CoMMiTTEd

Erasmus+

Project 2020-1-DE01-KA226-HE-005742

CoMMiTTEd

Covid, Migrants and Minorities in Teacher Education: A Fake News Observatory to Promote Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy in Times of Crisis.

E-handbook for teachers and teacher educators

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ISBN: 978-972-789-842-8
DOI: https://doi.org/10.48528/jbw5-0807
URL: https://committedobservatory.eu/en/home/

Graphic Design: Criamagin

February 2023

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CoMMiTTEd is a project co-funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme. The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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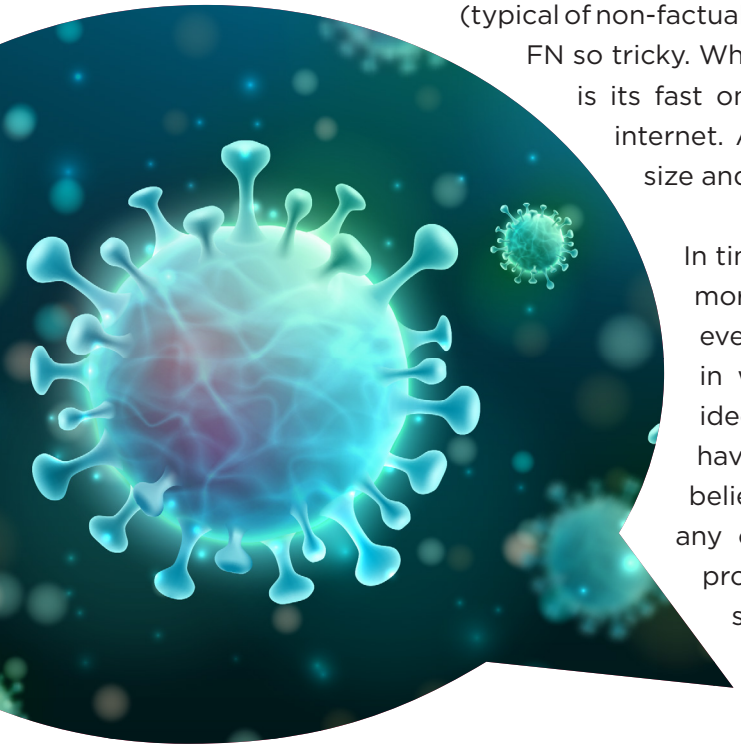
1 INTRODUCTION TO CoMMiTTEd

1.1 SOME CORNERSTONES OF A (PEDAGOGICAL) PROBLEM

Fake news (hereinafter referred to as FN) is neither a recent phenomenon nor one to which people with lower levels of formal education are more prone.

Moreover, FN is almost never about something totally fake, and nor is it necessarily about the news domain. In fact, it is a mixture of facts and fallacies, a cocktail of emotional triggers (typical of non-factual discursive genres) and gaslighting strategies that make FN so tricky. What makes FN such a recurrent phenomenon nowadays is its fast online circulation and its rapid expansion through the internet. As referred to by Ang, Anwar and Jayakumar, "scale, size and speed are core elements of the problem" (2021, p. 9).



In times of crisis, controversy, and pandemics, the public is more permeable and susceptible to believing in FN, and even more so if false facts and narratives are embedded in what they already tend to believe. This means that ideologies, as well as cognitive and emotional aspects, have an influence on whether we believe or do not believe in what we read, hear, and/or see. Indeed, today any controversial statement with a catchy image and a provocative hashtag can be picked up by those who share the emotions behind the post, and can become viral almost immediately (Breeze & Gintsburg, forthcoming).

The COVID-19 pandemic was the trigger for the CoMMiTTEd project, and its name reflects its background: Covid, Migrants and Minorities in Teacher Education: A Fake News Observatory to promote Critical Thinking and Digital Literacy in Times of Crisis (URL: https://committedobservatory.eu/en/home/). The international team of the project had become aware of a troublesome connection circulating in the press (online and printed) and in social media connecting the origins and the spread of the SARS-Covid virus to different ethnic or social groups, usually migrants and minorities. Importantly, this phenomenon was not country-specific (Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal are represented in the team), but somehow fitted in with the more or less racist and biased narratives that were already in circulation in each country. This FN related to, fed into and was fed by some national narratives about minority groups, making them credible to mass audiences, who were trapped at home during confinement periods and were particularly vulnerable to the effects of widespread sensational journalism.

The pandemic brought at least two phases of FN. The first phase is related to the origins of the pandemic (remember the "China virus"?), putting some ethnic groups at the focus of collective anger

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and malicious attacks. The naming of the variants of SARS-CoV-2 (remember the South-African, Brazilian or British variant?) helped to spread the idea that other people were more prone to or involved in the spread of the virus. Scapegoating, finding the culprits, became almost as important as healing the victims and finding a cure. The second phase involved potential therapies (from treatments with hydroxychloroquine to the ingestion of bleach and other treatments that are dangerous, to say the least). And when finally a possibility of a cure started to be glimpsed (with vaccines), new FN was created and circulated about its possible creators, possible agendas, and possible effects.

FN multiplied about vaccines: for those who did not believe in the vaccines' healing power, their creators belonged to evil groups within an international cabal that wanted to conquer the world and cause permanent damage to the majority of the world's population (Breeze, 2021); for those who did believe in the vaccines, the idea that some ethnic and religious groups were more sceptical about the vaccine and refused to have it meant that they were putting the rest of the population in danger. Additionally, among the latter group, i.e., the keen supporters of vaccination, numerous posts were circulating claiming that the authorities were vaccinating migrants and members of religious and ethnic minorities first, and thereby discriminating against the local populations (Breeze & Gintsburg, forthcoming).

1.2 WHAT IS COMMITTED ABOUT?

In the context of multiplying sources of supposed information in the **post-truth** era and citizen journalism that needs nothing more than an unverified account on a social network, did you ever have any doubts about your competences to deal with this phenomenon?

Do you think you have the knowledge and abilities to identify FN? Have you ever fallen for a **conspiracy theory?** Do you ever think about your skills to make others aware of FN?

Do you think FN should be discussed at school, both in specific subjects and across the curriculum? Are you concerned with your skills regarding how to introduce FN about divisive and problematic issues into your lessons?

CoMMiTTEd has developed resources to help teachers with these professional needs. This involved delving into the world of FN, working intensively on case studies from across Europe, developing applied research with students and teachers in the four partner countries (Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and Portugal), and developing an understanding of the language being used to analyse FN and other related phenomena (for example, have you heard about **astroturfing** or **gaslighting** before?).

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The CoMMiTTEd project has the explicit aim of countering the blaming of migrants and minorities for social, educational, economic and health problems.

The goal is to give (student) teachers tools to stop or limit the spread of FN and hate speech. These hate discourses have been very prominent, especially with the wider use of social media and social networks, and have been multiplied through multimedia resources. The tools for teachers are meant to enhance critical thinking and to build (student) teachers' digital, media, and news literacy skills (among others; see Tables 1 and 2), which are necessary to critically read, interpret and engage with (multimodal) texts in analogue and digital environments.

With the resources created by the CoMMiTTEd project, we want to enhance (student) teachers' critical thinking by helping them acquire critical (multimodal) discourse analysis skills, as well as by strengthening their digital teaching competences, thus leading to professional development. In order to achieve this goal, the multidisciplinary CoMMiTTEd team has developed three resources:

- **The CoMMiTTEd Observatory of Fake News** (details in section 3), an online database with examples of pieces of disinformation relating migrants and minorities to the Covid-19 pandemic. These examples have been analysed and deconstructed in order to create pedagogical resources for teachers to use for the development of critical thinking and (multimodal) discourse analysis skills.

