BSRYF Youth Ministerial

Workshop:

Truth Under Pressure: Disinformation & Digital Rights in the Baltic Sea Region



Working Group Digital Literacy & Democracy

20.04.2026

The WHY behind our Working Group:

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Digital spaces are where **civic life** increasingly unfolds. Yet **disinformation campaigns** manufacture and amplify social cleavages, threating cohesion and democratic stability.

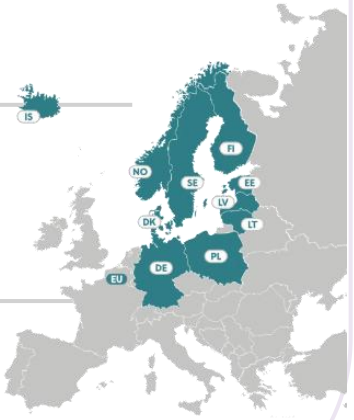
Transformative potential for democratic innovation, inclusion, and deliberation

vs.

Harm potential to destabilise societies, undermine transparency, and amplify inequality.

To ensure democracy thrives online, digital technologies must be **human-centred and human-rights compliant.**

Strengthening **digital literacy** is essential for **resilient, inclusive, and democratic societies.**



This requires **youth-informed policies** at the forefront, combining top-down governance with bottom-up, local innovation.

Main Focus Areas:

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1. Digital Literacy and Civic Resilience

Goals

- Understand and counter **disinformation**, algorithms, and **hybrid threats**.
- Promote safe online practices and public engagement in digital spaces.

#Policy Tags

#Education #Security #CivicResilience #DigitaRights

Baltic Disinfo Watch Project

2. Demystifying AI and Emerging Technologies

Goals

- Make AI understandable and promote its responsible, inclusive and **ethical use.**
- Assess the risks and opportunities of technological developments.

#Policy Tags

#FutureSkills #Inclusion #Innovation #Ethics #Trust #Transperency #DigitaRights

3. Fostering Digital Democracy and Innovation

Goals

- Reimagine democratic institutions and civic engagement with technology.
- Analyse the impact of digital tools on **inclusion**, trust, and decision-making quality.
- Explore **citizen-driven innovation**, decentralized participation, and mission-oriented policy approaches.

#Policy Tags

#Democracy #Participation #Innovation #Collaboration #OpenGovernment #Inclusion

WG DLD Outputs



Values

Youth-centred
Open to 16–29-year-olds, placing their lived experience at the centre of policy analysis and recommendation.

Cross regional
Grounded in the perspectives of all ten CBSS member stat

Evidenced based
anchored in verified research, documented cases and traceable sources

Agile
Responsive to the fast-moving threat landscape

Actionable
Every output is designed to move from analysis to practice

The Rise of Fake News

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Deepfakes Are Already Shaping Opinions Around Conflicts

EU: Twitter leaves voluntary pact on fighting disinformation

Russia's disinformation operations resurface ahead of German election

Russia has revived its disinformation tactics to boost the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party and discredit its rivals

Is EU democracy under pressure? Foreign information manipulation emerges as second biggest threat

AI threat: It's not just fake news, it's personalized political warfare

EU launches 'Democracy Shield' to fight disinformation and interference online

Europe is looking to online platforms and influencers to help fight disinformation and promote democracy, according to a European ...

Russia activates special operation Doppelganger in midst of election in Poland – Defense Intelligence

"People Don't Care About Truth if It Doesn't Fit Their Agenda."

