

Module 7 (Part 1)

Making the Internet a Safer, Fairer, & Honest Space



www.includemedia.eu

This resource is licensed
under CC BY 4.0



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Finnish National Agency for Education. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

* Note to manage waste please print this document in greyscale or black and white rather than in colour. Please print on both sides of the paper (duplex) and if you can print multiple slides or pages on one page.

Module 7 (Part 1)

Part 1 Focus Area:

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age:
The Role of European Media
Standards



Module 7

Making the Internet a Safer, Fairer, & Honest Space

This Module explores ethical challenges and governance in digital media, highlighting the role of media professionals, educators, and civil society in promoting accountability, media standards, and digital literacy.

YOU ARE HERE

MODULE 7 (Part 1)

Topic 1

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

Examines how media professionals can maintain credibility, combat misinformation, and uphold ethical reporting standards..



MODULE 7 (Part 2)

Topic 2

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Inclusive Digital Governance

Discusses how governments, CSOs, and tech companies can co-create policies that ensure a safer and more inclusive digital space.



MODULE 7 (Part 3)

Topic 3

Universities and Media Education: Strengthening Digital Citizenship in Europe

Explores how higher education institutions can equip students with critical media literacy skills to navigate the digital landscape



Focus Areas (4): Each of the **4 Topics** covers **3-4 Focus Areas**, with – Introduction, Context, Case Studies, Videos, Tools etc.

Resources Section: Each topic has a **Resources Area** complete with a set of digital tools, exercises and resources to assist learning application and to provide a deeper interactive level of understanding.

Conclusions: Provided on each topic at the Module in **Part 4**.

MODULE 7 (Part 4)

Topic 1

The Role of Civil Society in Holding Digital Platforms Accountable

Highlights how activists and watchdog organisations monitor tech giants, advocate for transparency, and push for policy changes

Module Overview

This module highlights the collective role of media professionals, educational institutions, and civil society organisations (CSOs) in maintaining ethical digital environments.

It explores media standards, governance frameworks, and the importance of digital literacy in promoting responsible online spaces. Participants will examine challenges and opportunities in promoting credible journalism, multi-stakeholder governance, and digital citizenship in Europe through real-world case studies, policy discussions, and digital tools.

YOU ARE HERE

TOPIC 01

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

Examines how media professionals can maintain credibility, combat misinformation, and uphold ethical reporting standards.

TOPIC 02

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Inclusive Digital Governance

Discusses how governments, CSOs, and tech companies can co-create policies that ensure a safer and more inclusive digital space.

TOPIC 03

Universities and Media Education: Strengthening Digital Citizenship in Europe

Explores how higher education institutions can equip students with critical media literacy skills to navigate the digital landscape.

TOPIC 04

The Role of Civil Society in Holding Digital Platforms Accountable

Highlights how activists and watchdog organisations monitor tech giants, advocate for transparency, and push for policy changes.



Module Snapshot

Focus Area:

Ethics & Governance

Aim:

Focuses on building multi-stakeholder governance models and accountability mechanisms for digital platforms. This section highlights the collective role of media professionals, educational institutions, and civil society in maintaining ethical digital environments. It emphasises media standards, governance, and digital literacy.



Key Words:

- Ethical Digital Spaces
- Online Accountability
- Multi-Stakeholder Governance
- Digital Collaboration, Transparency
- Media Integrity
- Inclusive Platforms
- Universal Design
- Citizen Participation
- Fair Digital Practices
- Civil Society Engagement
- Journalism & Media Standards
- Universities and Media Education
- Policy & Regulation



01

Page 04

Module
Overview

02

Page 05

Module
Snapshot



03

Page 09

Learning
Outcomes

03

Page 13

Topic 1
Introduction:
Ethical Journalism
in the Digital Age:
The Role of
European Media
Standards



05

Page 21

Focus Area 1:
Ethical guidelines
and self-regulation
in digital
journalism



06

Page 32

Focus Area 2:
The role of
European media
standards in
ensuring accuracy
and credibility

07

Page 40

Focus Area 3:
Challenges of
sensationalism,
misinformation,
and political bias in
digital reporting



08

Page 59

Conclusion

Module 7 (Part 1) Interactive Learning Elements



60 Slides



01 Exercises



02 Videos



05 Case Studies



02 Digital Tools



05 Toolkits & Guides



10 Articles & Reports



04 Real World Examples

Learning Outcomes

Topic 1: Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

- Analyse the role of European media standards in promoting ethical journalism and combating misinformation in the digital age.
- Evaluate the challenges journalists face in maintaining objectivity, transparency, and public trust in digital media environments.



Learning Outcomes

Topic 2: Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for Inclusive Digital Governance

- Examine the roles of governments, civil society, and private sector actors in shaping inclusive and accountable digital governance.
- Assess best practices for enabling multi-stakeholder collaboration to address issues such as platform regulation, online safety, and digital rights



Learning Outcomes

Topic 3: Universities and Media Education: Strengthening Digital Citizenship in Europe

- Explore how universities contribute to digital literacy and responsible media consumption among students and the wider public.
- Develop strategies for integrating critical media education into higher education curricula to empower digital citizens



Learning Outcomes

Topic 4: The Role of Civil Society in Holding Digital Platforms Accountable

- Identify the key advocacy tools and legal mechanisms used by civil society organisations to demand transparency and ethical governance from digital platforms.
- Evaluate the impact of civil society interventions on platform policies related to misinformation, algorithmic bias, and data privacy



Topic 1

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards





Overview

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

Journalism relies on fact-checking, source validation and context, but the rapid flow of digital news complicates this process, weakens verification, reduces traditional media gatekeeping, and fuels mis-disinformation.

This section examines how media professionals can maintain credibility, combat misinformation, and uphold ethical reporting standards in the digital era. It explores ***European media policies, regulatory frameworks, and initiatives that safeguard journalistic integrity***

Key Definitions & Concepts

01

Press Freedom vs. Responsibility: Understanding how to balance free speech with ethical journalism

02

Media Ethics and Fact-Checking: How to uphold integrity in the digital news ecosystem

03

Regulatory Frameworks: Examine European policies guiding media accountability



Introduction: What is Media Self-Regulation?

A mechanism to **counter digital disinformation** and weakened media gatekeeping, maintaining trust and accuracy in journalism.

It involves voluntary guidelines and ethical standards set by media professionals, rather than government-imposed regulations

Components of Media Self-regulation:

- a code of conduct
- a body, typically a council and/or an ombudsperson



Media & Press Councils

A self-regulatory body that upholds press freedom while ensuring ethical journalism and addressing public complaints about journalistic misconduct (Press Council, n.d.). These functions are essential in maintaining public trust and accountability within the media.

- **Journalistic codes of ethics** universally focus on four core principles: **truthfulness**, **independence**, **fair play**, and **respect for privacy** and **human dignity**.
- These **values** are not just abstract ideals they are vital for **protecting democracy**, **ensuring informed citizenship**, and **preventing** the spread of harmful **disinformation**.

