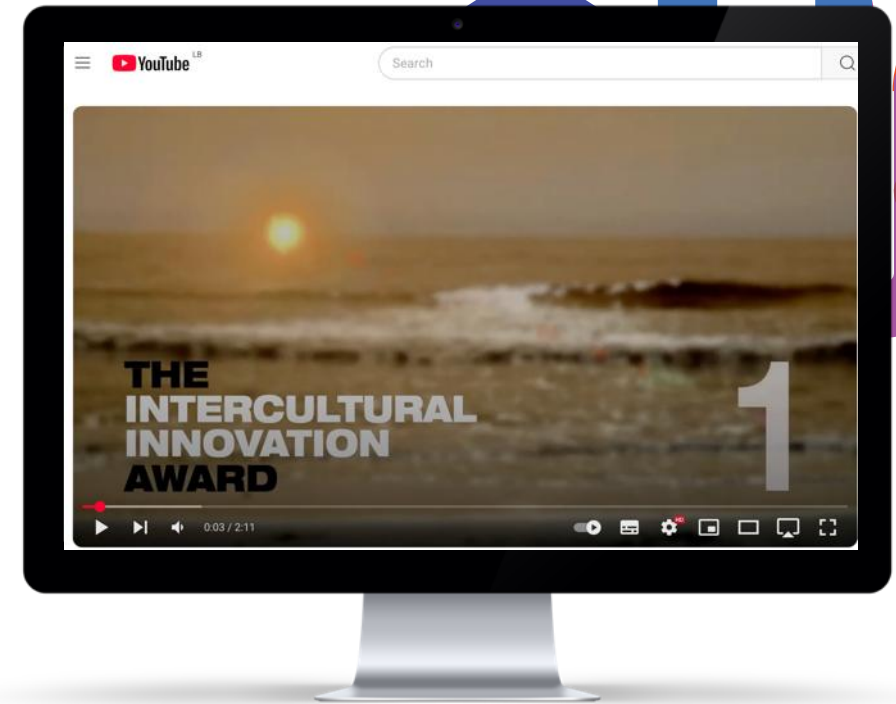


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Case Study: Ordinary Heroes Challenging Divisive Narratives & Ethical Journalism

Ordinary Heroes aims to present a new narrative of wartime events that shows a different side of the story — one that cuts across the ethnic spectrum and reaffirms our faith in humanity.

Ordinary Heroes was created by PCRC in 2010 to facilitate reconciliation, interethnic tolerance, understanding, and the restoration of intergroup relationships in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Western Balkans, and the world. The program presents heroic actions of ordinary civilians in Cambodia, Rwanda, the Balkans and during the Holocaust.

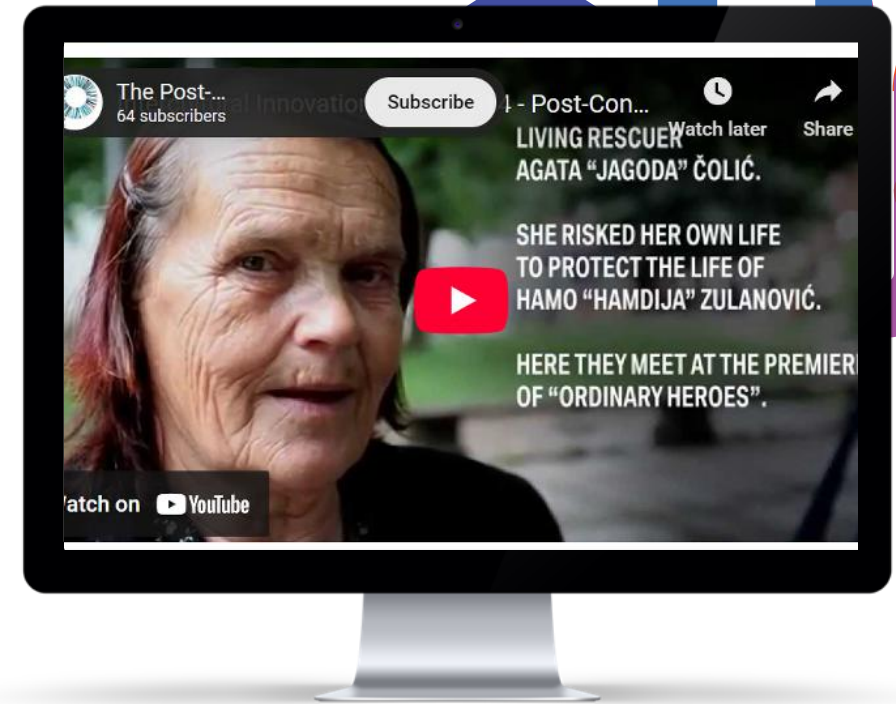


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Case Study: Ordinary Heroes Challenging Divisive Narratives & Ethical Journalism