tougher AI social media rules spark censorship fears

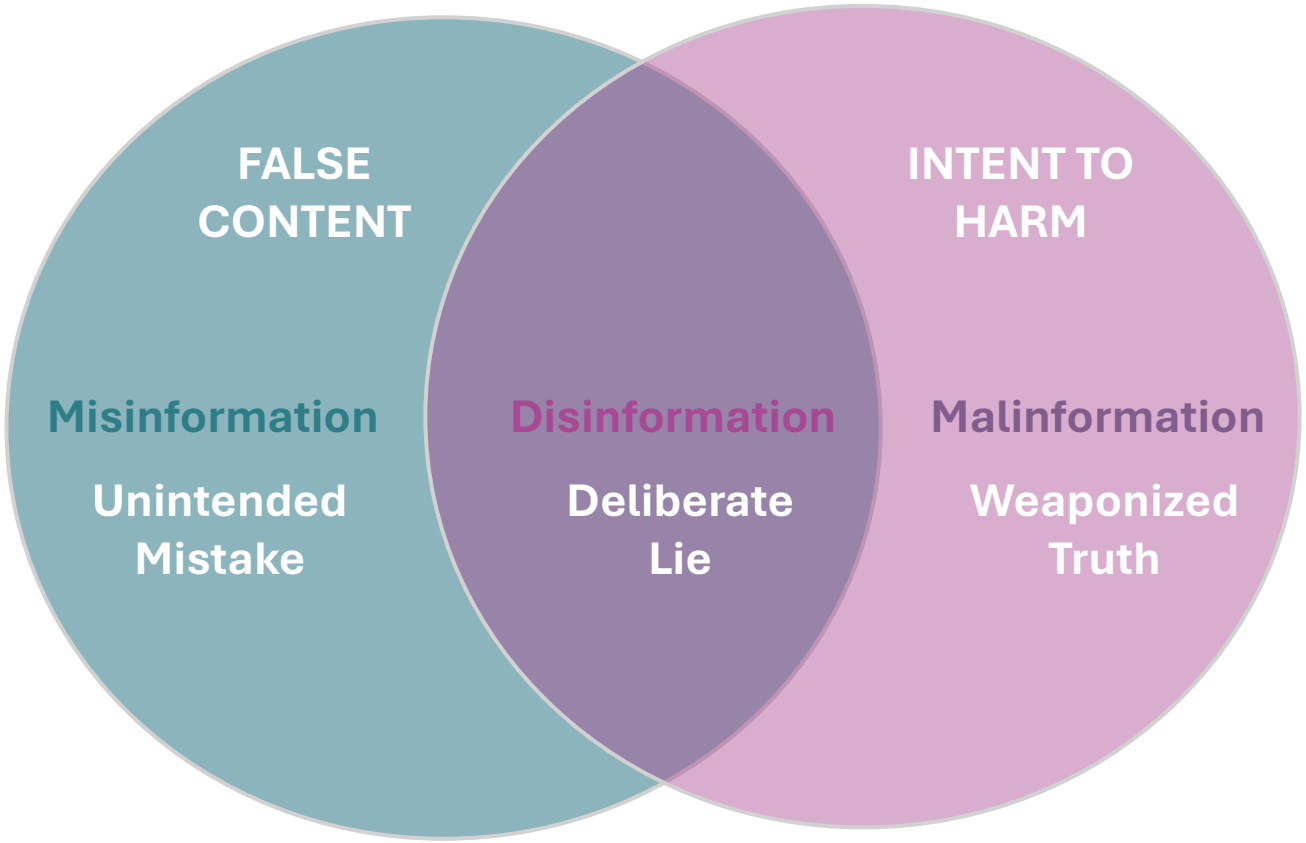
After decades of teaching media literacy, Finland equips students with skills to spot AI deepfakes