Click 

[Database of Press Councils](#)
[Online Media Self-Regulation Guidebook](#)

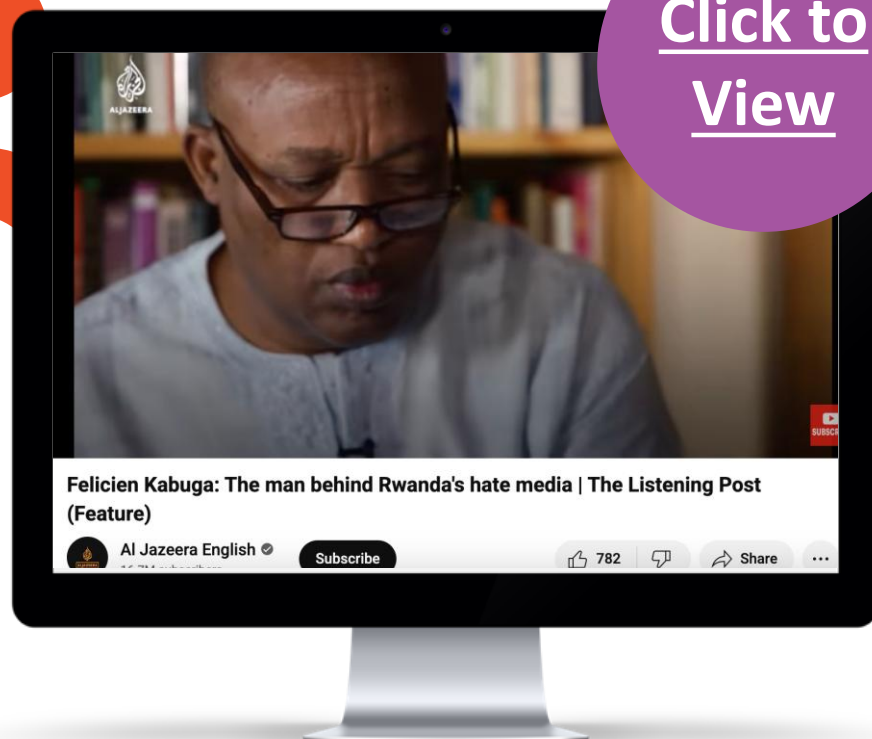
Foundations of Responsible Media: Truth, Ethics, & Accountability

Without truth and press freedom, media can become tools of propaganda, manipulation, or censorship.

A powerful example of this is the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, where the radio station Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) spread hate speech and misinformation, fueling violence and contributing to the mass killing of over 800,000 people. This tragic case highlights how unethical journalism can escalate conflict and endanger lives.

In contrast, **ethical journalism and independent media serve** as a safeguard against the abuse of power, giving voice to the marginalised and fostering peace through accurate and fair reporting. Therefore, institutions like the Press Council play a crucial role in preserving democratic values and upholding professional standards in the media.

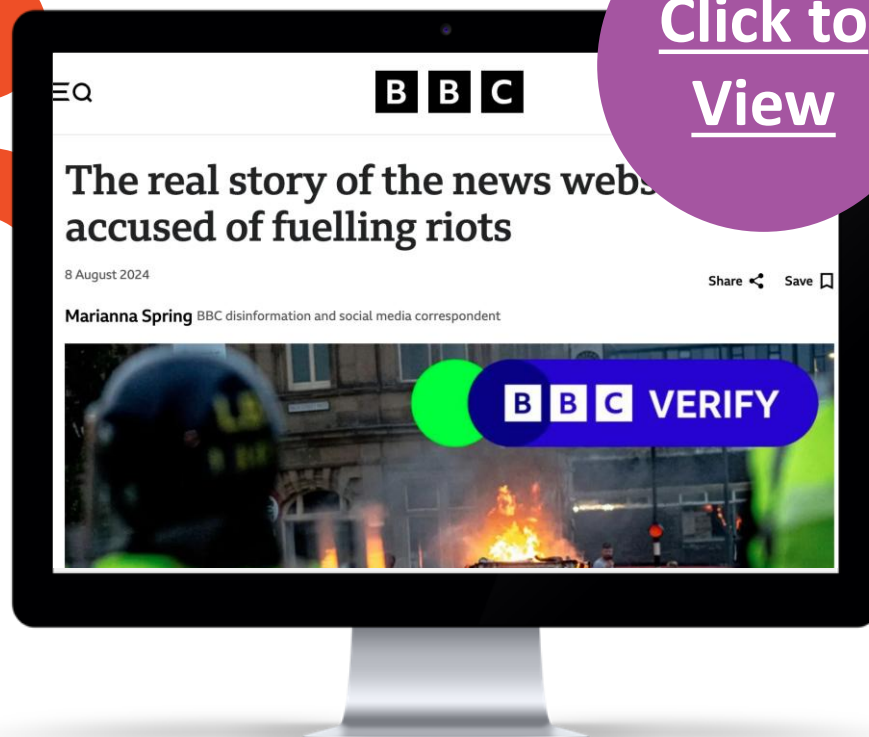
[Click to View](#)



The case of Misinformation: Channel3Now's Role in UK Riots (2024)

- The attack on a girls' dance school in Southport, UK, which killed three children, **triggered** widespread **unrest** and **riots**.
- The violence was **fueled** by **misinformation falsely claiming** that the attacker was an illegal immigrant, a claim that was later proven false.
- This misinformation incited protests and violence across the country.
- The government warned that foreign actors were exploiting the situation to **deepen societal divisions** through the further spread of misinformation and disinformation.

[Click to View](#)



Click 

[How Did Foreign Actors Exploit the Recent Riots in the UK?](#)

The BBC investigated a website accused of spreading false reports that fueled unrest and riots. The website's management apologised but denied deliberate spread of misinformation

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age

Exploring 3 Focus Areas in Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

01

Ethical guidelines and self-regulation in digital journalism

02

The role of European media standards in ensuring accuracy and credibility

03

Challenges of sensationalism, misinformation, and political bias in digital reporting





Focus Area 1

Ethical Journalism in
the Digital Age: The
Role of European
Media Standards

Ethical Guidelines and Self-Regulation in Digital Journalism

Journalism ethics vary due to national media differences, legal frameworks, and societal values (Fidalgo et al., 2022).

European Media Councils:

- **Differ in jurisdiction;** some cover all media; others focus only on print & online.
- **Some follow general journalism guidelines;** others specifically address digital journalism.
- **Development of guidelines varies;** some nations update rules faster than others.



Focus Area 1

Ethical Journalism in
the Digital Age: The
Role of European
Media Standards

Ethical Guidelines and Self-Regulation in Digital Journalism

Examples of Digital Journalism Ethics:

- **Luxembourg:** Journalists must verify the legality of linked content before hyperlinking (*Press Council EU, 2019*)
- **Finland:** Public-generated content is not editorial, must be monitored separately, and follow ethical principles (*The Union of Journalists in Finland, 2014*)

Click



[55 Ethical Codes from 45 Countries](#)

The European Media Freedom Act (2024)



The Act addresses **fragmented national media regulations**, enhancing the **EU media market**. It complements the Digital Services Act DSA by tackling issues like **disinformation** and **abuse by state-controlled media**, while establishing a binding **framework for national regulators**.

Key aims of the Act include safeguarding **editorial independence**, **protecting journalistic sources**, ensuring the independence of **public service media**, introducing **customizable media offers**, and establishing **harmonised rules for online services**.

The Rising Threat of Disinformation and Societal Division



In today's digital age, disinformation, intentionally false or manipulated information shared to mislead or influence public opinion, poses a serious threat to democracy, public trust, and social cohesion. As digital platforms increasingly shape how people understand the world, disinformation narratives that gain traction online can intensify polarisation, deepen societal divides, and distort public debate.

