

MLFD Focus Group - Bulgaria

March 27, 29 and 30

SUMMARY

The 3-day Focus group gave participants the opportunity to discuss, debate and understand the importance of media literacy skills in combating the spread of fake news and disinformation at national and European levels. Participants discussed how they receive and consume information, what sources of information they trust and how to fact-check the accountability of a given source of information. Each FG's session was very interactive and participants were engaged in the discussions and asked questions to the experts involved. The format followed a well-organised structure with an introduction and set of the context, presentation of the MLFD project and the booklet, welcoming experts, encouraging the involvement of all participants, respecting each view point and allowing participants to discuss the topics among themselves.

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RESULTS

All of the three focus group's sessions revolved around important topics both for the participants and for Europe as a whole. The combat of dis/misinformation is central to the European community and it becomes apparent when voting for particular policies that shape the future of a society. Participants discussed the role of international cooperation in combating disinformation, media literacy education and training and the role of social media engines in shaping the quality of digital journalism. These topics helped participants debrief complex matters and scenarios and to better identify the effects of disinformation on our societies and democracies.

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RESULTS

CRITICAL THINKING

FACT-CHECKING

MEDIA LITERACY SKILLS AND COMPETINCIES OUTLINED AS IMPORTANT

EVALUATING SOURCES

OVERVIEW OF THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE

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RESULTS

The recommendations of the Bulgarian participants included:

- False facts listings (on European and International level)
- Awareness campaigns about misleading information
- A list of outlets that disproportionately disseminate misinformation
- An international app for suspecting misinformation cases to be reported by citizens
- Educating people on how to discern fact from fiction, reliable source from an unreliable source

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RESULTS

Participants discussed the importance of free speech as an integral part of journalism and of utmost importance to democracy. Efforts to combat disinformation must be well considered and available for scrutiny before implementation in order to achieve the highest results with minimum infringement on the freedom of speech. All of the participants agreed that free speech does not absolve an actor from any accountability and although a person is free to make statements, there are consequences that need to be faced.

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