It uses multimedia educational peacebuilding stories of rescue and moral courage to promote tolerance, reconciliation, and interethnic cooperation. It was scaled up from a primary photography exhibition and youth conference to a large, multimedia educational peacebuilding program with several components

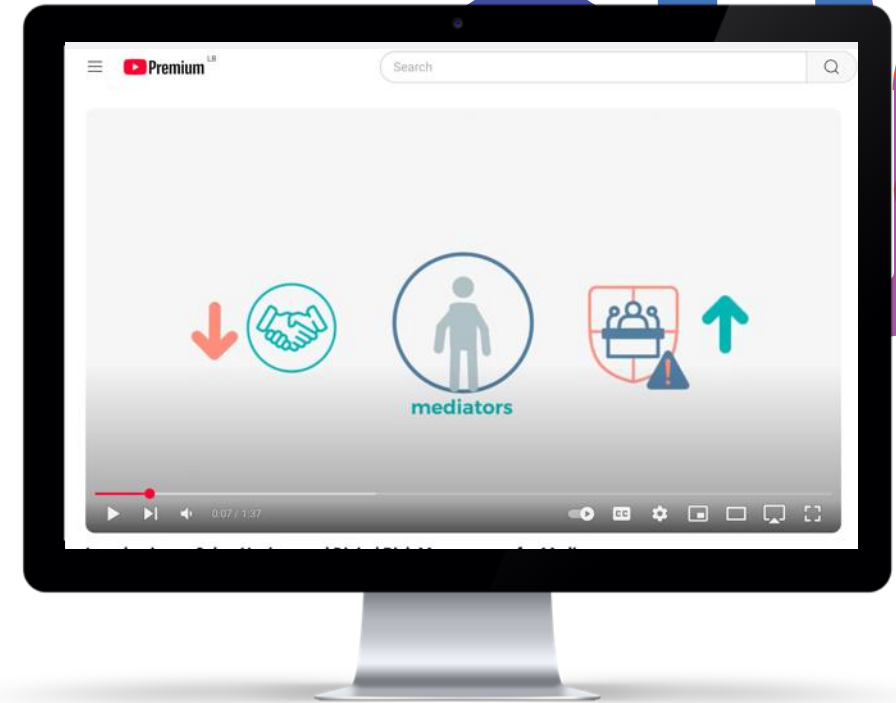
Stories such as these show that people have always been people, above all else, regardless of their national, ethnic, religious, or other identities. Elma Karahodžić, Program Participant, Tešanj, Bosnia-Herzegovina



[Click To Watch](#)

Case Study: Introduction to Cyber Hygiene and Digital Risk Management for Mediators

The world is currently undergoing a massive digital transformation. Our growing connectivity and dependence on digital technologies will continue to expand in the coming years, bringing radical changes to how we do things, including how we mediate in conflict settings. The Covid-19 pandemic has further accelerated mediators' use of virtual platforms, digital devices and tools to communicate and engage with conflict parties.