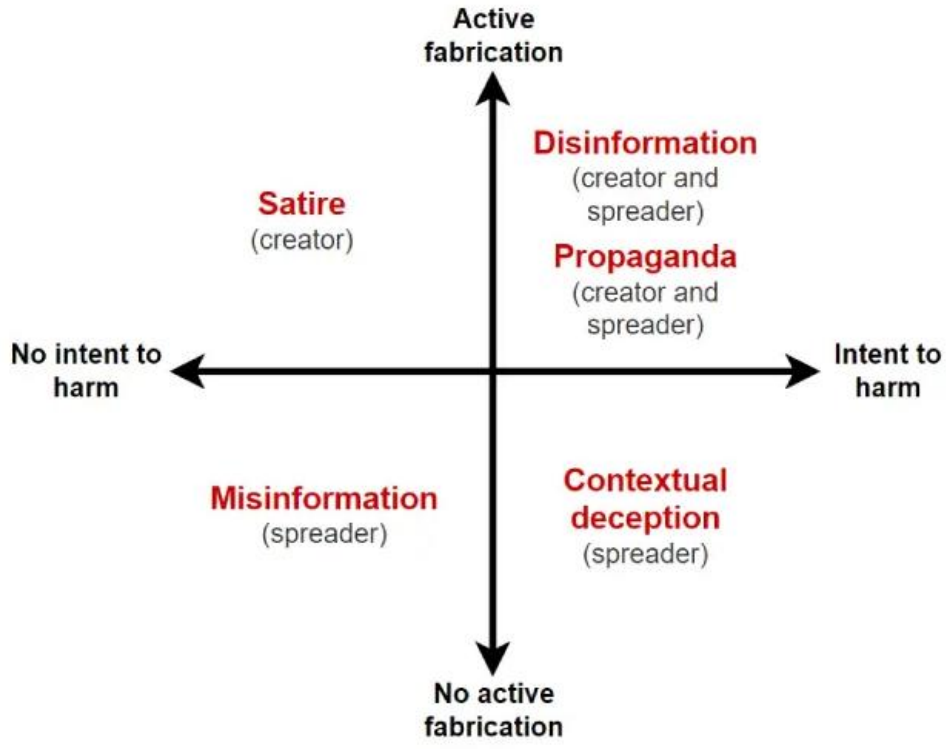
EU sanctions nine people over Bucha massacre, four for information manipulation

Fake news sites steal media brand names

What is Disinformation?

Not all “Fake News" is created equal: Intent matters!