- **Two online teacher education e-modules** (details in section 4), accompanied by an **introductory resource on the FN phenomenon,** which are intended for integration into diverse educational settings, either for teachers to implement with their students, or for teacher educators to implement in (initial, advance or continuous) teacher education. The first module, "Developing intercultural competence through the analysis of Fake News on migrants and minorities", focuses on the skills for interpreting and relating to Otherness. The second module, "From detecting to using Fake News as pedagogical tools in educational settings", explores the pedagogical potential of FN and addresses the development of intercultural competence as a key competence in dealing with Othering.

- This **pedagogical e-handbook,** which compiles information and ideas on how to use the resources previously named, both at school and in teacher education programmes, also includes a glossary of essential key terms.

With these resources, the CoMMiTTEd project promotes a more conscious handling of information, a more responsible use of digital technologies and what they entail, and also critical thinking skills, which we understand as central to lifelong learning.

1 INTRODUCTION TO CoMMiTTEd

Despite the obvious need to address misinformation and FN in education, there are still very few resources specifically designed for pedagogical purposes and for teacher education (e.g. Digital learning lab[1], Klicksafe[2]). Theoretically, some publications are already addressing issues such as "education in the age of misinformation" (Parker, forthcoming) and reflecting on how to transform disinformation into a pedagogical resource (Melo-Pfeifer & Dedecek Gertz, 2022). The CoMMiTTEd team does not claim that these resources provide answers to all the potential problems associated with the creation, circulation and consumption of FN, or that they give a single answer to the question of how to address FN in a school context.

The main objective of CoMMiTTEd is the development of critical reading and interpretation skills when dealing with FN related to minorities and migrants, and the promotion of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997).

By intercultural competence, we mean the set of attitudes, knowledge and skills that an individual needs to take part in encounters between individuals who identify themselves or are identified as belonging to different groups. The resources produced in the framework of the CoMMiTTEd project focus on the ability to critically question, on the basis of specific discursive and multimodal decoding strategies, what is commonly referred to as FN. These interpreting and relating skills can then be transposed to educational contexts in which teachers are called on to act in order to create a fairer, more equal society, and to combat phenomena such as hate speech.

[1]https://digitallearninglab.de/
[2]https://www.klicksafe.de/desinformation-und-meinung

1 INTRODUCTION TO CoMMiTTEd

1.3 WHAT IS THIS E-HANDBOOK ABOUT?

This pedagogical e-handbook, while not covering all the issues related to the development of teacher competences to cope with FN, was designed as a hands-on resource for teachers (pre-service or in-service) and teacher educators about possible ways of integrating the discussion about FN into their teaching. It presents theoretical and praxis-oriented principles related to critical (multimodal) discourse analysis and its implementation in classroom and teacher education itineraries.

This pedagogical e-handbook includes:

- a presentation of the project, its theoretical assumptions, and of the empirical material created, namely on how to identify FN in the press and social digital media, and on to how to transform it into pedagogical resources;
- guidelines about how to use (and possibly feed) the pedagogic Observatory of Fake News, namely, how it might be used in the classroom and in teacher education activities;
- tips and suggestions for using the pedagogic Observatory of Fake News in subjects across the curriculum, namely in secondary education;
- guidelines to use the two e-modules produced ("Developing intercultural competence" and "Fake news as pedagogical tools"), both as independent and institutional users, in pre- and in-service teacher programmes;
- a glossary with key terms defining the project and its outcomes, which were considered of paramount importance for teachers and teacher educators.

2 FAKE NEWS IN EDUCATION, FAKE NEWS FOR EDUCATION

2.1 WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

Manipulating and lying are not new phenomena in communication in the public sphere. A long time before everyone became acquainted with the term "fake news", social analysts like Walter Lippmann, in the 1920s, and Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, writing together in the 1980s, talked about how the press worked within a logic of "manufacturing consent". They had different opinions though. For Lippmann, manufacturing consent was a legitimate goal of journalism. He thought that people were prone to being irrational and thus journalism had the duty to manage what he called "public opinion". Although this position reveals that he viewed his fellow U.S. citizens as not particularly clever, his main concern was a legitimate one: to maintain the functioning of democracy. Though Lippmann was aware of the problem of stereotyping groups of people, his position about "public opinion" assumed that people were incapable of proper critical thinking – and journalism should tell them what to think.

Later on, Herman and Chomsky thought differently. Analysing the media landscape in the U.S. from a critical perspective, Herman and Chomsky pointed out that, in the 1980s, journalism worked in favour of pushing a positive view of government policies. They claimed that mass media denied the public access to critical perspectives, thereby manufacturing consent in favour of the government's positions and hegemonic views from wealthy social strata. This was the core idea of the "propaganda model" of mass media communication. In other words, journalism's duty of maintaining a functioning democracy was impossible, since what was being published and broadcast were only one-sided positions. Nowadays, the internet has facilitated the circulation of critical positions towards established perspectives, but that may happen both along the lines of what Herman and Chomsky recommended (the circulation of critical opinions) as well as in a disruptive manner that contributes neither to maintaining nor to improving democracy.

Nowadays we consider what these authors were talking about under the heading of "information disorders". We can define these as activities and processes related to creating, sharing and consuming information which is skewed, biased or outright false. This can assume different formats. When Herman and Chomsky were writing, for instance, one concern was "propaganda" in mass media, such as print journalism, FM/AM radio, and traditional TV channels. Currently, a major concern is FN circulating on social media platforms, like Twitter, Facebook, or others. Writing in 2017, Claire Wardle and Hossein Derakhshan suggest that we use broader, abstract, categories to describe these two examples. By using abstract concepts based on concrete examples, we can capture the complexity of the phenomenon of "information disorders" – which also makes it easier to identify them in their different formats. Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) propose that there are three categories of "information disorder". They write[3]:

- **Misinformation** is when false information is shared, but no harm is meant;
- **Disinformation** is when false information is knowingly shared to cause harm;
- **Malinformation** is when genuine information is shared to cause harm, often by moving information designed to stay private into the public sphere.

[3] See page 5 of Wardle and Derakhshan's report "Information Disorder: Towards an Interdisciplinary Framework for Research and Policy-Making", published by the Council of Europe in 2017. Available at https://rm.coe.int/information-disorder-toward-an-interdisciplinary-framework-forresearc/168076277c

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An example of misinformation may occur when breaking news about an extraordinary event: sometimes, while the causes and consequences of the event are still unclear or developing, journalists might broadcast information that turns out to be inaccurate as the situation evolves. An example of disinformation is when a public figure tweets that "migrants cause COVID" and tries to illustrate that with a manipulated graph that shows false statistics that would support their claim. The Observatory of Fake News created in the scope of CoMMiTTEd has plenty of concrete examples like this. Finally, an example of malinformation can be seen in the case of the hacking and leaking of an actual email exchange among climate scientists. The hackers, who were also deniers of human-caused climate change, decontextualised the e-mails and made them public to try to frame climate research as a fraud.