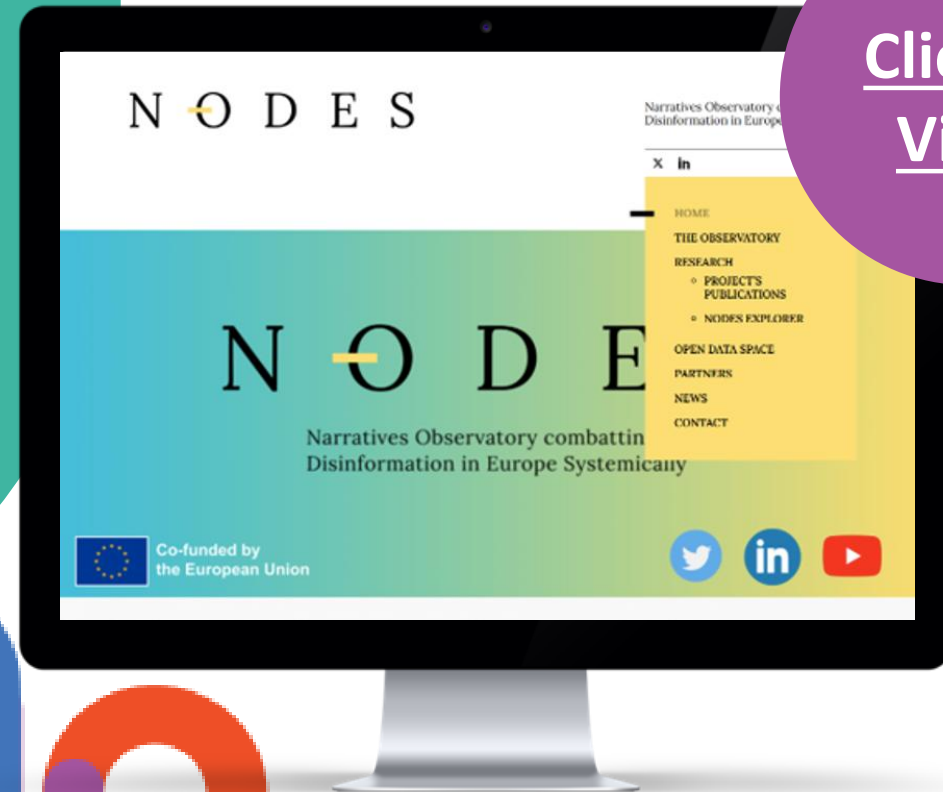
Polarisation occurs when groups in society grow increasingly divided and hostile in their views, making dialogue and compromise more difficult.

Societal divides refer to separations based on political beliefs, class, race, geography, or values.

Disinformation fuels these divides by spreading emotionally charged content that reinforces an “us vs. them” mentality. This is precisely what the **NODES initiative** aims to address by analysing and countering the impact of disinformation narratives across Europe.

“Unlocking resilience in Europe’s democracy will require mastering the narratives that shape our collective reality, and this is something that we should address urgently”

Erika Staël von Holstein,
Chief Executive of
Re-Imagine Europa



[Click to](#)
[View](#)

Narratives Observatory Combating Disinformation in Europe Systemically (NODES)



[Click to
View](#)

NODES is a European initiative launched in 2023 that analyses and investigates how disinformation spreads around sensitive topics like **climate change**, **migration**, and **public health**, across both digital and traditional media.

Its goal is to inform better policymaking through data-driven insights on how narratives shape public opinion.

[Key Findings from the First European Narrative Observatory](#)

Narratives Observatory Combating Disinformation in Europe Systemically (NODES)



[Click to
View](#)

Recommendations

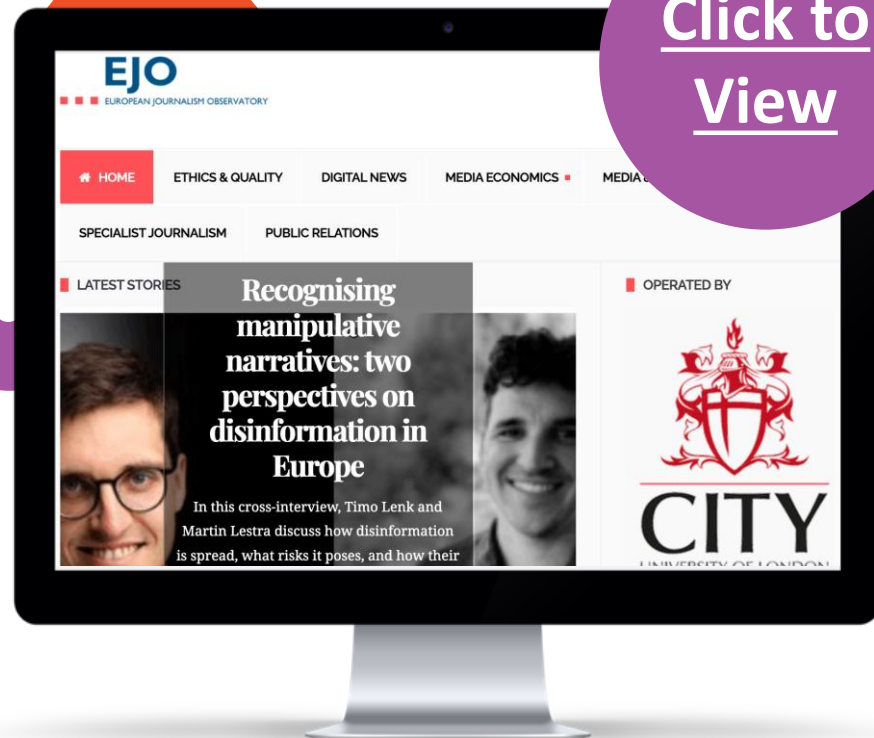
- Appoint an expert group on narratives to advise EU institutions on risks and trends.
- Support the development of national and European narrative observatories to monitor and respond to harmful narratives.
- Ensure access to data on public discourse for researchers studying narrative impacts.
- Enhance citizen dialogues and deliberative democracy by incorporating narrative analysis into public consultations.
- Foster international collaboration to counter global disinformation trends.

Other EU Initiatives

Some EU initiatives not only fight disinformation but also empower local media, protect democratic discourse and build societal resilience against division and violence.

European Journalism Observatory (EJO): In today's fragmented media environment, reliable journalism is more essential than ever. The European Journalism Observatory (EJO) plays a crucial role in promoting **press freedom**, raising **professional standards**, and ensuring **media accountability** across Europe and beyond.

Established to connect media research with real-world practice, EJO encourages international exchange through conferences, workshops, and joint cross-border projects. Its initiatives promote innovation and share best practices particularly important amid rising misinformation, digital disruption, and growing political pressure.



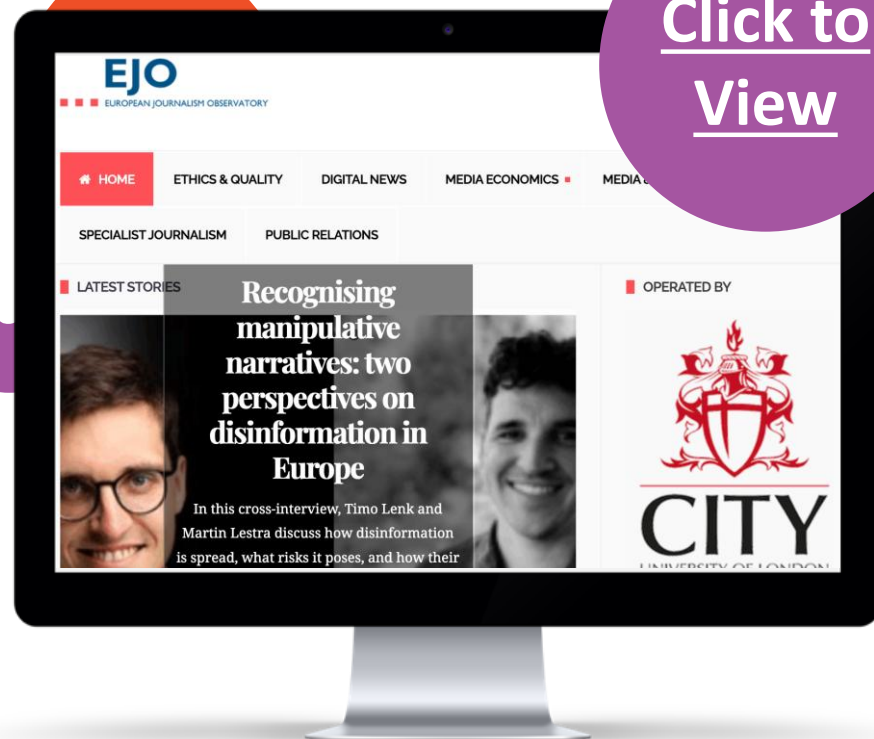
[Click to View](#)

Other EU Initiatives

Through its commitment to ethical and high-quality journalism, EJO helps **build** a more **informed public**, **strengthen democratic institutions**, and **enhance media resilience**.

