

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
<b>Participant:</b>	1. CODACONS - COORDINAMENTO DELLE ASSOCIAZIONI PER LA DIFESA DELL'AMBIENTE E DEI DIRITTI DEGLI UTENTI E CONSUMATORI ASSOCIAZIONE (CODACONS) 2. ISTITUTO EUROPEO PER LO SVILUPPO SOCIO ECONOMICO ASSOCIAZIONE (ISES)
<b>PIC number:</b>	1. PIC 923367445 2. PIC 948848666
<b>Project name and acronym:</b>	[An intergenerational active debate on how countering disinformation to empower citizens] — [MEDIWISE]

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
<b>Event number:</b>	[WP8]
<b>Event name:</b>	[Navigare nel mare delle fake news: Conoscere, comprendere, collaborare/ Navigating the sea of fake news: Know, understand, collaborate] – Local event 1
<b>Type:</b>	Workshop
<b>In situ/online:</b>	[in-situ]
<b>Location:</b>	[Italy], [Rome]
<b>Date(s):</b>	[10/05/2024]
<b>Website(s) (if any):</b>	<a href="https://www.mediawise-project.eu/">https://www.mediawise-project.eu/</a>
Participants	
Female:	20
Male:	10
Non-binary:	0
From country 1 [Italy]:	30
...	
Total number of participants:	30
From total number of countries:	1
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	
<p>On May 10, 2024, 30 people gathered at Binario F from Facebook at Stazione Termini. The selection of the meeting venue already demonstrated the intentions and commitment of these partners to create an impact towards the audience. Binario F indeed is a community space in the heart of Rome where digital natives, students, entrepreneurs, companies, developers and NGOs can attend free courses and activities to improve their digital skills and learn new ones.</p> <p>This event brought together young adults aged 18-25 and older adults aged 65+ to collaborate in</p>	

unveiling fake news and discussing strategies for identifying and countering misinformation. The workshop was designed to foster mutual learning, with each generation sharing their unique perspectives and experiences with social media and news consumption. It represented a unique opportunity for participants to directly put into practice some fact-checking tools and to dialogue how young people and older adults approach social media and news that turn to be fake.

### Objectives

1. Enhance participants' ability to identify fake news.
2. Foster intergenerational dialogue and cooperation.
3. Equip participants with practical tools and strategies to counter fake news.
4. Understand generational differences in media consumption and trust.

### Agenda of the event

10 :00 – 10: 30: Registration and welcome of the participants/Introduction to MEDIAWISE project

10:30 - 11:30: Introduction to Fake News, what are they? what are their risks? Analysis of the fake news effects on society. Presentation of facts & figures & case studies.

11:30 - 13:00: Interactive workshop on fact-checking methodologies and debunking. Presentation of tools and resources available for young people and older adults. Practical demonstration of fact-checking.

Parallel sessions:

- o Identification of fake news and how to spot them. Analysis of the Pandoro and Easter eggs by Chiara Ferragni
- o Identification of fake news and how to spot them. Analysis of fake news on migrants.

Use of online tools to verify news. Discussion on the role of the media in the dissemination of accurate information. Collaboration strategies between media, institutions and civil society.

13:00/13:30: Q&A session and event closure.

The workshop began with an introduction that set the stage for the day's activities. Participants were welcomed and briefed on the objectives of the event: to enhance their ability to identify fake news and to understand the different approaches each generation takes toward media consumption. An ice-breaker activity helped participants get acquainted, establishing an atmosphere of openness and collaboration.

#### Introduction to Fake News

In the first major session, participants were divided into mixed-age groups and presented with a collection of news articles. The task was to determine which articles were real and which were fake. This exercise sparked lively discussions within each group, as younger and older participants shared their reasoning and approaches. The younger participants, adept at using digital tools and fact-checking websites, demonstrated their proficiency in quickly cross-referencing information. They highlighted the importance of skepticism towards sensationalist headlines and the necessity of verifying sources.

Conversely, the older participants, with their rich life experience and familiarity with traditional media, offered a different perspective. They emphasized intuition and the credibility of long-established news outlets as key factors in their judgment. Many shared challenges they faced in navigating digital platforms and verifying online information, revealing a gap that the younger participants eagerly helped to bridge.

Then, young adults discussed their high engagement with social media platforms and their awareness of how algorithms can influence the visibility of news stories. They spoke about the proactive measures they take, such as using ad-blockers and privacy tools, to limit their exposure to targeted misinformation.