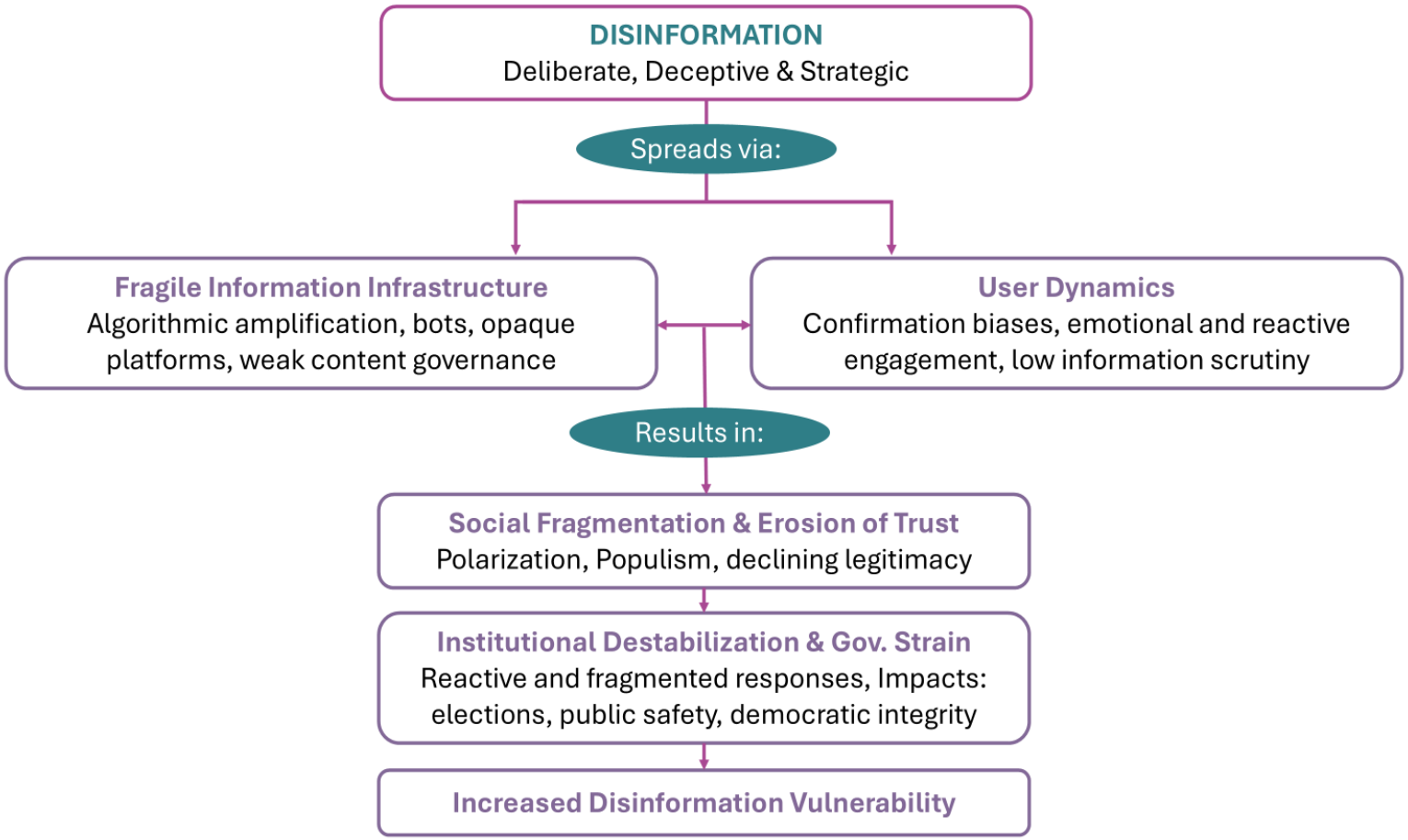




OECD Going Digital Toolkit Note, No 23, 2022

Disinformation: The Trojan horse effect

Systemic effects:



Speed of Spread

6×

False news reaches 1,500 people six times faster than true news — and is 70% more likely to be shared. Not because of bots. Because of us.*

The Correction Problem

~3%

Of tweets containing COVID misinformation were ever debunked. Corrections almost never reach the same audience as the original false claim.*

The BSR Gap

3 vs 242

Facebook employs 3 content moderators for Estonian and 2 for Latvian — compared to 242 for German. Same platform, radically unequal protection.*

*MIT / Science, 2018 — Vosoughi, Roy & Aral, Miyazaki et al., via ScienceDirect review, 2023, Euronews / EU DisinfoLab, 2024

Debate Rounds:

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Find a Group:

Note-taker | Spokesperson | 4 -5 people

Mixed countries

Decide your roles now. The note-taker captures key points. The spokesperson shares your group's insights at the end — 30-60 seconds, one idea.

No right or wrong answers

This is a debate, not a test. Disagreement is the point — different countries, different perspectives.

The Sequence

- Q1 — Debate the question, 5 minutes
- Share insights with the big group
- Q2 — Debate the question, 5 minutes
- Share insights with the big group
- Q3 — Debate the question, 5 minutes
- Share insights with the big group

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Question 1:

How has growing up online changed what it means to participate in politics?

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Think about:

01

How we get informed

How does speed, abundance and algorithmic curation of online information shape what we believe and who we trust ?