For Example

The European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), an EJO partner organised a workshop in Belgrade (Oct 2018) for editors from Western Balkan public broadcasters. The event focused on implementing editorial codes of conduct, countering self-censorship, and improving conflict-sensitive coverage, strengthening newsroom collaboration and promoted ethical reporting in a historically sensitive region.



Prompt European Narrative Observatory

PROMPT European Narrative Observatory, funded by the European Commission, uses AI tools to detect and track disinformation around divisive issues:

- The war in Ukraine
- LGBTQIA+ rights
- The 2024 European Elections

PROMPT enhances peacebuilding by:

- Identifying polarising narratives before they escalate, allowing local media to respond with factual, context-sensitive reporting.
- Working with NGOs and local journalists to debunk harmful misinformation—e.g., fake stories targeting LGBTQ+ communities in Hungary and Poland that have incited discrimination.
- Sharing insights across EU states to promote coordinated responses to hostile information operations.



The European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO)

European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO) unites fact-checkers, researchers, and media literacy experts in 14 hubs across 27 EU countries and Norway.

These regional hubs:

- Coordinate local responses to disinformation that might inflame ethnic, religious, or political tensions (e.g., LGBTQ+ disinformation in the Baltics).
- Provide **real-time support to journalists and educators**—especially during crises such as COVID-19 or the Ukraine war.
- Strengthen digital resilience by teaching communities how to identify and reject harmful content, particularly in vulnerable or marginalised areas.





Focus Area 2

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age: The Role of European Media Standards

As Europe advances toward a secure, safe, and sustainable digital future, ethical journalism remains a cornerstone for safeguarding democracy, trust, and informed citizenship.

The **European Commission's 2024 vision for digital transformation** outlines six guiding principles to ensure that technology serves people, protects rights, and strengthens democratic values. It provides the **ethical framework** within which European media and journalism are expected to operate.

This vision sets the stage for stronger media standards that **align journalistic integrity with digital innovation**, ensuring that freedom of expression, data privacy, and access to trustworthy information are preserved in an increasingly complex media landscape.

EU's Commitment to a Secure, Safe, & Sustainable Digital Transformation (EU Commission, 2024)



People at the Centre	Freedom of Choice	Safety and Security
Digital technologies should protect people's rights, support democracy, and ensure that all digital players act responsibly and safely. The EU promotes these values across the world.	People should benefit from a fair online environment, be safe from illegal and harmful content, and be empowered when they interact with new and evolving technologies like artificial intelligence.	The digital environment should be safe and secure . All users, from childhood to old age, should be empowered and protected.
Solidarity and Inclusion	Participation	Sustainability
Technology should unite, not divide, people. Everyone should have access to the internet, to digital skills, to digital public services and to fair working conditions.	Citizens should be able to engage in the democratic process at all levels and have control over their own data.	Digital devices should support sustainability and the green transition. People need to know about the environmental impact and energy consumption of their devices.

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU)

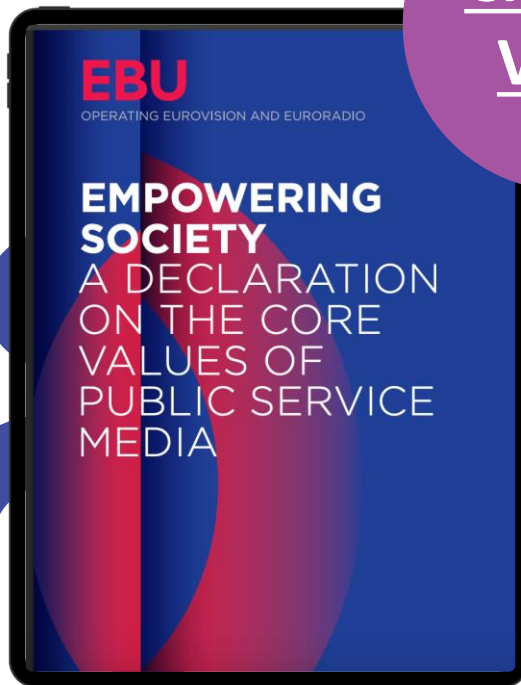
EBU representing over a hundred organisations, is a leading **global alliance of public service media (PSM)**, where broadcasting made, financed and controlled by the public, for the public.

In a media landscape dominated by commercial interests, the EBU promotes solidarity, cooperation, and a trusted space for learning. It supports members in navigating change while upholding core democratic values.

As public service media, EBU members share the core values:

- **Universality:** accessible to everyone
- **Independence:** free from political/commercial influence
- **Excellence:** high-quality, trustworthy content
- **Diversity:** inclusive of varied voices
- **Accountability:** responsible to the public
- **Innovation:** using new technologies to improve service

[Click to View](#)



“The threats to press freedom are ever-present and growing. Some of these are external and autocratic: cyber, legal, and physical threats, as well as the horrific imprisonment and murder of journalists”

Lexie Kirkconnell-Kawana
Chief Executive, Impress



Joint Podcasts by the Press Councils from Belgium, Finland, & Germany

As the weaponisation of disinformation intensifies, a joint podcast by the press councils of Belgium, Finland, and Germany is a timely initiative that highlights the urgent need for press freedom, adherence to ethical journalistic standards, and international solidarity among journalists. In an era of manipulated truths and shrinking democratic space, the podcast explores how journalism can uphold professional integrity, defend democratic values, and rebuild public trust.

The joint podcast discussed two cases:

- One where a press council received a complaint against a news report regarding a traffic accident killing school children in Belgium
- The other involves a Finnish journalist who investigated troll factories in Russia and received death threats



Joint Podcasts by the Press Councils from Belgium, Finland, & Germany

The key questions explored in the podcasts are:

- How can we address fake news and information warfare in the age of social media?
- What is the role of the press in upholding ethical standards such as truthfulness and a duty of care?