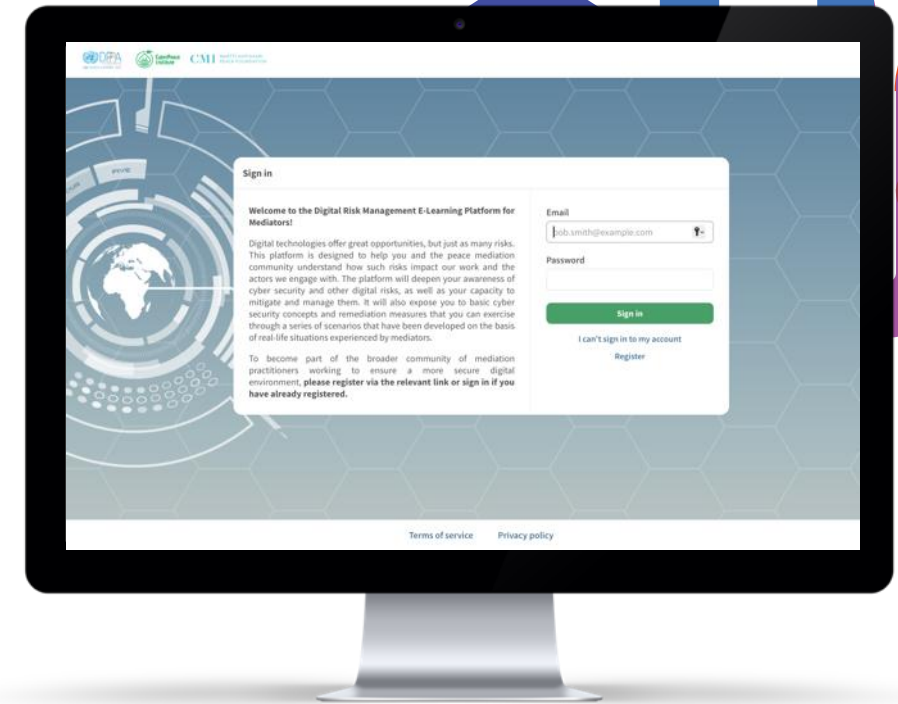


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Case Study: Introduction to Cyber Hygiene and Digital Risk Management for Mediators

Mediation experts need to understand the risks associated with digital technologies, how they impact our work and the actors we engage with. This e-learning platform explores some of these risks and proposes ways to address them.

Learn more on digital risk management at <https://mediation-digitalrisk.org/>



[Click To View](https://mediation-digitalrisk.org/)



Topic 3

Resources Section

European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

- **Digital Tools:** Adobe Express, Instagram, Tik Tok, Threads, Canva, UN Peacekeeper, WhatsApp, Google Docs, Notion, Padlet
- **Exercises:** Crafting Ethical Peace-Focused Narratives; Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy
- **Resources:** Guides, Toolkits, Articles etc.

Digital Tools:

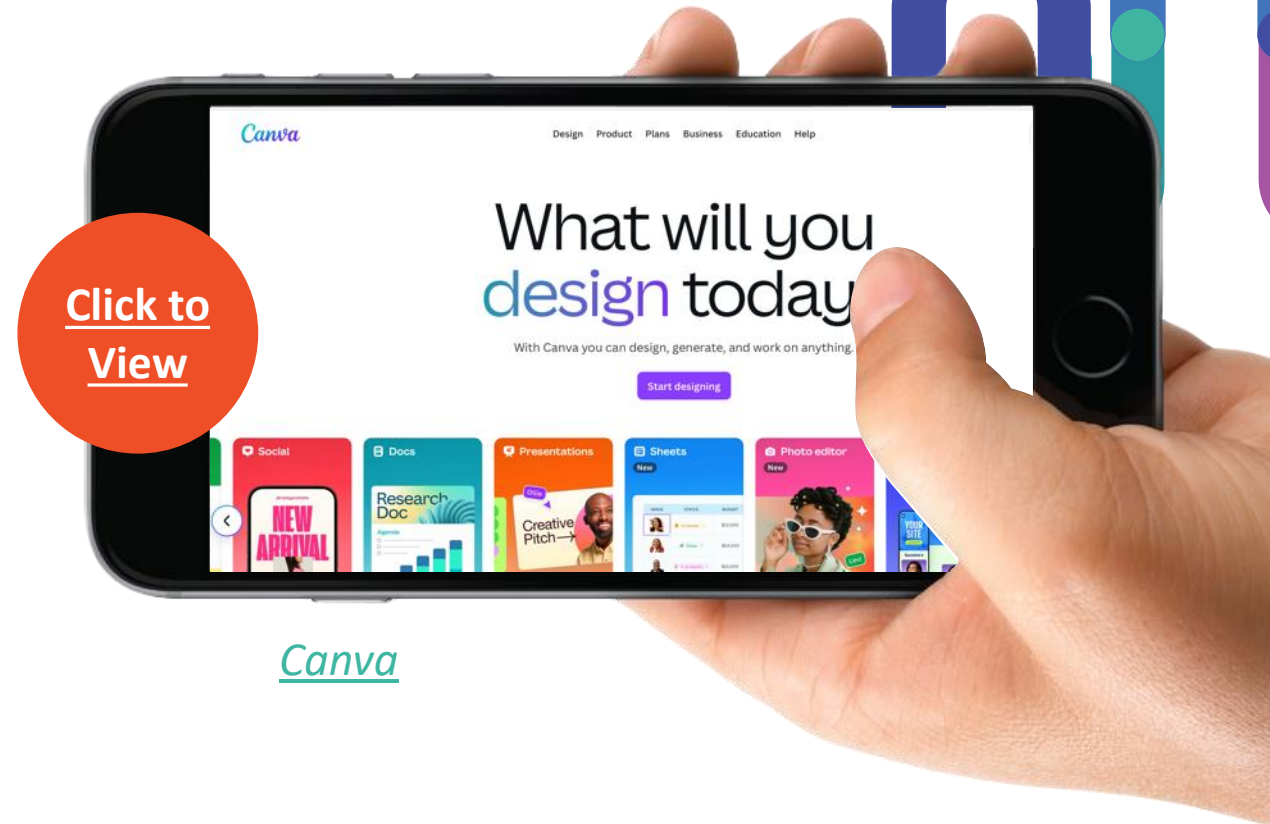
Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy

Name: [Canva](#) / [Adobe Express](#) –
Campaign builder

Use for: Designing digital posters, videos, carousels, and infographics for online advocacy.

Tips: Keep copy short, use calls-to-action (e.g., "Tag a friend who cares").

Watch out for: Stock photos that reinforce stereotypes.



Optimal usage: Co-create a toolkit template learners can remix and reuse.

Digital Tools:

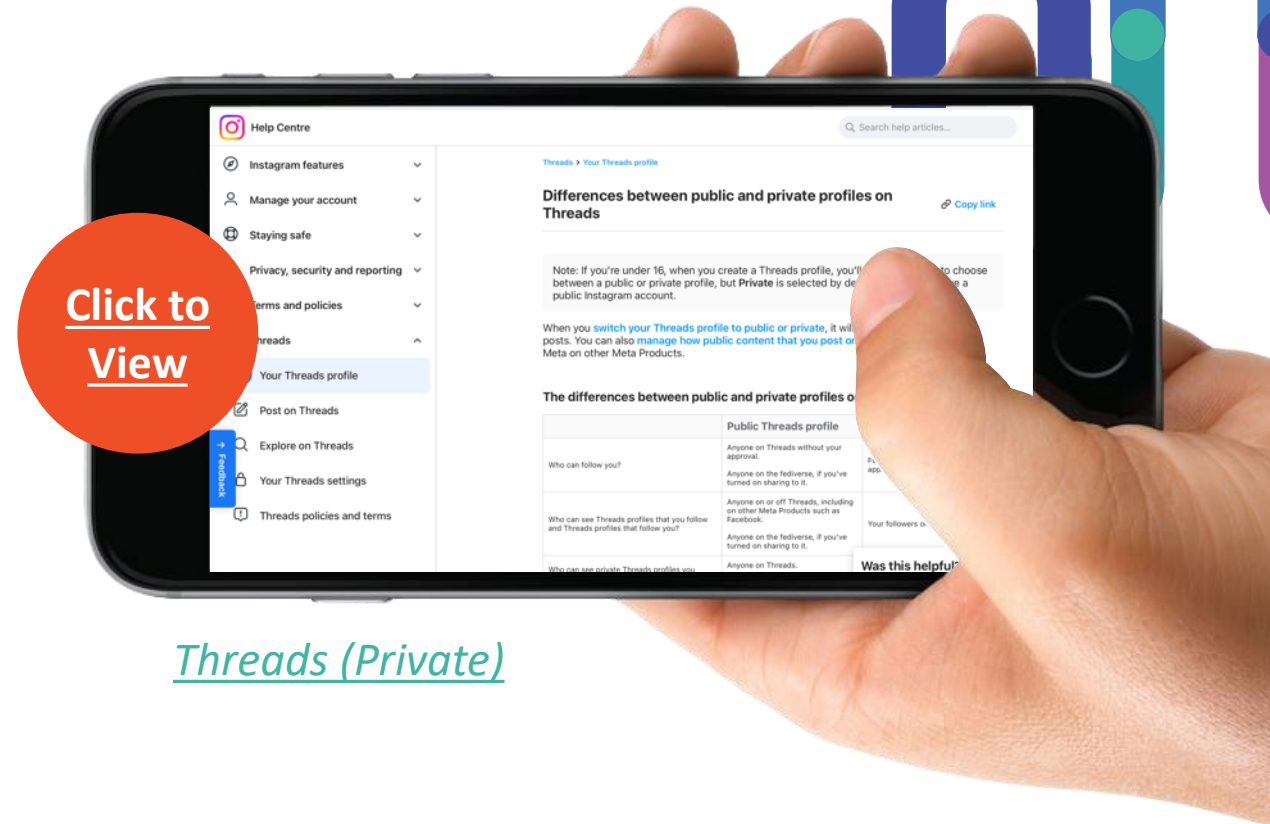
Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy

Name: [Instagram](#) / [TikTok](#) / [Threads](#)
[\(Private\)](#) – Campaign testing ground

Use for: Piloting youth-led campaigns in
real or simulated accounts.

Tips: Use polls, stories, and hashtags to
boost engagement.

Watch out for: Burnout or harmful
feedback—create guidelines for
feedback loops.



[Threads \(Private\)](#)

Optimal usage: Use in project-based
teams with digital mentors or social
media moderators.

Digital Tools:

Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy

Name: UN Peacemaker's Digital Technologies in Mediation

Description: Offers insights into integrating digital technologies in mediation processes, including case studies and best practices.

Apply to topic: Ideal for mediators seeking to incorporate digital tools into their practice. Provides real-world examples. Enhances understanding of digital mediation.

[Click to View](#)

<https://peacemaker.un.org/en/thematic-areas/digital-technologies#conflict-analysis>

Covers the following:

- Conflict Analysis
- Engagement with Conflict Parties
- Inclusivity
- Social Media and Communication



Digital Tools:

WhatsApp

Name: WhatsApp for Peacebuilding

Description: : Demonstrates the use of WhatsApp as a tool for digital peacebuilding, facilitating communication and coordination among stakeholders.

Apply to topic: Suitable for grassroots mobilization and maintaining dialogue in conflict-affected areas. Widely accessible and user-friendly. Enables real-time communication.

<https://www.salamwakalam.com/videos/635/whatsapp-a-digital-peacebuilding-tool/en>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5XMmIJDHOs>

Download:

<https://www.whatsapp.com/>

Digital Tools:

Crafting Ethical Peace-Focused Narratives

Name: Google Docs or Notion – Collaborative writing

Use for: Co-creating ethical storytelling guidelines or story review checklists.

Tips: Prompt discussions on representation, power, and cultural sensitivity.

Watch out for: Over-sanitising stories—focus on dignity, not neutrality.

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<https://docs.google.com/>

Optimal usage: Assign peer-review roles to evaluate ethical clarity.

Digital Tools:

