

DISINFORMATION, MANIPULATION & CRITICAL THINKING

Programme

"The essence of the independent mind lies not in what it thinks, but in how it thinks."

– Christopher Hitchens



Mediac**creativa**

www.mediacretiva.eu



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Course summary

In an era where false information spreads faster than facts, Disinfocracy explores how fake news, manipulated messages, and online propaganda influence democracy and social trust.

The word **Disinfocracy** is inspired by the Spanish concept “Bulocracia”, a blend of bulo (hoax) and democracia (democracy), describing how misinformation can become a form of power that shapes opinions, divides societies, and undermines critical thinking.

This 4-day course invites adult learners to explore how misinformation spreads and how to confront it effectively. Through interactive workshops, media analysis, and real-life case studies, participants will gain practical skills to **verify sources**, **question narratives**, and promote **responsible information-sharing** in today’s digital landscape.

Hosted by **Media Creativa**, the course combines digital literacy with civic reflection, empowering participants to become informed, resilient, and active citizens capable of defending truth and dialogue in democratic societies.

TARGET GROUP(S)

Adults interested in understanding misinformation mechanisms and learning practical tools to identify and counter fake news, filter bubbles, and manipulative narratives.

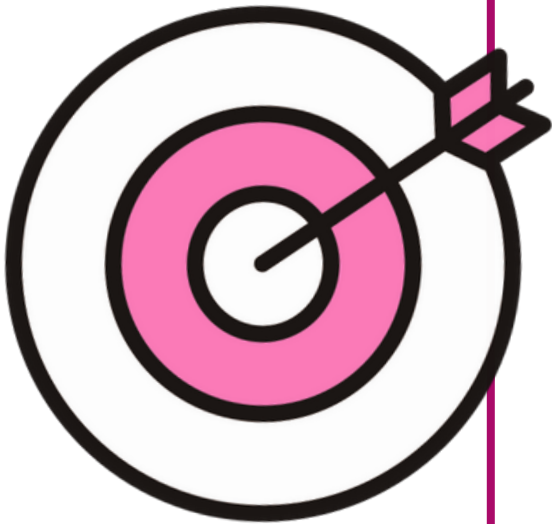
Basic digital literacy is recommended (use of browsers, social media, and online search).

KEY TOPICS

- Understanding misinformation and its impact on public opinion.
- Algorithms and media manipulation.
- Fact-checking tools and methods.
- Critical thinking and civic responsibility.
- Media literacy for a more inclusive and democratic society.



Learning objectives



- To understand how disinformation spreads and affects social cohesion.
- To identify manipulation strategies and learn to debunk them.
- To practise source verification and digital fact-checking.
- To strengthen critical and reflective thinking skills.
- To promote responsible and tolerant information sharing in daily life.

METHODOLOGY

The course is based on **experiential** and **collaborative learning**, using practical workshops, gamified exercises, and real-life examples. Participants will alternate between digital work, reflection, and group dynamics that encourage debate and curiosity.

Each day includes a mix of **analysis**, **simulation**, and **creative problem-solving**. The methodology aims to strengthen participants' autonomy and confidence as informed citizens who can navigate complex information ecosystems with a critical and ethical mindset.

Techniques include:

- **Learning by doing:** participants explore fact-checking tools, verification platforms, and social media examples directly.
- **Peer learning:** exchange of ideas, strategies, and discoveries between participants to foster collaborative understanding.
- **Critical awareness:** every tool and case is analysed for its social impact, ethical dimensions, and media responsibility.
- **Reflection and ethics:** promoting critical thinking about the balance between freedom of expression, information reliability, and civic responsibility.

Informal learning moments – such as shared coffee breaks or short dialogues during visits – are intentionally included to reinforce confidence and spontaneous communication.

The programme concludes with a **structured evaluation** process, both individual and collective reflection, receiving feedback, and developing personal action plans for applying and disseminating the results in their local communities and professional environments once the programme is over.

PROGRAMME DAY-BY-DAY

Training sessions run approximately from 9:00 – 14:00, with optional cultural activities in the afternoons. Duration and agendas are open for changes and adaptations to learners needs and interests.

DAY 1 - WHAT IS DISINFOCRACY? UNDERSTANDING THE INFORMATION JUNGLE

Welcome

Welcome and group integration.

Participants are welcomed to the course and introduced to the concept of Disinfocracy –how misinformation and manipulation influence democracy and everyday life. An initial group dynamic helps everyone share their own experiences with fake news and information overload.



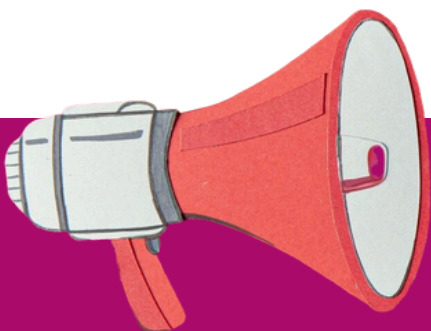
Group dynamic: “Fake-hunt” (Fake News Scavenger).

In small teams, participants analyse famous fake news stories from Europe and beyond. They discuss why people believed them, what emotions or biases were triggered, and what impact they had on society. The exercise raises awareness of how misinformation plays on fear, humour, and confirmation bias.



Reflection session: “Why do we believe?”

Guided reflection on how our values, culture, and digital habits influence what we perceive as true. Participants are encouraged to think about their own information routines and how to strengthen critical distance.



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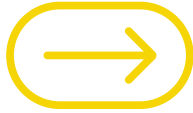
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PROGRAMME DAY-BY-DAY

DAY 2 - HOW FAKE NEWS SPREADS



Interactive workshop: Algorithms and echo chambers.