On the other hand, older adults expressed their preference for traditional media sources like television, newspapers, and radio. They shared their greater trust in news outlets with a long history of reliability, contrasting with the younger generation's digital-first approach. The debate illuminated the distinct but complementary ways each generation engages with news, highlighting the potential for cross-generational learning and support.

Throughout the discussion, participants from both age groups exchanged practical strategies for countering misinformation.

#### Session: Identification of fake news and how to spot them. Analysis of the Pandoro and Easter eggs by Chiara Ferragni

In the first session, the case of Pandoro and Chiara Ferragni was introduced. Chiara Ferragni, a popular Italian fashion influencer, had been falsely accused of disparaging Pandoro, a traditional Italian Christmas cake, in a viral social media post. The fake news had sparked significant online outrage, making it an ideal example to examine.

#### Session: Identification of fake news and how to spot them. Analysis of fake news on migrants.

The participants were presented with several widely circulated false narratives, such as exaggerated crime statistics and fabricated stories about migrant benefits. These examples were chosen to

illustrate the damaging impact of misinformation on public perception and policy. Participants were divided into intergenerational groups and given the task of analyzing these fake news stories. Each group received both the original false articles and credible sources debunking them.

For both sessions, participants were divided into mixed-age groups and tasked with analyzing the fake news cases. Each group was given the original fake news article, as well as various sources debunking the misinformation. This exercise prompted lively discussions within the groups, as participants compared their initial reactions and investigative methods.

For example, the younger participants, familiar with Chiara Ferragni's online presence, quickly identified inconsistencies in the alleged quotes and the style of the fake post. They demonstrated their ability to use digital tools and fact-checking websites to verify the authenticity of the information. Many pointed out the importance of cross-referencing multiple sources and recognized the tell-tale signs of a manufactured controversy. Older participants, while less familiar with Ferragni's online persona, brought a different perspective to the analysis. They relied more on their intuition and experience with traditional media, emphasizing the need for skepticism towards sensationalist stories. Some shared their challenges in navigating digital platforms, highlighting the value of collaboration with younger, more digitally savvy individuals.

The case studies revealed generational differences in media consumption and verification methods.

Younger adults discussed their high engagement with social media and their awareness of how algorithms can influence the visibility of news stories. They spoke about the proactive measures they take, such as using ad-blockers and privacy tools, to limit exposure to targeted misinformation. In contrast, older adults expressed a preference for traditional media sources like television, newspapers, and radio. They shared their greater trust in news outlets with a long-standing reputation for reliability, contrasting with the younger generation's digital-first approach. This discussion highlighted the distinct but complementary ways each generation engages with news, underscoring the potential for cross-generational learning and support.

Following the analysis, a moderated debate provided a platform for participants to share their personal experiences with fake news. Young adults recounted instances where they had encountered and debunked misinformation online, often through peer networks and digital tools. Older adults shared stories of being misled by fake news, particularly on social media platforms they were less familiar with.

The debate underscored the importance of intergenerational dialogue in countering fake news. Collaborative verification emerged as a powerful tool, with younger participants offering to teach digital literacy and fact-checking skills to their older counterparts. Older participants, in turn, shared their critical thinking and evaluative skills, honed through years of experience, with the younger generation.

## **Key Findings and Insights**

### Identifying Fake News

- **Young Adults (18-25):**
  - Demonstrated proficiency in using digital tools and fact-checking websites.
  - Highlighted the importance of cross-referencing multiple sources.
  - Showed skepticism towards sensationalist headlines and unverified sources.
- **Older Adults (65+):**
  - Relied more on traditional media and trusted long-established news outlets.
  - Expressed challenges in navigating digital platforms and verifying online information.
  - Emphasized the role of intuition and life experience in identifying credible news.

### Strategies to Counter Misinformation

- **Collaborative Verification:**
  - Encouraging cross-generational dialogues where both groups can learn from each other.
  - Young adults teaching digital literacy and fact-checking skills to older adults.
  - Older adults sharing critical thinking and evaluative skills grounded in experience.
- **Educational Programs:**
  - Implementing community-based educational programs to improve media literacy.
  - Offering workshops similar to this one in more communities to reach a broader audience.
- **Trusted Sources:**
  - Building a community of trusted sources and promoting critical thinking.
  - Encouraging people to verify news through multiple reputable sources before sharing.

**Conclusions**

The intergenerational workshop on countering fake news was a resounding success, fostering a rich exchange of knowledge and strategies between young adults and older adults. Participants left with a greater appreciation of the different approaches each generation takes towards media consumption and verification, and with practical tools to better identify and counter fake news. Future workshops and continuous community engagement are essential to further bridge the generational gap in media literacy and create a more informed society.