02

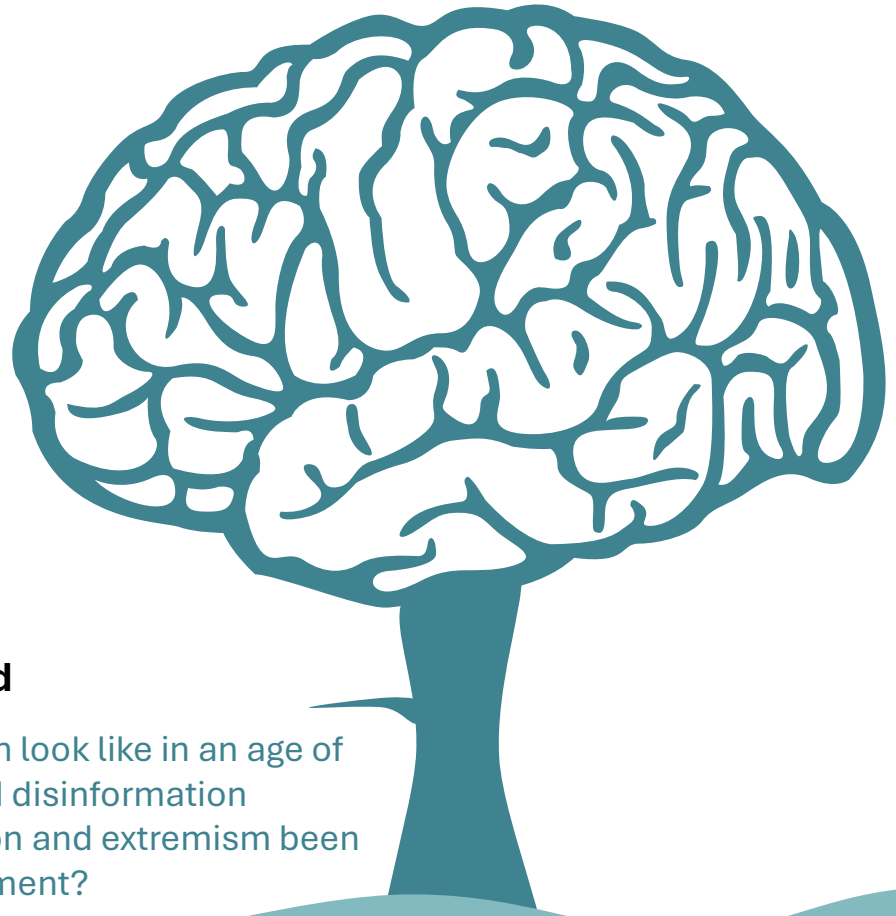
How we participate

What is the role of voice and visibility, dissent and debate in the online political landscape? Has the internet expanded modes of participation?

03

How democracy is threatened

What does meaningful participation look like in an age of foreign interference, deepfakes and disinformation campaigns? How have radicalization and extremism been affected by online political engagement?



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04

Digital Democracy

How have different countries in the Region approached online political participation? How do your experiences differ?

05

Local vs. Global

How do dynamics of local vs. global political engagement play out online?

06

Regional Information Pressure

How do we navigate a media landscape that id heavily impacted by Russian disinformation campaigns?

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Question 2:

Where does regulating disinformation end and censoring legitimate dissent begin?

Who should draw that line, governments, platforms, or citizens?

Where does regulating disinformation end and censoring legitimate dissent begin? Who should draw that line, governments, platforms, or citizens?

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Think about:

01

Intent vs. Opinion

Is this trying to manipulate people or just expressing a controversial view?