Click to listen to the podcasts: 

[“I’m not going to live like this”:
Jessikka Aro's fight against Russian trolls](#)

[A Traffic Accident that Changed
Reporting Standards](#)

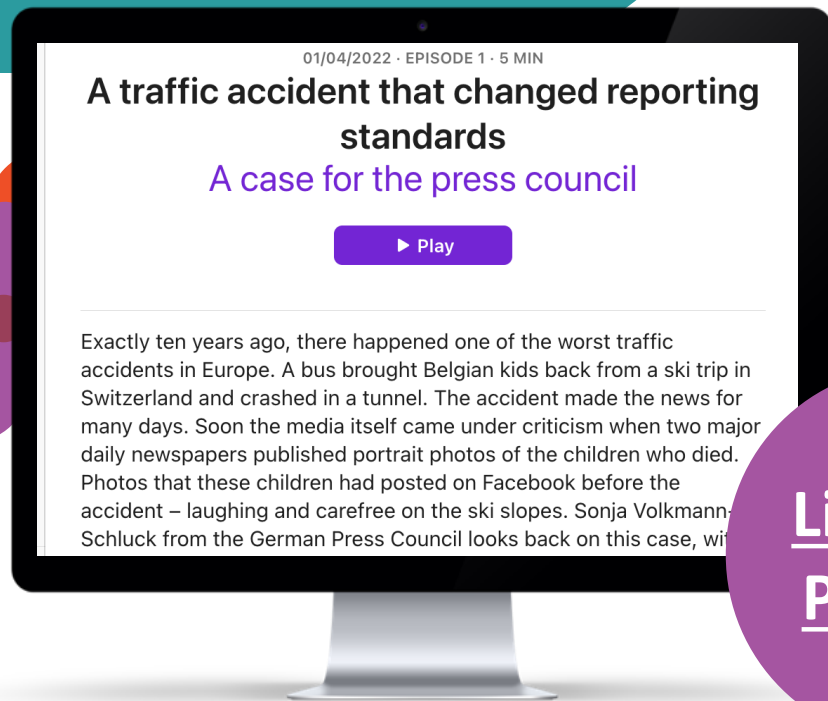
Case Study

Media Ethics Reforms Sparked by the Swiss Bus Crash Case

A tragic bus crash in Switzerland claimed the lives of Belgian school children returning from a ski trip. The media faced backlash after two major Belgian newspapers published Facebook photos of the minor victims who had been published it online before the accident.

This case (**A Traffic Accident that Changed Reporting Standards**) is revisited in the podcast by representatives of the German Press Council, Belgium's media council, and the editor-in-chief of Belgian newspaper Het Nieuwsblad.

Across Europe, the aftermath of the tragic Swiss



**Listen to
Podcast**

Case Study

Media Ethics Reforms Sparked by the Swiss Bus Crash Case

Listen to
Podcast



Across Europe, the aftermath of the tragic Swiss bus crash prompted significant ethical reforms in journalism, particularly regarding coverage of victims, privacy, and use of personal data, including:

- **Press Council rulings:** The German Press Council repeatedly ruled that graphic imagery is acceptable only if it serves a verifiable journalistic purpose, not shock value
- **Council of Europe guidelines (2019):** Introduced explicit directives to safeguard minors and victims in media coverage, emphasizing consent, respect for dignity, and minimising harm
- **Resolution 1003** and the proposed **European Media Freedom Act** reinforce the importance of editorial independence and victim privacy across EU member states, limiting intrusive or sensational reporting.
- The **Ethical Journalism Network** and **IFJ** pushed for stricter rules around using social media content, especially when involving minors or grieving families.



Focus Area 3

Ethical Journalism in
the Digital Age: The
Role of European
Media Standards

Challenges of Sensationalism, Misinformation, & Political Bias in Digital Reporting

- Sensational content (**clickbait**) prioritises **emotional appeal** and engagement **over journalistic integrity**.
- Tools like Google Analytics **encourage click-driven content**, often sacrificing nuanced storytelling
- **Fake news** and sensational headlines **spread faster** than fact-based reporting.
- **Traditional media** outlets are often **left playing catch-up**, trying to correct false narratives.
- **Audiences** often **trust the first information** they encounter, regardless of accuracy (*Youvan, 2024*).



“New technologies have not changed the essence of journalism. Yet, it has revolutionized the way journalists work”

Adeline Hulin, UNESCO Brussels

Factors Contributing to Mis-DisInformation and Sensationalism



The rise of mis- and disinformation in today's media environment is fueled by a complex interplay of technological advancements, economic incentives, and social dynamics. Different research studies have identified multiple factors contributing to mis and disinformation and sensationalism in the digital world

Study 1:

Democratic Decay and Disinformation in the Digital Age (Nery, 2019)

Study 2:

The Evolution of U.S. Mainstream Media Headlines: From Investigative Journalism to Sensationalism in the Digital Age (Youvan, 2024)

Study 3:

The challenges and role of modern journalism in digital media enterprises (Swaroop, 2023)

Factors Contributing to Mis-DisInformation and Sensationalism



Study 1:

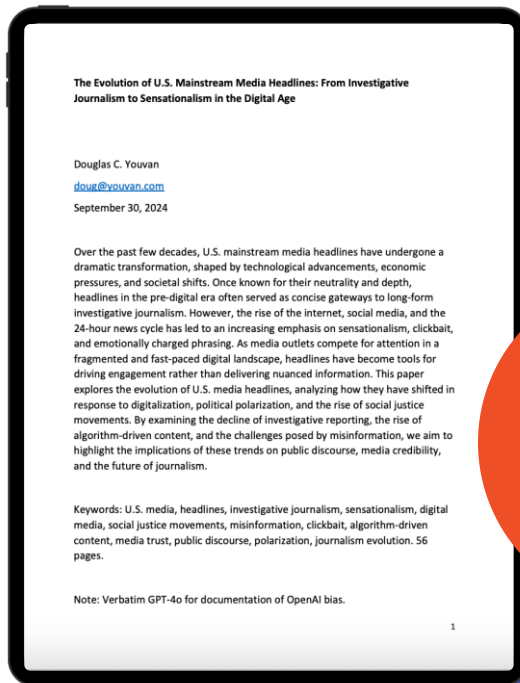
Democratic Decay and Disinformation in the Digital Age (Nery, 2019)

- **Computational Propaganda** that involves the deployment of automated bots, deepfake technology, and organised disinformation efforts to shape public opinion online, frequently backed by state or political actors.
- **Audience-driven news** production on social media, where content is often tailored for engagement rather than accuracy, leading to sensationalism and echo chambers.
- **Growing Demand for Instant News & Lower Barriers to Publishing**
- **Erosion of Trust in Traditional Media:** skepticism toward established news outlets drives audiences toward alternative and sometimes unreliable sources

Factors Contributing to Mis-DisInformation and Sensationalism

Study 2:

The Evolution of U.S. Mainstream Media Headlines: From Investigative Journalism to Sensationalism in the Digital Age (Youvan, 2024)

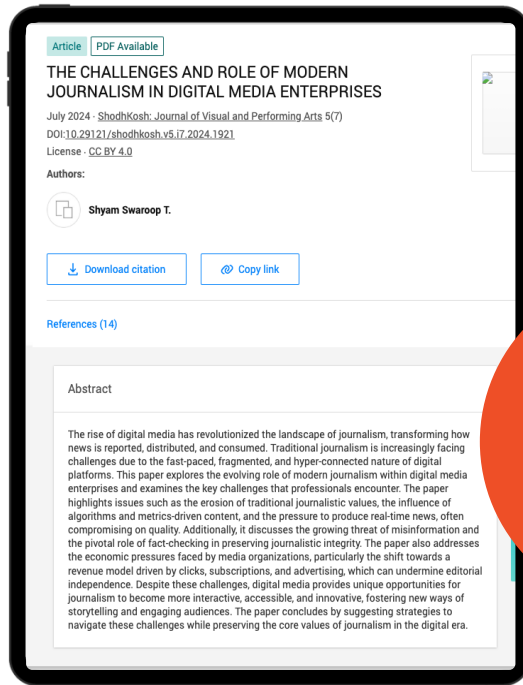


Shift to Click-Based Revenue Models & Algorithmic Amplification

News is monetised through engagement metrics, while algorithms favor divisive or emotionally charged content that fuels polarisation.