Other researchers have called false information presented as news "media manipulation" (e.g. Alice Marwick and Rebecca Lewis in 2017) or "information warfare" (e.g. Irina Khaldarova and Mervi Pantti in 2016). In recent years, there has been a tendency to use the term FN for all these categories. This makes it easier to understand better the subject of discussion (which is why we decided to use this term in our e-handbook). However, the simplicity and straightforwardness of this term has its downside as well, as it can also make the phenomenon seem less complex than it actually is. First and foremost, this is because FN is generally associated with fabricated, completely false information but not with information that might be factually accurate. In reality, however, this is not always the case - **some FN might be based on accurate facts that were exaggerated or presented in a one-sided manner** (like "migrants are all unvaccinated"), some are taken out of context, and some are misunderstood (you might want to read our "The Nature of Fake News" resource). Of course, there are also claims that are completely false (like "microchips are being installed in people through vaccines"). Another critique from media researchers is that disruptive public figures have appropriated the term to fuel hate discourses and that it is a contradiction in terms: if something is considered fake, it cannot be associated with "news". For the sake of easier communication, here, when we talk about FN, we are talking about media content that can assume any of the three aspects mentioned before (mis-, dis- or malinformation). Furthermore, we are talking about what is published not only on social media platforms but also in text format. Therefore, we are considering all kinds of sources (from established journalistic sources to outright untrustworthy websites) and all kinds of formats (from text only to videos). We have seen that the concern about information disorders is not new. In fact, conspiracy theories and campaigns to smear reputations and provoke dissent are probably as old as the history of humankind. That is why perhaps the most interesting aspect for us as researchers and educators, when it comes to what is circulating online today, is not the formats and content of FN, but the reasons behind it. Understanding who creates FN can help us understand the reasons why it is created. Back in the 1980s, Herman and Chomsky pointed to the mass media as actors who were manipulating

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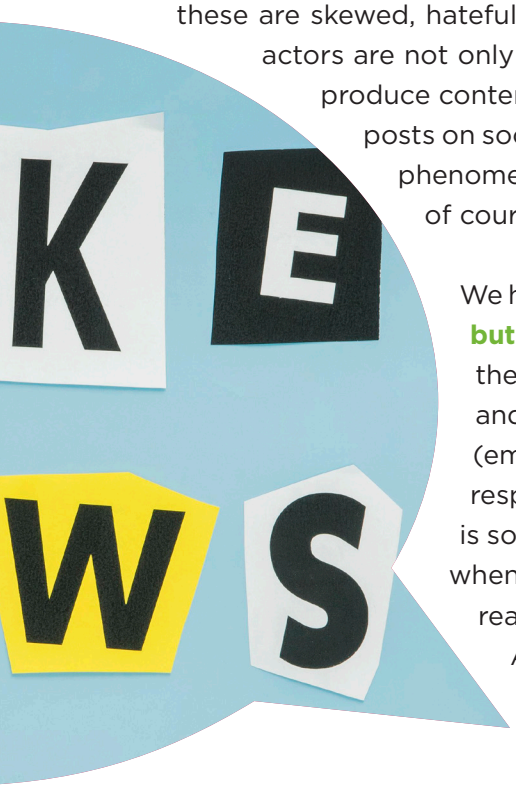
public discourse towards consenting to U.S. government policies. Following the description of Wardle and Derakhshan (2017), **the traditional journalism that prevails in the mass media is not free from information disorders.** In that sense, the concerns of Herman and Chomsky still make sense. However, in 2017, media researchers Alice Marwick and Rebecca Lewis suggested that we redirect the spotlight away from the traditional press to focus on the new actors who have gained power online – and who are not so easily identifiable. Marwick and Lewis (2017) highlight the role of political movements popularly named "alternative right" or "alt-right". They claim that these actors are also manipulating the media. They do so by sharing content that is clearly fabricated but packaged in a such way as to look like proper news: it might have similar design features to what is found on a traditional news site and some parts of the content are likely to be based on facts – but the arguments they draw from these are skewed, hateful or simply fake. According to Marwick and Lewis (2017), among these actors are not only alt-right ideologues, like Richard Spencer and Milo Yiannopolous, who produce content that fuels information disorders, but also ordinary citizens who share posts on social media containing fake news or conspiracy theories, for instance. This phenomenon has been mostly identified in actors on the political right wing, but of course, it might be reproduced across the political spectrum.



We have seen that **information disorders like FN are not a new phenomenon, but the increased access to digital media has fueled them.** Connected with the speedy pace of the internet, FN appeals to extreme feelings, like hatred and indignation, thereby creating an environment likely to activate quick (emotional) responses – which are not always well thought through. These responses might make us more willing to share FN. Even if we think that this is something only alt-right actors would do, we are all prone to react quickly when we have strong feelings. This is even more likely to happen when a reaction can be as quick as sharing or liking something on social media. An antidote to that is (self-)reflection. When a post on Twitter triggers extreme emotions, for example, before doing anything, we should check the sources of that post, and read the content thoroughly and critically, accounting for how the text or the image depicts groups who are systematically disadvantaged, like specific ethnic or religious groups, or migrants. If anything sounds hateful or simply odd, at best another source should be checked. These concrete steps are rather easy to follow, but they require some level of self-reflection, since we must first be able to recognise that the content we are seeing is triggering extreme feelings. Due to their development stage, young people might be particularly vulnerable and have difficulties in controlling these feelings. Here is where **schools and teachers can contribute to tackling the problem of information disorders.** Accounting both for the characteristics that help us identify FN and its emotional component, in this e-handbook, we provide education professionals with ideas about how to embed FN-related activities as pedagogical tools.

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2.2 HOW CAN WE ADDRESS FAKE NEWS IN EDUCATION?

As we have seen, FN is not a new phenomenon, but it is pervasive, insidious, and difficult to grasp. If we particularly think of FN relating the Covid-pandemic to migrants and minorities (and we could generalise it to other FN), it is also ideologically and politically motivated, deliberately casting doubt and suspicion on those groups. It consequently turns out to be a complex pedagogical object that can be looked at from different perspectives. This means that **there is not one better way to address FN pedagogically, and there is not just one method or approach to do this.** However, it is generally agreed that teachers must develop the competences to deal with FN and that they have to make sure students understand why a piece of news might be fake to avoid "backfiring" effects.

Dealing with FN about migrants and minorities as a pedagogical object and/or as a resource implies reflecting about what kind of society schools and education want to contribute to. Figure 1 presents some principles and values that the pedagogical use of FN about minorities and migrants can serve and develop.