02

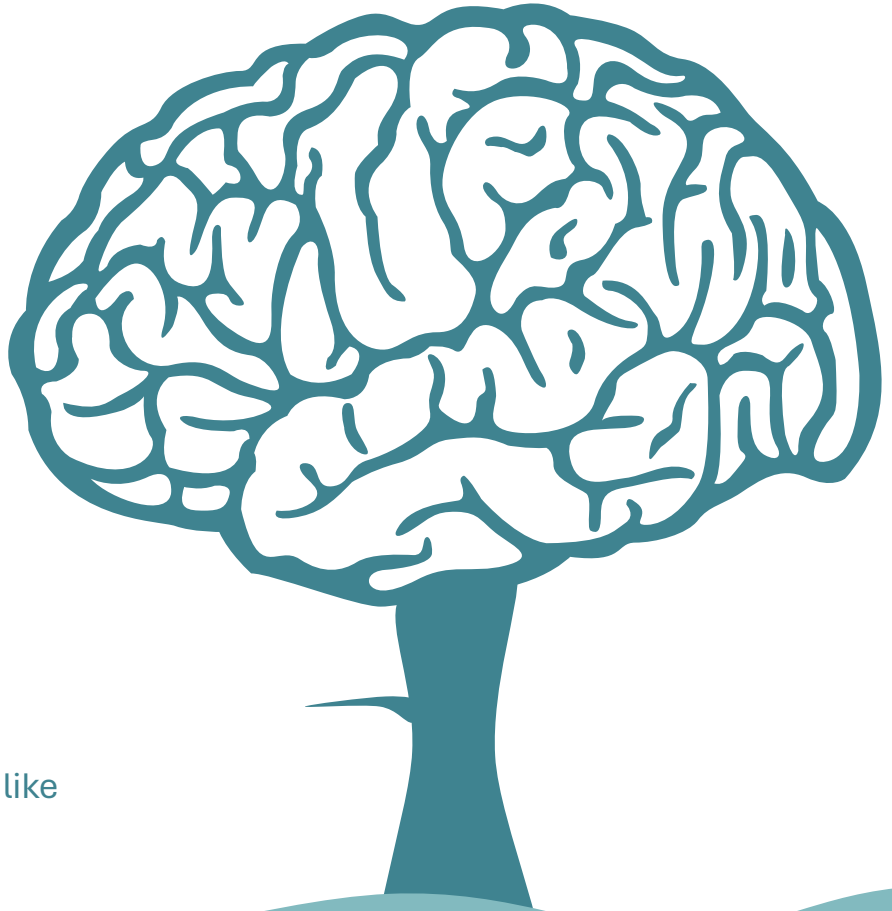
Harm vs. disagreement

Should content be limited because it is false, or only if it causes real harm (elections, public safety?)

03

Who decides?

Who do you trust to draw the line? Governments, platforms, or people like you?



BSR Anchors:

04

Security lens

In countries like Estonia and Latvia, disinfo is often treated as a national security threat, not just speech.

•

05

The Nordic high trust model

In the Nordics, strong institutions make more people open to moderation, but only if it’s transparent and fair

06

Eu rules in practice

The Digital Service Act already shapes what platforms remove, but where the line is drawn still varies in practice

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Question 3:

What can you do to ‘fight’ disinformation?

What is one thing young people can do that institutions cannot in the fight against disinformation?

What can you do to fight disinformation?
What can young people do that institutions cannot?

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Think about:

01

Why do people share content they're not sure is true?

Is it about speed, identity, social belonging or something else?