Click to
View

Factors Contributing to Mis-DisInformation and Sensationalism



[Click to View](#)

Study 3:

The challenges and role of modern journalism in digital media enterprises (Swaroop, 2023)

Expansion of Data Journalism:

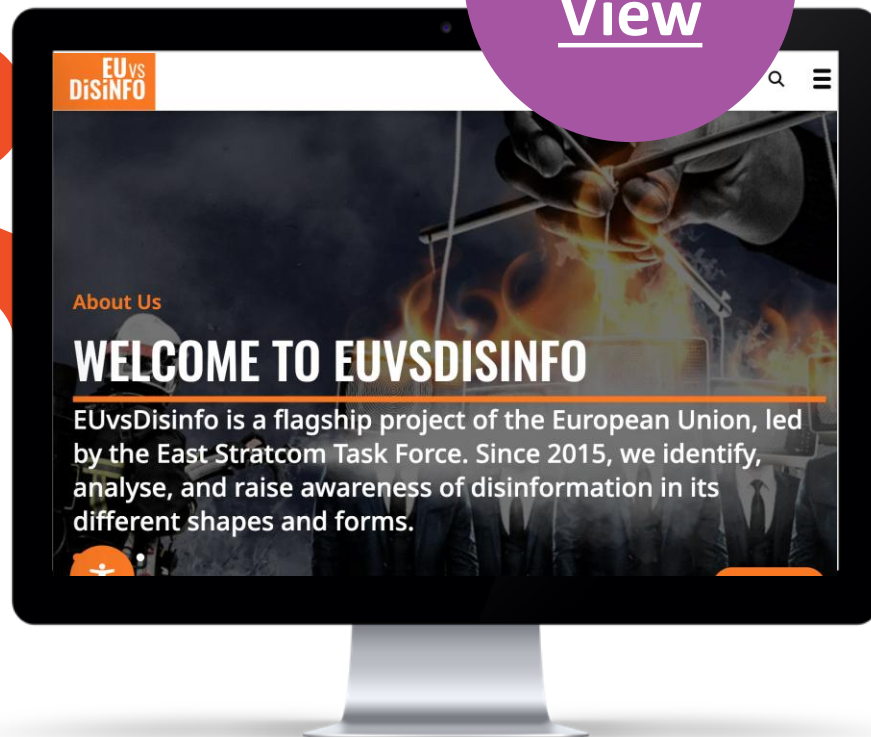
While often valuable, data visualisations can be misinterpreted or manipulated to mislead audiences if not presented responsibly.

The European External Action Service (EEAS)

The **European External Action Service (EEAS)** is the EU's diplomatic service. Since 2011, it has implemented the EU's foreign and security policy, promoting peace, security, and European values around the world through diplomacy, crisis response, and international partnerships.

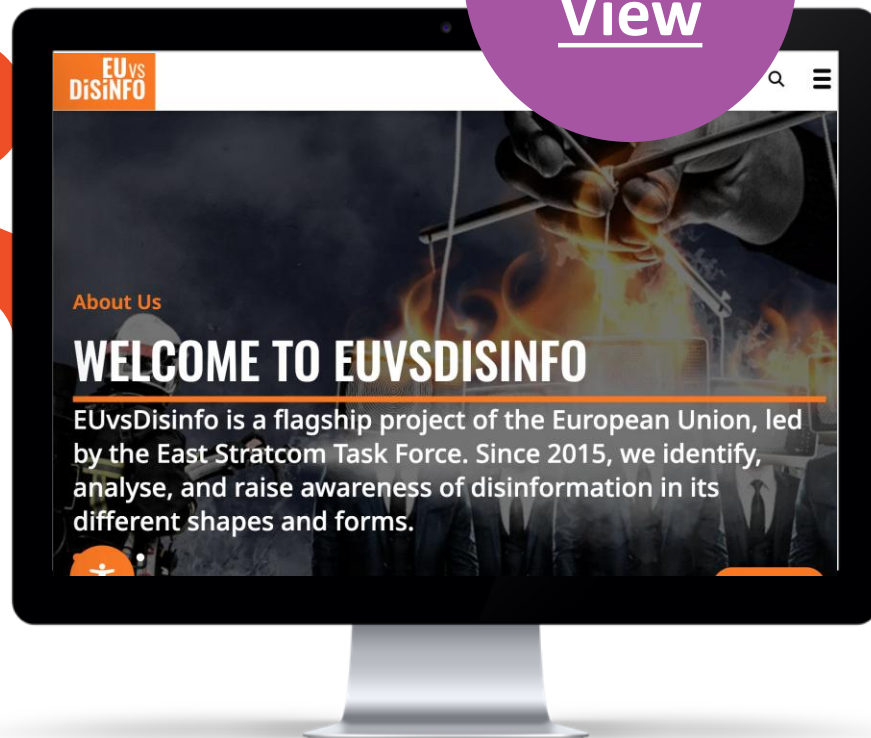
As digital threats become more intertwined with global politics, the EEAS plays a key role in safeguarding the EU's democratic integrity from foreign manipulation efforts.

[Click to](#)
[View](#)



The European External Action Service (EEAS)

[Click to View](#)



EUvsDisinfo is one of the most visible tool of **EEAS**, a **flagship project to counter information manipulation** efforts targeting the EU, its Member States, neighboring countries, and global partners. Its goal is to raise **public awareness** of disinformation and help people build **resilience** against information manipulation.

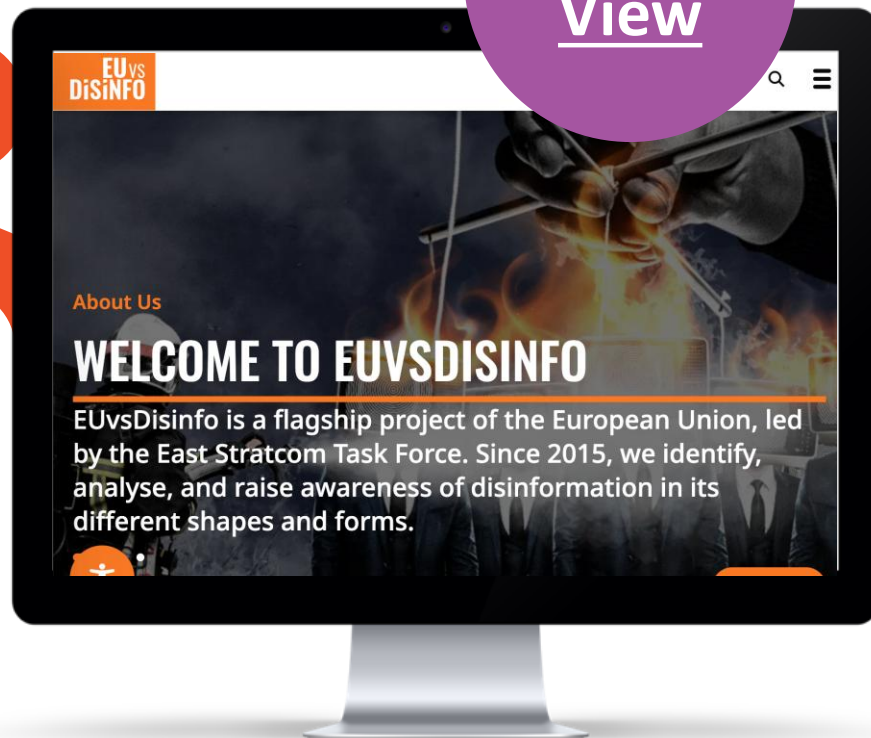
The **EUvsDisinfo** website includes the **world's largest public archive** of disinformation featuring **articles, interviews, and guest content** published in 13 different languages

Click 

[DISINFO: The task of the Europeans is to continue the war and use Ukraine to destroy Russia](#)

The European External Action Service (EEAS)

[Click to View](#)



The **EUvsDisinfo** database includes the **world's largest public archive** of disinformation, featuring **articles, interviews, and guest content** published in 13 different languages

- The platform maintains an extensive **disinformation database**, tracking thousands of false narratives—many linked to **pro-Kremlin media** or hostile foreign actors.
- For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, EUvsDisinfo documented how false claims about vaccine safety and EU failures were weaponised to erode trust in public institutions.
- It also runs **myth-busting articles, awareness campaigns**, and provides **media literacy resources** to help the public and journalists build resilience against manipulation.