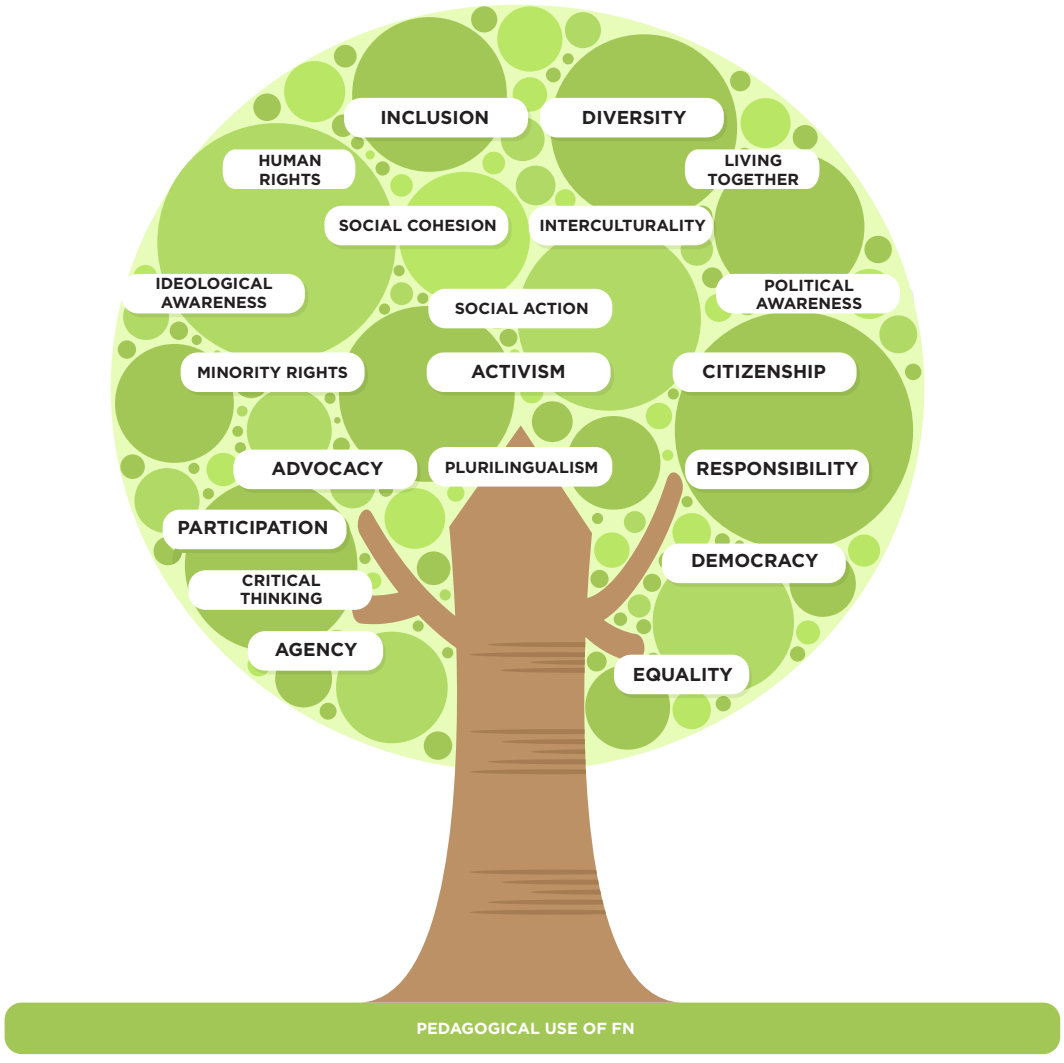

Figure 1. Promoting values and principles through the pedagogical use of FN.

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In order to identify FN and to be able to read the media and social media critically, several literacies (sometimes also named under the heading of competences and skills) are needed, most of which are already integrated into curricula in Europe and around the world.

Several literacies are needed to facilitate the understanding of FN, because of its complexity and **multimodality**, and because of the variety of themes it can be about.

Table 1 lists some of those referred to in the literature, and gives suggestions for further readings. The reader will see that some definitions partially overlap (digital literacy, information literacy, media literacy, and news literacy, for example). All of them could be anticipated by the adjective 'critical' (and basic!) because of the way they are called upon to deal with social problems such as lack of equity, social justice and participation. Teachers from several school subjects addressing FN in their classes or studying the mechanisms of production, circulation and consumption of FN might be interested in addressing some of the issues included in the description.

Literacies	Description	For example...
Algorithm literacy	Understanding that online tools, apps, platforms and services use algorithms to find patterns and connections in the data, which might be used for human-machine interactions. It requires users to be able to critically evaluate algorithmic decision-making and apply coping behaviours. It leads students to develop awareness of how algorithms create and feed "resonance chambers" and "bubbles", basically based on emotional answers (likes, follow, etc).	Dogruel et al. (2021a) Dogruel (2021b)
Artificial intelligence literacy	Having competences in both the human and technological dimensions of artificial intelligence, at a level appropriate for the individual (i.e. according to their age and interests). The technological dimension of AI comprises how it works (the techniques and the technologies) and the human dimension refers to what its impact is on people (on human cognition, privacy, agency and so on).	Holmes et al. (2019) Holmes et al. (2022)
Data literacy	A specific skill set and knowledge base, which empowers individuals to transform data into information and into actionable knowledge by enabling them to access, interpret, critically assess, manage, and ethically use data.	Koltay (2017)

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Literacies	Description	For example...
Digital literacy	Digital literacy is the ability to use technologies to find, evaluate, create and communicate information. According to the European Commission (2019), who uses the term "digital competence", it involves the confident, critical and responsible use of, and engagement with, digital technologies for learning, at work, and for participation in society. It includes information and data literacy, communication and collaboration, media literacy, digital content creation (including programming), safety (including digital well-being and competences related to cybersecurity), intellectual property related questions, problem solving and critical thinking. Building on the research tradition of New Literacy Studies as well as on the concept of "multiliteracies" (Cope & Kalantzys, 1996; 2009), the contemporary understanding of digital literacy subscribes to a more user-based approach introducing the figure of the "prosumer" rather than sticking to the figure of the literacy "consumer", thus moving away from the straightforward consumption of a literacy product (see Belshaw, 2016).	Belshaw (2016) Cope & Kalantzis (2009) European Commission (2019) New London Group (1996)
Discursive competence	This concept goes beyond the ability to use language(s), also including the competence to separate facts from fiction, to separate possibility from implausibility, and to recognise polysemy and stylistic functions of language, rhetorical strategies, and multiple voices in the discourse. In terms of dealing with FN, it refers to the ability to analyse it as a discourse and dismantle FN through constructing valid counter discourses.	Musolff, Breeze, Kondo, & Vilar-Lluch (2022) Wodak (2021)
Information literacy	This concept refers to a set of abilities requiring individuals to recognise when and why they need (more) information and develop the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the information needed. It involves making informed choices, developing research skills, learning to organise information and evaluating the relevance and accuracy of search results (critical thinking).	European Commission (2019)

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Literacies	Description	For example...
Literacy	Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, express, create and interpret concepts, feelings, facts and opinions in both oral and written forms, using visual, sound/audio and digital materials across disciplines and contexts. It implies the ability to communicate and connect effectively with others, in an appropriate and creative way.	European Commission (2019)
Media literacy	Media literacy equips people with the necessary skills to consume, scrutinise and produce a variety of (digital) media content. It helps answer questions related to who produced the content, who made it available, and how it is consumed.	Bozdağ, Neag & Leurs (2022) European Commission (2022a and 2022b) Sádaba & Salaverría (2023) Trültzsch-Wijnen (2020)
News literacy	"The ability to use critical thinking skills to judge the reliability and credibility of news reports from all media: print, TV, radio or the web" (Center for News Literacy, 2016; Tully, 2021). News literacy implies recognising "news" as a discursive ensemble, and actively engaging with sources and facts.	Center for News Literacy (2016) Schwarzenegger & Wagner (2018) Tully (2021)
Visual literacy	The ability to read images (both static and in movement) and to spot inconsistencies and manipulation. It includes the ability to analyse the multimodal composition and the framing of a particular image, the emotions it intends to produce, and the connection to the contexts where it is put into circulation. It thus includes aspects related to the production and the publication of images, because the same image can be read very differently according to the interactions it establishes with a certain visual (and ideological) environment.	Kress & Van Leeuwen (2021)

Table 1. Countering FN through the development of multiple literacies and competences.