02

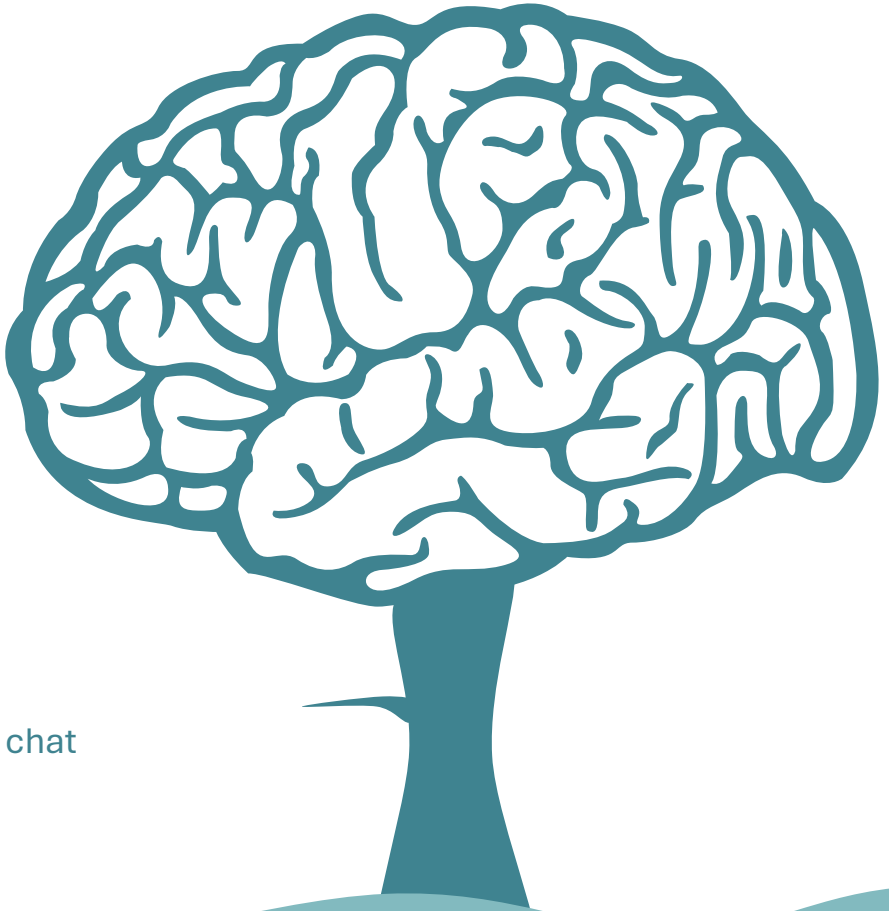
Do you know the tools?

Reverse image search, fact-check sites, DSA trusted flaggers; have you ever used any of these?

03

Would you speak up?

If you saw disinformation in a group chat or online right now, would you say something? What would stop you?



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04

Advantage you have

You're faster than any institution. By the time a government flags a post, you've already seen it and can act first.

05

Finnish model

Finland teaches media literacy as a standalone school subject. Does that translate into real behaviour online?

06

Peer corrections

Studies show corrections from peers are more trusted than corrections from journalists or government.

Verify Before You Share — A 3-Step Toolkit

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Slow down. Cross-check. Then decide what to share.

01 TRACE

the image or video

TOOLS

- Google Reverse Image
- TinEye
- InVID (Chrome)

ASK YOURSELF

Where did this visual first appear online and has it been edited or recycled?

02 CHECK

the claim itself

TOOLS

- EUvsDisinfo
- Google Fact Check
- EDMO / BECID

ASK YOURSELF

Has it already been debunked? Does any reliable source confirm or contradict it?

03 ASSESS

the source & spread

TOOLS

- Wayback Machine
- Google Trends
- Account history

ASK YOURSELF

Who is amplifying this, when did it spike and is the original source still online?

Built for Europe — The Regional Resilience Stack

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Public, EU-funded infrastructure built for the Baltic Sea Region's exact threat picture.

EU FLAGSHIP

EUvsDisinfo

EEAS · East StratCom Task Force

Europe's flagship public database tracking pro-Kremlin disinformation across the EU and its eastern neighbourhood.

540

FIMI incidents detected globally in 2025

Public database · Weekly reviews · Multilingual

BECID

EDMO BALTIC HUB

Estonia · Latvia · Lithuania

EDMO regional hub coordinating fact-checking, disinformation research and media literacy across the Baltic states. Renewed EU funding through 2028.

NORDIS

EDMO NORDIC HUB

Denmark · Sweden · Norway · Finland

Nordic Observatory for Digital Media and Information Disorder cross-Nordic studies on platform manipulation and information integrity.

DSA + Code of Practice

EU REGULATION

Binding across all EU platforms

Digital Services Act integrated the Code of Practice on Disinformation in Feb 2025 platforms must publish transparency reports and respond to flagged content.

WHY BSR → *The 4th EEAS FIMI Report (March 2026) names the Baltic Sea and Arctic regions as anticipated top targets for 2026.*

APPENDIX