In today's digital battlefield, this initiative is critical for **countering propaganda, protecting public trust**, and defending democracy in the EU and beyond.

European Media Bias in the Coverage of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

This report analyses UK and international media coverage of the recent Israel-Palestine conflict, highlighting bias in language, framing, and source credibility. It argues that much of the media has underplayed Palestinian suffering and marginalised or misrepresented pro-Palestinian voices.

The report also critiques the amplification of unverified claims and the use of Islamophobic and antisemitism-related tropes.



[Click to View](#)

Click



[Bias in Western Reporting](#)



Topic 1: Resources Section

Explore the following real-world cases and tools to understand and counter disinformation

01

Digital Tools:

Ask FactCheck, NewsGuard

02

Case Studies:

- France 24's The Observer, debunk the false claim regarding Palestinian child victims
- EEAS & EUvsDisinfo: Countering Disinformation at the 2024 Bürgenstock Summit on Ukraine

03

Activity: Group Discussion

Journalistic Ethics in Reporting Conflict: A Critical Group Analysis

04

Other Resources:

Research reports, articles, & documentaries





Resources: Tools



Ask FactCheck | factcheck.org

It allows readers to submit questions about political claims, viral rumours, or potentially misleading information. The FactCheck.org team investigates and publishes answers to selected inquiries. [How to spot fake news](#)

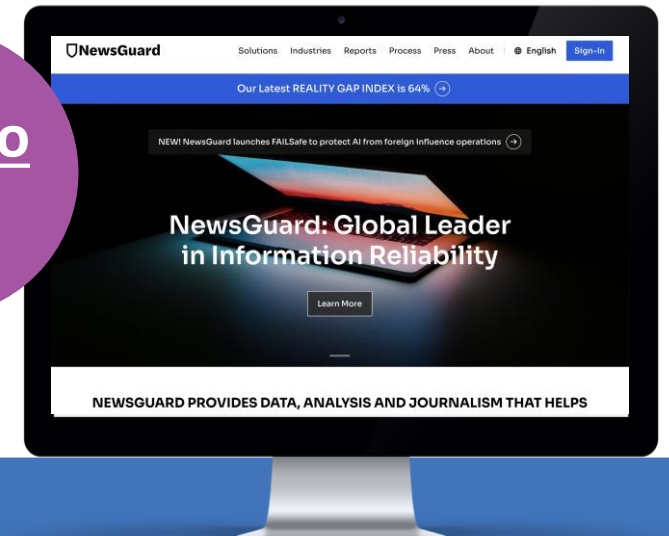
[Click to View](#)



NewsGuard | newsguardtech.com

An NGO that analyses the social impact of algorithms. Provides research and advocacy on transparency and fairness in digital platforms.

[Click to View](#)



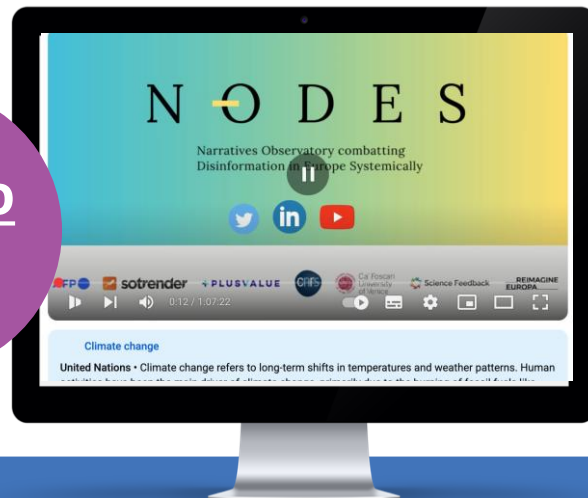


Resources: Video & Case Studies

Narratives that Shape Our World

The video presents key findings from the NODES project, which analyses how public discourse around critical issues, such as climate change, COVID-19, and migration, is shaped by prevailing narratives. Understanding these narratives helps reveal how information spreads, influences public opinion, and affects social cohesion in a rapidly changing digital media environment.

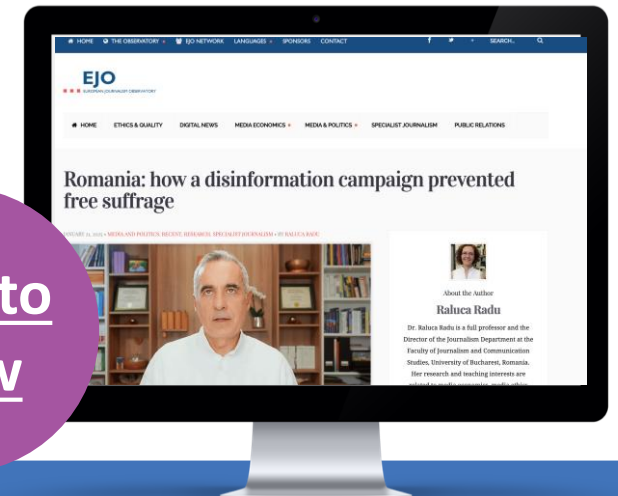
[Click to View](#)



Romania: How a disinformation campaign prevented free suffrage

This document from the European Narrative Observatory provides an in-depth analysis of the disinformation campaign during Romania's 2024 presidential elections. It details how social media influencers and viral content on platforms like TikTok manipulated public opinion, affecting voter choices and election integrity. The report underscores the urgent need for monitoring digital narratives to safeguard democratic processes.

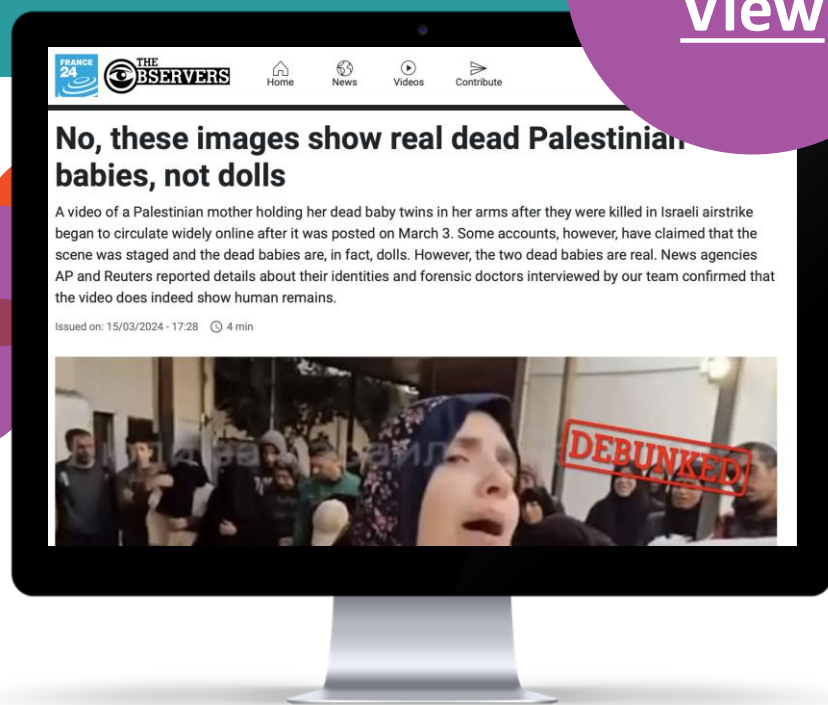
[Click to View](#)



Case Study

France 24's The Observer Debunk the False Claim

[Click to View](#)



France 24 “**Les Observateurs**” (Observatory) employs a multi-step process to investigate and **debunk false reports**, emphasising transparency, fairness, and public education.