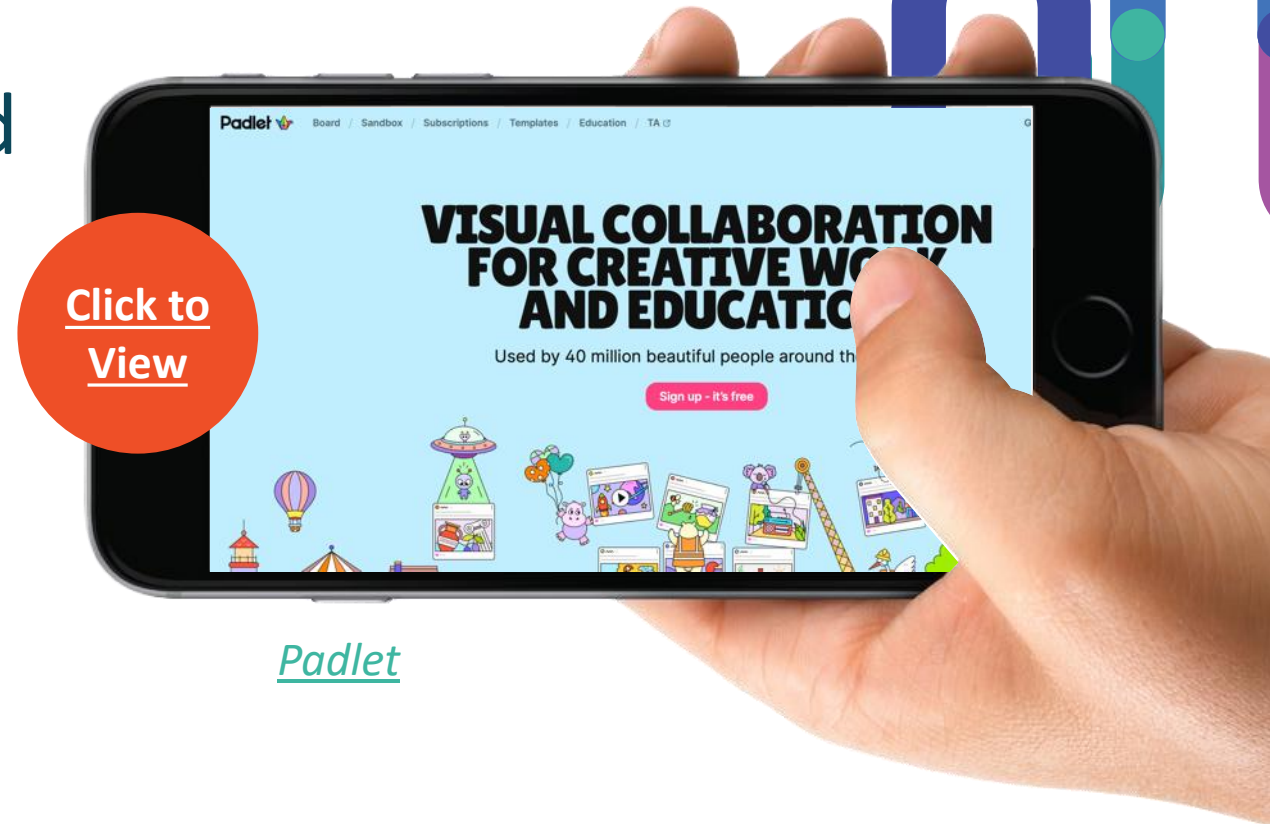
Crafting Ethical Peace-Focused Narratives

Name: [Padlet](#) – Anonymous idea board

Use for: Gathering examples of ethical dilemmas or unsafe storytelling from learners.

Tips: Allow anonymous posting to reduce self-censorship.

Watch out for: Unmoderated content—review posts before open sharing.



[Padlet](#)

Optimal usage: Use as a warm-up for discussions around consent and narrative framing.



Exercise



Crafting Ethical Peace-Focused Narratives

Learn how to cultivate deep awareness of the power dynamics of storytelling. Learn ethical sensitivity which is critical for working in divided or conflict affected communities. Encourage responsible media production and consumption. You will learn how to see digital storytelling as a civic duty, not just a digital tool.

Now, in small groups, participants create a set of ethical storytelling guidelines for peace narratives. These should address informed consent, representation and voice, avoiding stereotypes or retraumatization, accuracy and impact

Tips:

- Share real-world examples (good vs. problematic peace stories)
- Use quotes or testimonies to debate grey areas (e.g. "Should we ever use anonymous footage of protests?")
- End with each group presenting their "Ethical Peace Media Code of Conduct"



Exercise



Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy

➡ In this exercise, you will learn how to apply entrepreneurial and civic skills in real-world contexts. You will get to see yourself and your peers as change agents. Explore technical tools for digital media advocacy (Canva, scheduling tools, content creation apps) and learn how to build teamwork and communication

➡ Start by developing a mini digital campaign addressing a current social or peace-related issue (e.g. bullying, migration, religious tolerance).



Exercise



Intersection of Activism, Media, and Digital Advocacy

→ Define a goal & message. Choose a platform (Instagram, TikTok, blog). Design key visual elements (posters, reels, polls). Plan interaction (e.g. comments, Q&A, digital pledges)

Tips:

- Use campaign planning templates (Problem – Message – Audience – Platform – Action)
- Now “pitch” your campaign to the group for peer feedback
- If possible, pilot the campaigns digitally e.g., online webpage (even just internally) and gather responses



Resources



[Click To Read](#)