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Apart from these literacies, and specifically related to the field of CoMMiTTEd, two competences are relevant to prevent us from falling for FN: intercultural competence and plurilingual competence (Table 2). These two competences are important because they are closely related to the perception of the Other, and their development helps us to deconstruct the mechanisms of **othering**, i.e., the discursive and multimodal strategies and processes involved in constructing the image of an individual or group as substantially different from the "majority". This is commonly done through the construction of dichotomies such as "them" and "us".

Competence	Definition	Do you want to know more?
Intercultural competence	The ability to participate in cross-cultural encounters, to be able to read and critically interpret facts, texts, and multimodal artefacts, created and circulating in other contexts. It requires the ability to recognise that all perspectives, even your own, are developed in particular contexts of socialisation. It also encompasses the ability to put oneself in the other person's shoes, to decentre and change perspectives, and the willingness to understand multiple viewpoints. It encompasses a cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimension. This is a very important competence related to FN, in two senses: • one might need to dismantle the mechanisms of manipulation involved in the construction of the image of the Other; • one might be called upon to take part in interaction with people not sharing the same worldviews and experiences, and thus having different perspectives on the "facts" (fake or not).	Byram (1997)
Plurilingual competence	The ability to read, interpret, produce and exchange information in different languages. When related to FN, the plurilingual competence allows for crisscrossing information about the same "facts" in different linguistic news ecosystems. The development of plurilingual competence is thus closely related to the ability to develop a more complex and diverse image of the Other and of the world, and contributes to the critical development of the literacies listed in table 1.	Piccardo et al. (2022)

Table 2. Countering FN through the development of intercultural and plurilingual competence.

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The list of literacies and competences included in Tables 1 and 2 is not exhaustive of all literacies and competences discussed in the literature. However, they are the ones that seem most relevant in school contexts, being part of several curricula in European terms (and beyond). Considering the rapid evolution of digital media and the way in which information (also FN) is produced, circulated and consumed, we may in the future see the list of competences further extended to meet new demands and challenges.

Alongside the literacies and competences to be addressed and developed, two interconnected pedagogical principles might be considered:

- **Student-centred strategies:** confronting students with their own practices, making them aware that being adept at using different tools and gadgets does not make them automatically literate in and critical about their use: a reflection on textual, discursive and multimodal traps they have fallen into might be a way forward to acknowledge one's own lack of immunity to FN. Student-centred strategies might also imply getting them to reflect about their own experiences, with FN and with othering processes: such a reflection might improve students' decentering skills and promote empathy and more positive emotional responses to Otherness.

- **Discovery strategies:** making students acquire knowledge and develop know-how needed to debunk and interpret FN; these might lead to the development of knowledge of different types (historical, geographical, scientific, mathematical) and to the development of interpreting and relating skills, going beyond the mere interpretation of texts and written documents and embracing a pedagogy of multiliteracies (see Digital Literacy).

These pedagogical principles to address FN at school can also be used in pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes. In fact, they guided the conceptualisation of the resources and pedagogical activities included in the Observatory of Fake News (section 3) and in the interactive teacher education e-modules (section 4).

3 THE OBSERVATORY OF FAKE NEWS

3.1 ORGANISATION

The Observatory of Fake News offers a database made up of twenty FN items that link migrants (people from MENA (Middle East and North Africa) and Sub-Saharan Africans, Asians, and South Americans), as well as ethnic and religious minorities (most prominently Jews and Muslims) with the COVID pandemic in four European countries - Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. In each of them, researchers from the universities of Aveiro, Hamburg, Navarra, and Tilburg selected five examples which represent features of the national anti-migration and anti-minority discourse typical for these geographical areas (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Visualisation of the organisation of the observatory.

As expected, these narratives differ from one country to another based on national and geopolitical particularities and regional ethnographic presuppositions and ideologies. In Germany, for instance, the migratory discourse is linked to the 'Multikulti' concept, while in Spain and Portugal, the image of the 'pateras', or boats transporting migrants across the Strait of Gibraltar, appears. However, due to the global circulation of similar global narratives and shared challenges (COVID-19), there is a shared tendency to blame these groups (migrants and minorities) for the social and economic problems caused by the pandemic, blaming them even for causing the pandemic and presenting them as a group of 'foreign'/'different' people. These phenomena of scapegoating the more vulnerable people and of stigmatising them as "others" (othering phenomenon) have repeatedly occurred throughout history and, in particular, in times of crisis (such as the COVID pandemic), leading to considerable consequences in public discourse and social relations.

3 THE OBSERVATORY OF FAKE NEWS

The Observatory of Fake News aims to offer teacher educators and future teachers a ready-to-use kit of real examples through which they can raise their students' awareness of the strategies (rhetorical and multimodal) used to target and present these groups in the media and to illustrate how false narratives are created. The treatment of this FN is accompanied by "Suggestions for pedagogical use" (available at https://committedobservatory.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Pedagogical-use-EN.pdf) and a **glossary** of concepts for pedagogical use (Figure 3).

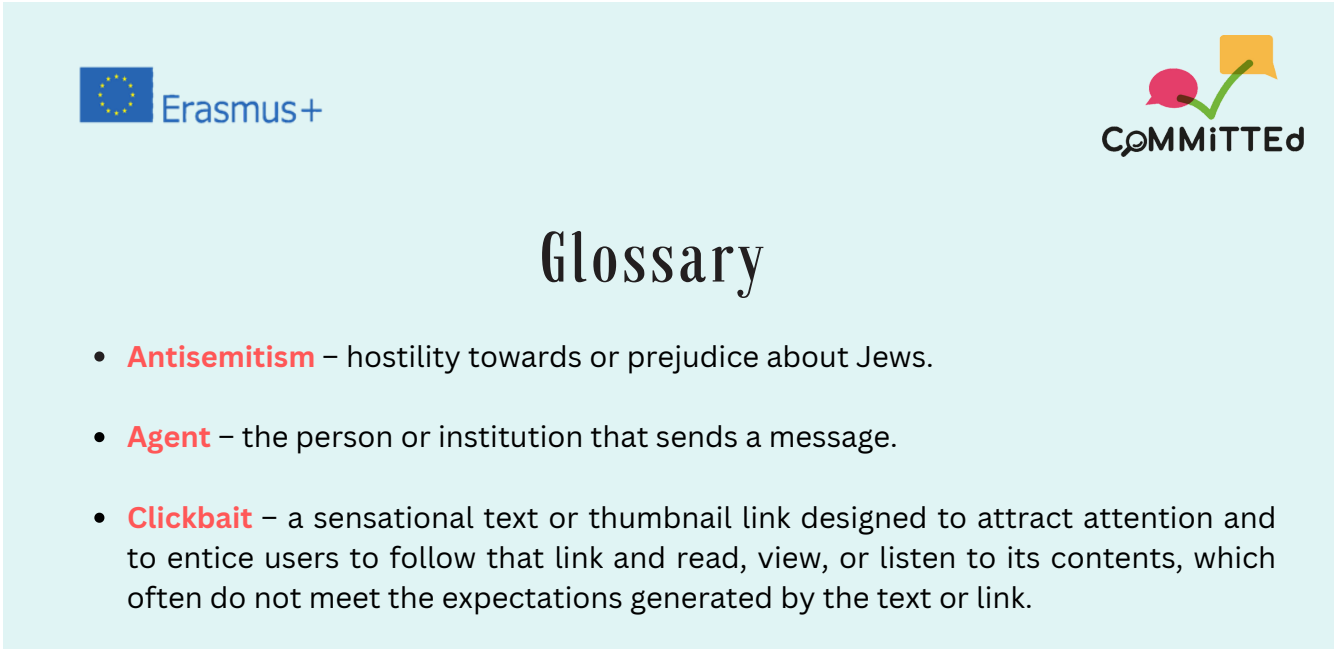

Figure 3. Visualisation of the glossary.