In March 2024, France 24-The Observer debunked a viral claim that photos of deceased Palestinian babies were staged using dolls. The investigation involved reverse image searches, analysis of original photo sources, and consultation with journalists and medical professionals on the ground. The team demonstrated that the images were authentic and had been misrepresented online to spread disinformation. Their transparent fact-checking process highlighted the importance of visual verification and source credibility in conflict reporting.

Case Study

EUvsDisinfo & the 2024 Bürgenstock Summit

In June 2024, Switzerland hosted the Bürgenstock Summit, focused on Ukraine issue. During that time, Kremlin-affiliated media launched a coordinated disinformation campaign aimed at discrediting the summit, erode trust in diplomatic efforts, and shift blame from Russia.

False Narratives:

- Ukraine and the West framed as aggressors
- Ukraine's peace plan called "unworkable"
- "Peace" redefined as accepting Russian claims

EUvsDisinfo & EEAS Response:

- Monitored disinformation across languages and platforms
- Equipped EU embassies and media with facts to counter falsehoods

Takeaway:

Digital diplomacy plays a vital role in protecting peace efforts from strategic disinformation.



Activity

Task:

Analyse how Journalism Ethics outlined in Council of Europe's **Resolution 1003(1993)** are applied to digital news on wars in Gaza and Ukraine.

Assess news articles for accuracy, impartiality, accuracy, & reflect on their role in shaping public understanding.

Discussion:

"Did the article cite sources?" "Is the headline misleading?" "Can you identify any siding or bias toward one party in the conflict?" "Are images or language emotionally charged?"



Goal:

Promotes **critical thinking** on the real-world application of media ethics. Encourages collaborative analysis of bias, misinformation, and accountability in news narratives



Tips:

Assign rotating roles within groups: facilitator, note-taker, ethics analyst. Wrap up with group presentations or a shared board of suggested improvements to regulations



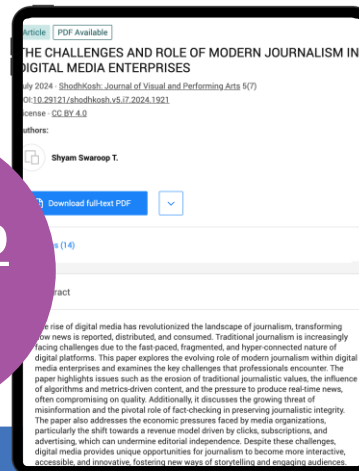


Resources: Articles & Reports

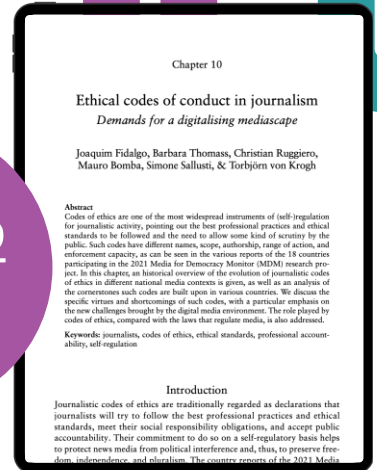
Article: Journalism in the Digital Era

The Challenges & Role of Modern Journalism Digital Media Enterprises - Digital media is reshaping journalism, challenging traditional values, emphasising speed over quality, and increasing reliance on algorithms and ad-driven models. This shift raises concerns about misinformation, editorial independence, and content integrity. This article explores evaluation of journalism amid digital transformation and the implications for industry professionals

[Click to View](#)



[Click to View](#)



Article: Journalistic Codes of Ethics in the Digital Age

Ethical Codes of Conduct in Journalism Demands for a Digitalising Mediascape - Journalistic codes of ethics promote professional standards and accountability. This study, based on the 2021 Media for Democracy Monitor across 18 countries, explores their evolution, key principles, and challenges especially in today's digital media environment.



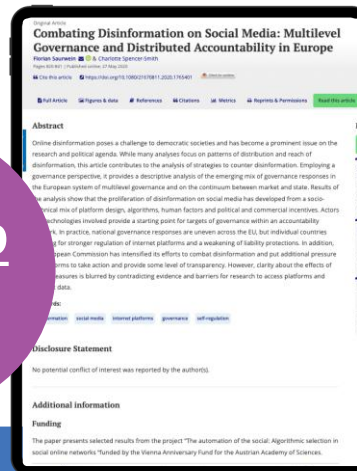
Resources: Articles & Reports

Disinformation and Accountability in Europe

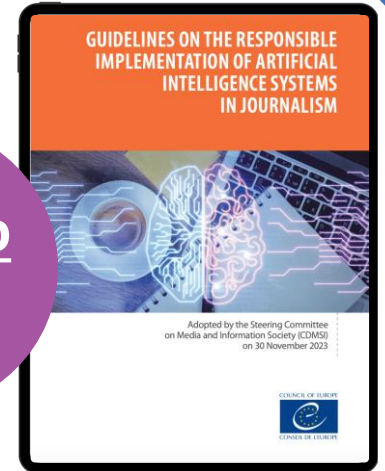
Combating Disinformation on Social Media: Multilevel Governance and Distributed Accountability in Europe

Digital media is reshaping journalism challenging traditional values, emphasising speed over quality, and increasing reliance on algorithms and ad-driven models. This shift raises concerns about misinformation, editorial independence, and content integrity. This article explores and analyses evaluation of journalism amid digital transformation and the implications for industry professionals

[Click to View](#)



[Click to View](#)



Research Report: AI and Journalism

Guidelines on the Responsible Implementation of Artificial Intelligence Systems in Journalism

With AI on the rise, media organizations are urged to adopt AI tools across journalism - while upholding editorial independence, ethics, and human rights. This report explores AI's impact on journalism through the lens of media freedom and Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which protects freedom of expression as a cornerstone of democracy.



Resources: Toolkit

Explore: Initiatives by the EU Commission to combat online disinformation

To address the growing threat of online disinformation, the European Commission has launched a series of coordinated initiatives aimed at protecting democratic values, promoting transparency, and ensuring accountability among digital platforms

- **A European Approach to Disinformation:** A set of tools to counter disinformation while protecting EU values.
- **Action Plan against Disinformation:** Strengthens EU cooperation and response efforts.
- **European Democracy Action Plan:** Sets guidelines for online platform accountability.
- **Strengthened Code of Practice (2022):** Unites stakeholders in voluntary self-regulatory initiative commitments against disinformation.
- **European Digital Media Observatory(EDMO):** Independent network of fact-checkers, researchers, and media experts.



Conclusion

Ethical journalism remains a cornerstone of a healthy digital information environment

European media standards and self-regulatory frameworks play a vital role in promoting accuracy, credibility, and accountability in online reporting.

As digital platforms reshape how news is produced and consumed, journalists face increasing challenges, including sensationalism, misinformation, political bias, and public distrust. Navigating these pressures requires a strong ethical foundation and a commitment to transparent, responsible journalism.

Empowering citizens to engage with media and uphold journalistic values critically is essential for sustaining trust and integrity in Europe's digital public sphere.

Module 7: Making the Internet a Safer, Fairer, & Honest Space

You have completed Part 1 (Topic 1)

Ethical Journalism in the Digital Age:
The Role of European Media Standards

Next is Part 2 (Focus Area 2)

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration for
Inclusive Digital Governance

www.includememedia.eu

This resource is licensed
under CC BY 4.0



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the Finnish National Agency for Education. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them

* Note to manage waste please print this document in greyscale or black and white rather than in colour. Please print on both sides of the paper (duplex) and if you can print multiple slides or pages on one page.