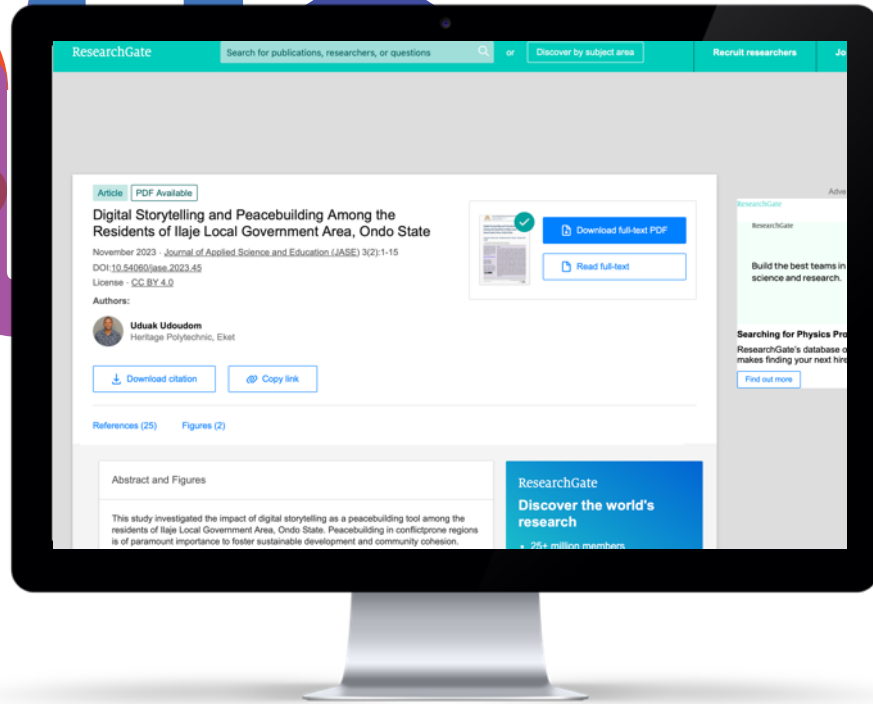
Framework: UN DPPA Framework for Digital Technology-Sensitive Conflict Analysis (2024)

Digital Technology Sensitive

This framework by the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) provides practical guidance on integrating digital technologies into conflict analysis. It highlights how digital tools—like social media data, online mapping, and digital ethnography—can help identify early warning signs, monitor tensions, and understand online narratives fueling conflict.



Resources



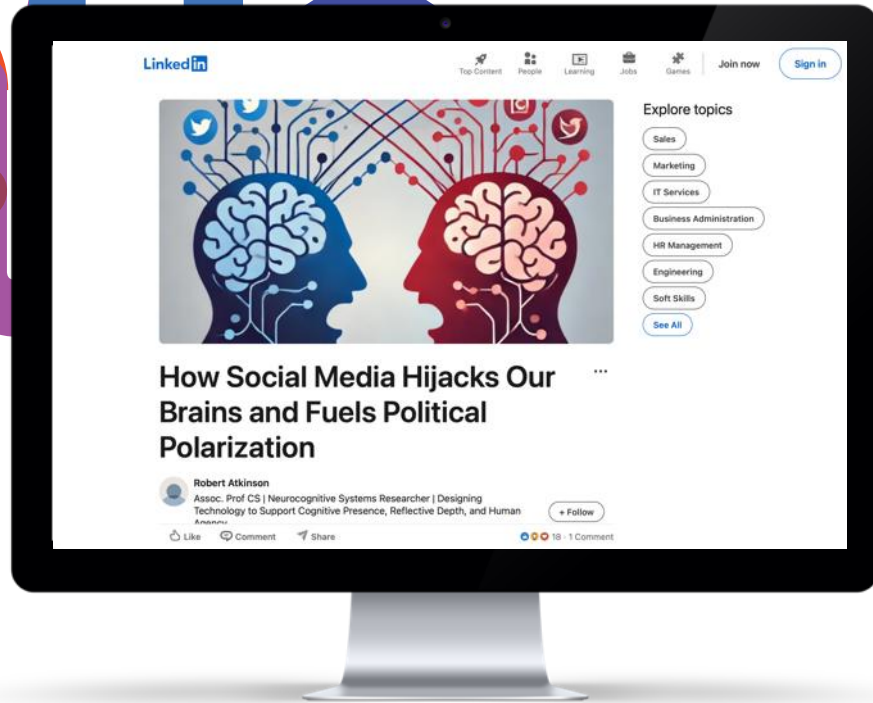
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Article: Digital Storytelling and Peacebuilding

[This study](#) investigated the impact of digital storytelling as a peacebuilding tool among the residents of Ilaje Local Government Area, Ondo State. Peacebuilding in conflict-prone regions is of paramount importance to foster sustainable development and community cohesion. Digital storytelling has emerged as a promising communication approach, allowing individuals to share their experiences, perspectives, and narratives through multimedia platforms, transcending traditional barriers of space and time.