The majority of disinformation emerges in "clandestine" underground channels, such as blogs, social media platforms and amateur media websites, which are often anonymous and therefore difficult to identify and debunk. During the pandemic, the internet has developed into an ideal place for creating and spreading false news, which has proliferated in recent years.

Migrants and migration routinely represent an easy target for those interested in spreading confusion, fear and anger, intending to reinforce old prejudices and stir up social divisions. It is a group that can easily be associated with issues with a more symbolic and personal meaning, such as religion and identity, but also with more sensitive social issues, such as work, health, and social security ("asylum seekers who receive preference in vaccination"; "immigrants who abuse social welfare systems or have better access to housing and social benefits than natives"). These narratives increased when unemployment and the economic impacts of the pandemic became a major concern and the readers' trust declined in the official sources of authority (such as public institutions and the news media). Furthermore, the migration related discourse seems to benefit from the voicelessness and exclusion

3 THE OBSERVATORY OF FAKE NEWS

of its target group/subjects, who tend to be underrepresented in the media and political debates and are often socioeconomically marginalised.

Our Observatory aims to provide teacher trainers and (student) teachers with strategies to recognise and differentiate between the different types of information disorder ("disinformation", "misinformation" and "malinformation") and develop the habit of consulting more reliable sources.

The different case studies that are included in the Observatory usually present the following structure: First, the FN in question is contextualised and briefly described. If it is an audio or a video, a transcription of the information presented is offered. Secondly, the source of the message is examined, and analytical skills are brought to bear on the audience to which the message is directed, the target group which is being criticised and the possible underlying interests or motives for which the information is created or retransmitted.

Then, the following points are investigated, which vary between the different FN items:

- the content being broadcast (e.g., "migrants get ahead of the vaccination queue");
- the chosen format and medium (e.g., voice note, text; WhatsApp, TikTok video; Twitter, Instagram post, attempts at imitating the news genre);
- possible indicators of fake news (grammar or spelling errors, omission of official sources, generalisations, unjustified accusations, sensationalist speech, image manipulation or out-of-context images);
- the type of false news or information disorder (misinformation, disinformation, malinformation);
- the reaction and impact (comments, likes, number of views, reposts) by the users;
- use of visual effects (positioning and choice of graphics, font, headlines).

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3.2 CONTENT

The case studies we selected for this Observatory offer the reader an insight into different types of information disorder which relate migrants and minorities to the COVID pandemic. In addition, they show the complexity of this phenomenon and outline grey areas that exist between outright false content and fact-based news coverage. For instance, this is the case when accurate figures or facts are used out of context, headlines and images have no connection to the article's content, or unverifiable claims are cited. To designate and study these forms of fake news, the terms "misinformation", "disinformation" and "malinformation" are used (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). It is important that the students become aware that stories and articles based on some evidence or facts can still cause harm to society or instigate hostility towards a particular group, for example, through exaggeration, sensationalism, or sharing of sensitive information. The case studies from the Observatory offer a valuable tool to recognise **bias**, selective reporting, and appeals to emotion. They can be useful to understand how to analyse and evaluate claims for their legitimacy and assess the trustworthiness of sources.

Table 3 presents the titles of the different case studies in the Observatory. These titles are translated into English; however, they are written in the language of the country they belong to, except for five case studies which were translated into English.

Dutch case studies 	• Asian offended by distasteful Corona song with Radio • The corona virus is a salafist conspiracy • Spot the difference 1940- 2020 • Bunkers in Zeeland plastered with Jewish stars with the word COVID • PvV leader Geert Wilders: Henk and Ingrid versus Mohammed and Fatima.
German case studies 	• A controversy in Berlin • Border control instead of vaccination control • Corona numbers among migrants • Special payment (favouring, injustice) even for rejected asylum seekers • Multikulti vs. Coronavirus

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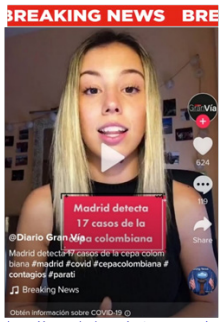
Spanish case studies 	• COVID-19 vaccination priority groups • Spain opens its borders to a new tourism group • "Colombian variant" of COVID-19 • Infected Moroccans in Cartagena, staying at Hostal Manolo • Jews behind the COVID-19 vaccines
Portuguese case studies 	• Native Australians resist vaccination against COVID-19 • Zmar Eco Resort - A "nazified" accommodation complex • The problem of refugees - which M&M are you going to eat? • Population replacement with masks against COVID-19 • COVID-19 variants origin
English translation of some case studies 	• Migrants jump the queue for vaccination in Spain? • Police borders, not vaccination status! • "The problem of refugees" - which M&M are you going to eat? • Infected Moroccans in Cartagena, staying at Hostal Manolo • Party For Freedom leader Geert Wilders: Henk and Ingrid against Mohammed and Fatima

Table 3. FN included in the Observatory.

In the examples included in the Observatory, migrants and minorities are associated with certain countries of origin (China, Colombia, Morocco, etc.) and religions (Jews, Muslims), or associated with specific migrant status (refugees, asylum seekers), or through the use of stereotyped onomastics as identifiers ("Mohammed and Fatima") (see Breeze, Gintsburg, & Baynham, 2022). Such designations are amalgams (they are generally in the plural form), often combined with negatively-connoted adjectives ("rejected asylum seekers", "infected Moroccans") or framed as problems (the "problem of refugees").

Moreover, they are presented as a possible danger that threatens the health, safety, security and economic wellbeing of our citizens, which is why they are blamed (scapegoated) for different issues:

- taking advantage of state aid or healthcare programmes;
- saturating the public health system;
- being more prone to believing in false news related to COVID, and presenting a low vaccination rate;
- neglecting social distancing measures;
- being carriers of the virus, as an invasive force that arrives in Europe illegally without further control, and as criminals.

Migrants are often associated with poor hygiene and represented as a violent homogeneous group. **This has led to a narrative that emphasises border control, regulation of financial support and a feeling of distrust towards newcomers.**

3.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

Due to the advances in technology and globalisation, media literacy education and training against disinformation (fake news, manipulation of information) are becoming essential in teacher training courses and in education in and beyond school. It is important to differentiate digital literacy skills from computer and IT skills (even if learning to use technology is an important life skill). However, it also requires critical thinking, discourse skills and social engagement to navigate and interact safely in the different multimodal online environments.

Digital literacy education and training against disinformation are becoming essential in teacher training courses and in education.

According to the OECD, there is a clear need to strengthen the role of education and training in tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy in the EU. The European Commission has launched various digital education policy initiatives (such as the Digital Education Action Plan, (2021-2027) to create 'A Europe fit for the Digital Age'. In line with this, many countries (such as the UK, Ireland, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Portugal and Finland) started to include digital literacy education in their school curricula, and training programmes and an increasing number of lessons and workshops are given on online responsibilities, risks (such as cyberbullying, advertising strategies, FN), acceptable behaviours and healthy online habits.