Participants experience how algorithms shape what we see online. Using simulations and visual exercises, they discover how social networks create information bubbles that reinforce opinions and limit perspective.



Role play: "The Fake Factory".

Half of the group becomes fake news creators and the other half fact-checkers. Each team receives prompts to invent, distribute, and then debunk a story. This gamified session helps visualise the speed, strategy, and creativity behind misinformation –and the difficulty of stopping it once it spreads.



Group reflection: "Digital empathy and responsibility".

Discussion about how our online behaviour influences others. How can we share information responsibly? What's the role of empathy in communication?



PROGRAMME DAY-BY-DAY

DAY 3 - TOOLS FOR TRUTH



Practical lab: Verify like a pro.

A guided, hands-on session where participants test free verification tools: Google Reverse Image Search, TinEye, Maldita.es, Newtral, and EFE Verifica. They learn to check images, contrast headlines, and evaluate the reliability of sources. Trainers assist participants as they verify real examples and share best practices.



Visit: Inside the newsroom.

Participants meet a local media organisation or independent newsroom in Bilbao. Journalists explain how they verify information, deal with social media rumours, and manage ethical dilemmas in the digital era. The session provides an insider's look at professional verification work.



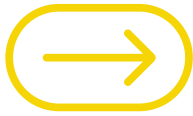
Outdoor activity: "Truth Walk".

A light urban game through Bilbao's city centre, where teams use QR codes to uncover famous misinformation cases and discover short lessons about verification, bias, and media ethics. The activity connects learning with exploration and teamwork.



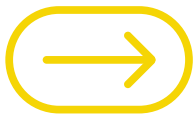
PROGRAMME DAY-BY-DAY

DAY 4 - CRITICAL THINKING AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP



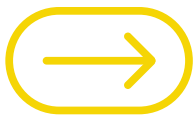
Activity: "Decode the Feed".

Participants work in teams to analyse simulated social media posts about politics, health, and society. They decide whether each post is reliable, biased, or fake, justifying their reasoning. The activity combines fun and analysis, building teamwork and media literacy.



Debate: "Truth vs. Virality".

A guided debate based on real news examples. Participants explore how false information spreads faster than truth, and what personal and collective actions can promote a healthier online environment.



Personal reflection: "My information diet".

Participants create small personal goals to improve their information habits: choosing better sources, fact-checking before sharing, or diversifying perspectives.



Group reflection and closing ceremony.

Final sharing of key takeaways and personal commitments to fight misinformation and fake news, followed by certificate delivery and a pintxo break celebrating learning and well-being.

* Some changes in the programme are possible. The content of the course is always adapted to the participants' previous knowledge, expectations and requirements. The participants receive the informational kit a few weeks before the start of the course.

COMPETENCES TO BE ACQUIRED BY THE PARTICIPANT

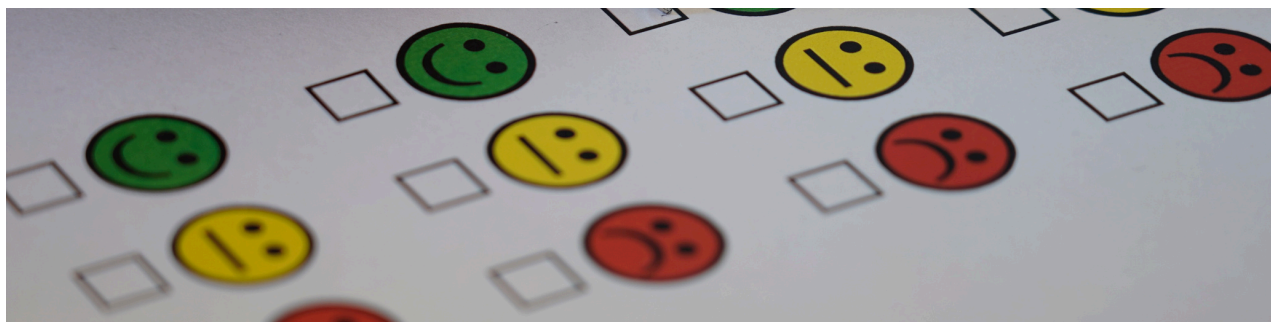


COMPETENCES



- Ability to identify and explain misinformation mechanisms.
- Improved skills in design and facilitate activities on critical thinking and media literacy.
- Practical knowledge of free verification tools and strategies.
- Awareness of emotional and ethical aspects in digital communication.
- Confidence to integrate innovative and gamified methods in adult education.

MONITORING, MENTORING AND EVALUATING



METHODS OF MONITORING AND MENTORING THE PARTICIPANT BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE MOBILITY

- Ongoing contact with the mobility participant.
- Questionnaire before and after mobility.
- Mentoring by the host and the sending organisation.
- Verification of the participant's concerns and expectations.
- Individual interviews.
- Participant report.
- Meetings with other participants in the mobility - reflections and debates where the quality of the learning outcomes will be assessed.

EXPECTED USE OF THE RESULTS AND EVALUATION

- Use of the verification methods and critical thinking strategies in daily life.
- Sharing of good practices and tools with colleagues, family, or local communities.
- Promotion of responsible communication and tolerance in social and digital spaces.
- Evaluation through group activities, peer feedback, and short reflection tasks.
- Completion of a final self-assessment (My information diet) to reflect on learning and personal change.

CERTIFICATION AND MATERIALS

- Certificate of participation (Erasmus+ format)
- Digital access to learning materials and supporting resources.
- Participant reflection journal.
- Post-course learning recommendations.

Ready to question, verify, and make informed choices?

Check dates and register your participation vía email.

Contact: info@mediacreativa.eu
www.mediacreativa.eu



Pre-register now - no deposit
required!