Resources



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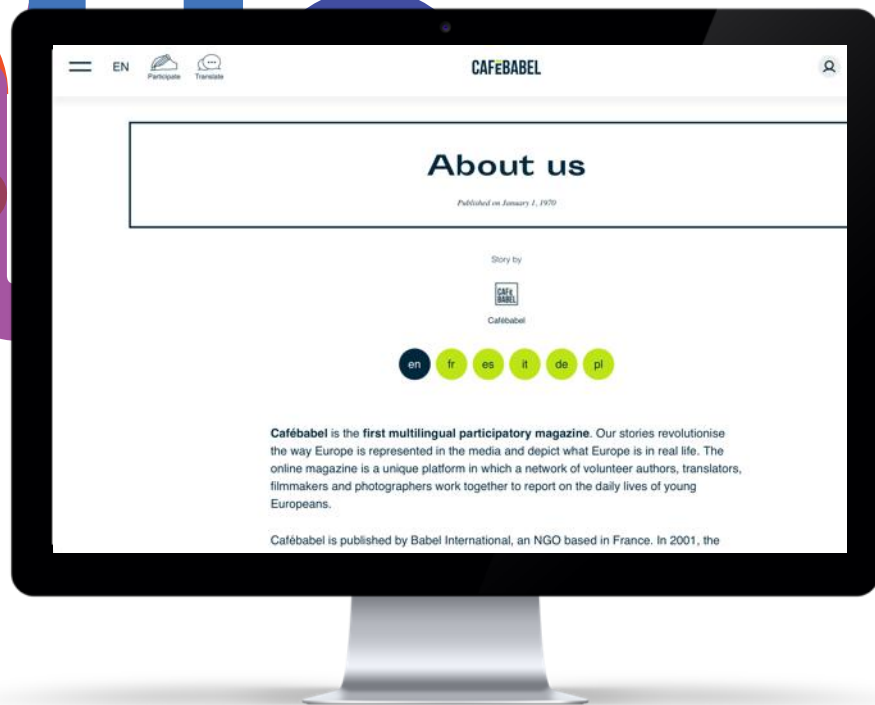
Article: How Social Media Hijacks Our Brains and Fuels Political Polarization

[How Social Media Hijacks Our Brains and Fuels Political Polarization](#)

Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram were initially created to connect us, but they have inadvertently become powerful tools for amplifying political polarization. From echo chambers that reinforce our beliefs to emotionally charged content that stokes our fears and anger, social media is reshaping the way we think, feel, and engage with political issues.



Resources



[Click To View](#)

Magazine: An online magazine written by and for young Europeans, offering grassroots perspectives on social issues, identity, and European life.

[CafeBabel](#), based in France, is the first multilingual participatory magazine. Our stories revolutionise the way Europe is represented in the media and depict what Europe is in real life. The online magazine is a unique platform in which a network of volunteer authors, translators, filmmakers and photographers work together to report on the daily lives of young Europeans.

Resources

Build Up delivers diverse skills: mediation, negotiation, facilitation, peacebuilding, marketing, media, filmmaking, design, coding, data analysis, social media, research, graphic recording and more.

They hold space for conversations and contributions where we can collectively learn how to build peace in the digital age through action, reflection, and iteration. They provide free resources in the **Learning Community**



[Open Online Courses](#) We offer a set of free introductory online courses to help you adapt your work to digital spaces.
[Webinars and Events](#) We join and host conversations with people doing and thinking about digital peacebuilding in interesting ways.

Module 4: Building Digital Bridges: Media's Power in Peacebuilding and Social Cohesion

You have completed **Part 3 - Focus Area 3**
European Digital Platforms Supporting Peace
Journalism and Constructive Dialogue

Next is **Part 4 - Focus Area 4**
The Role of Citizen Journalism in Strengthening
Social Cohesion

www.includememedia.eu

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