3.3.1 Using the Observatory in specific subjects and across the curriculum

At this point, we can envisage three scenarios in which the CoMMiTTEd resources can be used, which can be combined to achieve more sustainable results:

- Special school subjects designed to enhance media literacy;
- Across the curriculum, creating spaces in already existing school subjects;
- In extra-curricular activities.

Table 4 shows several ways in which the different case studies from the Observatory can be used in different school subjects, thus focusing on addressing FN across the curriculum. For more information, please consult the "Suggestions for pedagogical use" (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Visualisation of the Suggestions for pedagogical use.

3 THE OBSERVATORY OF FAKE NEWS

L1 language class	• select the FN and identify and analyse linguistic, rhetorical and multimodal strategies used in 'othering' migrants and refugees. • treat FN as a particular textual genre that needs to be properly 'read' and 'interpreted', requiring training in reading strategies. • identify and analyse lexical choices (in terms of adjectives, verbs and nouns) and particular grammatical constructions (consecutive sentences, or breaks in cohesion, for example) • make students aware of changes in journalistic genres after the pandemic, since social media are now moving towards hybrid genres of videos, audio, and visual stories, where the limits between the public and the private are diluted. • show the labelling power of the media in constructing group "identities"/ "representations". Analyse discursive representation of migrants, minorities and refugees in different European media. • help students understand the difference between a daily newspaper and a supermarket tabloid, an advertisement or a logo, a billboard or a webpage, a video game, or a novel. What makes one website legitimate and another a hoax, or how do advertisers package products to entice us to buy? Use real, local examples to help students differentiate between these text genres.
Foreign language class	• compare Fake News on the same theme in different languages, promote reasoning skills across languages and cultures, and intercomprehension skills. • use the analysis provided to write counter-narratives on the FN websites or social media accounts where the FN appeared.
Philosophy / Ethics	• discuss philosophical concepts of "true"/"false" and "fact"/ "opinions" with the examples in the observatory. • discuss the strategies used to depersonalise the target groups (minorities, migrants) (by not showing their faces; presenting them as a homogenous group).
History	• identify similar moments in history when underrepresented and more vulnerable groups (of different ethnicities, nationalities, religions, status, etc.) were scapegoated and related to disinformation.
Arts	• use theatre (role playing) to make students adopt a role they usually do not identify with, thus promoting the development of decentring skills. • analyse the relationship between the messages transmitted and sound effects, camera angles (close-ups), lightning, symbolism, imagery and flashbacks. You can work with key scenes from movies, commercials, or songs. Make the students perceive the effect scary music can play in a thriller by turning off the sound or listening to the soundtrack. Write down all the words that are spoken. Who says them? What kind of music is used? Another option is to explain to them the different camera positions and get them to analyse them in some scenes from a movie. • analyse visuals in advertisements (use of colours, lines, shapes and composition to convey particular ideas and emotions). How are these ideas and emotions related to the products being marketed? Are the connections logical and legitimate?

Maths	• address issues of probability, percentage, proportion and exponentiality used to manipulate the sense of quantifiers in FN. • examine fake news presenting migrants as a catalyst of infections or diseases and try to deconstruct the idea of migrants as a threat to health.
Politics	• address the social, political and economic contexts in which FN most commonly emerge and evolve; compare one specific context to another one using the different materials in the Observatory. • encourage students to find FN around other themes related to their expertise (climate change, war, manipulation of election results, etc.) and write an analysis similar to that provided in the Observatory.

Table 4. Suggestions for using the Observatory of Fake News in different school subjects.

Next, you can find a list of useful resources for teachers and educators on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy:

- **Digital education: free self-reflection tools**
- **Guidelines for teachers and educators on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy through education and training**
- **Final report of the Commission expert group on tackling disinformation and promoting digital literacy through education and training**
- **A Global Framework of Reference on Digital Literacy Skills**

3.3.2 Using the Observatory in teacher education programmes

Presented next are some assignments for reflective inquiry, which are of two types: some are for the university training of teachers and others for their future students at school. Most of these exercises can be done both online (at home) or in class during seminars/lectures or classroom lessons.

The following tasks are divided into three blocks, and it is recommended to perform at least one task per block.

BLOCK 1: Observing and creating your own FN observatory/ Linking FN with everyday experiences.

BLOCK 2: Reflective and critical reading assignments.

BLOCK 3: Small research studies/creative projects.

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BLOCK 1: CREATION OF OWN FAKE NEWS OBSERVATORY.

Learning objectives: Activate students' receptive skills by making them create their FN ethnography and by getting them to think about methodological strategies to develop media-literacy skills.

Student teachers	School students
• Develop a personal FN ethnography for a set number of days (the number of days depends on the level); you will write down the news you will be reading. Choose those pieces that drew your attention and explain why this was the case. Take screenshots and document your reaction. Analyse your reaction using the concepts and ideas you learned through the Observatory. • Choose one example from your FN observatory and analyse it according to the deconstructive criteria you consider necessary (such as authorship, format, audience, content, and purpose). Justify your analysis. • What strategies would you implement to enable your students to identify and analyse FN on their own? That is, what resources would you use to guide them in this inquiry process of detecting and deconstructing false news?	• It is your turn to work independently. Collect pieces of FN (number and type of pieces will depend on the age, subject, etc.) and organise them into an electronic presentation for the classroom. Choose those pieces that drew your attention and explain why this was the case. Take screenshots and document your reaction. • Analyse some of your news items in terms of 'fake or real' and use the concepts and ideas learned in the observatory. • Imagine you show one of the examples of the Observatory or from your own FN collection to your little brother, sister or friend, who believes it. What strategies would you recommend him or her to analyse them correctly and avoid spreading/sharing them?

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BLOCK 2: REFLECTIVE, CRITICAL READING ASSIGNMENT.

Learning objectives: Reflect on the media literacy aspects from the Observatory and the e-modules and connect them to the course bibliography. Activate students' critical reading skills by showing them how news/texts are constructed (explore strategies of persuasion, scapegoating, manipulation of emotions, revise the conventions of storytelling and symbolism, etc.).

Student teachers	School students
• Reading responses (3-5 pages) should: a. Focus on one of the assigned readings for the course. b. Have a clear and well-formulated thesis. Provide some summarising but include mostly analysis. How is the information you present related to your thesis statement? c. Demonstrate a thorough, critical and analytical discussion of the main questions presented in the reading you chose. • Take news items, posts, and videos related to the issues of migration, pandemics, and general health issues. Relate them to what you have learned from the observatory and the assigned readings. Reflect on what the different readings say about a given subject. In some cases, readings are highly complementary; in other cases, various readings will provide a wide-ranging picture of a certain issue. You should provide quotes accompanied by citations when appropriate, an understanding of terminology presented in the reading, and some of your analysis. • For this assignment, you will conduct an interview with a peer, friend or family member and analyse it in political, symbolic, anthropological, linguistic, and/or ethical terms. You must use at least (2) of our class readings in your analysis and may need to do additional library research. The teacher will need to provide a detailed assignment description.	• Use some of the examples presented in the previous section (3.3.1) (pedagogical use of the case studies and digital literacy assignments across school subjects).

