

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	CONFEDERACION DE AMBITO ESTATAL DECONSUMIDORES Y USUARIOS CECU (CECU)
PIC number:	PIC 938546587
Project name and acronym:	[An intergenerational active debate on how countering disinformation to empower citizens] — [MEDIWISE]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	[WP6]
Event name:	Desinformación y odio en las redes. ¿Un problema de ahora o de siempre?
Type:	[seminar, experts meeting]
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	[Spain], [Madrid]
Date(s):	[20 June 2023]
Website(s) (if any):	https://www.mediawise-project.eu/
Participants	
Female:	18
Male:	14
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Spain]:	32
From country 2 [name]:	
From country 3 [name]:	
...	
Total number of participants:	32
From total number of countries:	1
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	
<p>Fake news and disinformation are very present in our daily media consumption. One of the most worrying aspects is the proliferation of hate speeches in different media environments, as a reaction to the advances of feminism or other social movements, translated into the approval of new laws and social policies. The emergence of information and communication technologies has multiplied the possibilities of disseminating these contents and, therefore, has also increased their potential impact on the formation of public opinion. To what extent does this affect democratic functioning? Is this a current problem or has it always existed? What measures would help to deal with it?</p>	

The event was divided in two thematic blocks:

1. Hoaxes against feminist advances and other social policies.
2. Youth in the face of disinformation: Is this a current threat?

Four experts from the fields of journalism, academia and civil society discussed these issues and gave recommendations to citizens, journalists and decision makers:

- Raúl Magallón. Professor of Journalism and Audiovisual Communication and researcher at the Carlos III University of Madrid.
- Virginia Álvarez. Head of the Human Rights and Justice and Home Affairs Research Area of Amnesty International Spain.
- Deva Mar Escobedo. Contributing journalist at El Salto.
- Pablo H. Escayola. Academic Research Coordinator of Maldita.es.

Moderated by Alba Ara. Federación de Consumidores y Usuarios CECU.

The event was attended by 32 people of a very varied profile in terms of age and gender. Some of them came from other social organisations or political groupings, others came for personal interest in the subject. The discussion was very enriching both for the speakers and for the audience, which could also participate in the debate. One of the most interesting conversations that emerged was the emotional dimension of disinformation: one of the main aims of hoaxes is to provoke afraid, angry or hateful as a strategy to spread a given message. Attendees showed their concern about this issue and about the existence of “bubbles” of opinion, which make it very difficult to disprove disinformation.

Other interesting discussion was about how to regulate the dissemination of disinformation without disproportionately limiting the right to freedom of expression. Several approaches were shared in this regard. In general, experts recommended to increase the protection against discrimination and to improve the education in values of equality and respect for minorities in schools.

Finally, the fact that both young and older people attended the event was an opportunity to exchange different views on the effects of disinformation on the population and to dismantle some stereotypes about young people. It anticipated and established some keys to the intergenerational discussion that will take place in the next activity of the project.

After the analysis, the experts gave some of the recommendations addressed to civil society, journalists and governments. For example, they advised citizens to resist emotional reaction and not to share content without checking its veracity. To journalists, they recommended to make an effort not to succumb to the fast pace of information and contextualize it appropriately. Finally, they insisted on the need to implement digital and media literacy programmes for all ages and contexts, including warnings about the risks of disinformation and tools to face it.