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Readings for the course:

- Breeze, R., Gintsburg, S., & Baynham, M. (2022). Introduction: Narrating Space and Time in Migration. In R. Breeze, S. Gintsburg, & M. Baynham (Eds.). *Narrating Migrations from Africa and the Middle East: A Spatio-Temporal Approach* (1–14). Bloomsbury Academic. http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9781350274570.ch-I

- Breeze, R. & Gintsburg. S. (forthcoming). Exploiting the crisis: populists, migration, minorities and Covid-19. In N. Thielemann & D. Weiss (Eds.), *Remedies against the pandemic: How politicians communicate crisis management.* John Benjamins Publishing.

- Sádaba, C., & Salaverría, R. (2023). Combatir la desinformación con la alfabetización mediática: análisis de las tendencias en la Unión Europea. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social.*

- Salaverría, R., Buslón, N., & López Pan, F. (2020). Desinformación en tiempos de pandemia: tipología de los bulos sobre la COVID-19. *El Profesional de la Información.*

- Szakács, J., & Bognárt, E. (2021). *The impact of disinformation campaigns about migrants and minority groups in the EU.* European Parliament.

- Thoman E., Jolls T., & Centre for Media Literacy. (2008). *Literacy for the 21st century: an overview & orientation guide to media literacy education. part 1. theory cml medialit kit: a framework for learning and teaching in a media age* (Ed. 2). Centre for Media Literacy.

- Wardle, C., & Derakhshan, H. (2017). Information disorder: *Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making information disorder toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policymaking.* Council of Europe.

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BLOCK 3: SMALL RESEARCH STUDY/ CREATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT.

Learning objectives:

Teacher students: Write about a small, executed research study on media literacy education or migration discourse.

School students: Develop and present a small research project. This can be done in small groups and different forms (digital presentation, poster, video, cartoon, digital story, website, blog entrance, campaign about community matters, podcast, etc.).

Student teachers	School students
• Final FN project: Each student will submit a research paper which will consist of an abstract (1 page) and a small study (4-6 pages) about a topic related to FN, migrants/ minorities, and pandemics, linking it to what they learned while working with the cases from the observatory. • The abstract will include the following information: (1) A brief Introduction to your Topic, (2) 2-3 Research Questions, (3) Research Methods, (4) Possible Academic Sources (1 primary source and 3 secondary sources), (5) Expected outcomes. • Develop a concrete didactic proposal for teaching media literacy in a specific subject and age level. If possible, implement it in a pre- and post-test design. Report about your proposal/experience in a research paper. • Review teaching materials that look promising for media literacy education.	• Develop a questionnaire with the students to evaluate their use (consumption) and conception of fake news in social media. • Create a school media literacy bulletin board on a social networking site and invite teachers and students to post short reviews of books, reflections on new movies, analysis of the local campaign, insightful work done by students, etc. • Ask the students to interview people from different backgrounds (age, gender, education, cultural upbringing) and make them comment on one of the examples from the observatory. Write a report on the different viewpoints and try to explain the different responses. Alternative option: Create a role-play in class so the students can experience other people's points of view.

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

In addition to the Fake News Observatory, the CoMMiTTEd project also created two teacher education e-modules, that come along with a more theoretical one, called "The Nature of Fake News: Past and Present Tendencies". In this section, all three will be presented regarding their organisation, structure and content. Some suggestions for use will also be given.

4.1 THE NATURE OF FAKE NEWS: PAST AND PRESENT TENDENCIES

The two specific interactive e-modules are preceded, contextualised and complemented by an introductory one - "The Nature of Fake News: Past and Present Tendencies". This addresses the main topics and issues related to FN, bringing them into discussion and assigning (research) questions and tasks for reflection. Its organisation is based upon ten units, which can be subdivided into two parts:

- a first one (made up of units 1-7), which is longer and more theoretical, prompting the user to dive into the FN world and to get a deeper understanding of the history, processes, concepts and structure of FN. Overall, the units integrated into this part have an identical, uniform structure, based on the presentation and further deconstruction (according to the subject matter) of three events (except unit 4, which only has two), which are then followed by assignments related to each unit theme, and suggestions for teachers to approach the topic(s) addressed; and

- a second, shorter one (including units 8-10), with a more pedagogical and processual approach, focused on making the user aware of one of the possible methods for analysing FN items - the digital ethnography technique, an exhaustive, slow process that consists in discovering the trail(s) the FN has followed, what feedback it has generated, and how it has influenced public opinion.

In terms of content, in the first part, each unit focuses on a specific topic:

1. The **timelessness of FN** (with three examples from the past), where users get to know that FN belongs to all times and gain insight into the mechanisms behind FN;

2. Reflections on the processes behind the **creation of FN messages**;

3. **How experts research FN today,** as it manifests itself especially in the online world;

4. The **structure of FN**, with an emphasis on its overall production, on the elements that make it up, and on the phases of life a FN item goes through;

5. The identity of the people who send FN into the world – **the agent**;

6. Analysis of the nature of message of FN items – **the message**; and

7. Assignments for the users to explore the question about **the interpreters**.

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

The second part, on the other hand, embeds a different logic, addressing three distinct FN items previously explored (Islamic State and COVID; Bill Gates and the pandemic; and an Asian man in Cairo kicked out of taxi), analysing them through digital ethnographies and raising questions about their different layers. Table 5 presents the units and their content. Furthermore, each event is briefly presented and associated with the false information that circulated about it.

Unit(s)	FN items	Description
1 – Fake news is of all times 2 – How are FN messages created?	The Lisbon earthquake	On Saturday November 1, 1755, the day that Catholics worldwide celebrate the feast of All Saints, the Portuguese capital Lisbon was hit by an earthquake and a subsequent tsunami, after which large parts of the city caught fire. Around 40,000 people lost their lives. Many of them had gathered in the city's many churches to celebrate the religious festival. Theologians and religious authorities declared the disaster to be a punishment from God for the sins of mankind, thus spreading FN about the origins of the catastrophe.
	The murder in Damascus	On April 14, 1840, the Dutch newspaper "Algemeen Handelsblad" reported on the murder of a Capuchin monk by "Jews" in the Syrian city of Damascus. There was no evidence of this accusation, nor further investigation, but the local authorities locked up important Jewish leaders and a Jewish young man succumbed to torture in prison. The article also mentions the rumour that the local authorities themselves are said to have made the monk disappear, subsequently accusing the wealthy Jews of the murder with the aim of extorting money from them.
	Mad Tuesday September 5, 1944	Nazi Germany occupied the Netherlands in May 1940 and controlled the country for nearly five years. In 1944, after the Allies began to break through German lines and after the liberation of Antwerp, rumor spread that the city of Breda, located in the south of the country, was also free. People took to the streets, raised flags and celebrated the impending liberation. However, it turned out not to be true and the western part of the Netherlands had to wait a few more months for liberation.

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Unit(s)	FN items	Description
3 – Scientific Research on Fake News	"Hardly any complaints after Corona"	The leader of the Dutch political party Forum for Democracy Thierry Baudet indicated in the talk show "Op1" of January 10, 2021 that "more than 98% of the people who have had corona had virtually no complaints". The "eufactcheck" website debunked his statement, claiming that he obtained his information from the right source (an infection radar, from the Dutch government, that monitors the percentage of people who experience corona-like symptoms), but took it out of the right context (the percentage of corona-like symptoms is not the same as infected people).
	Slice of sausage as a distant star	Etienne Klein, a French physicist, posted a photo on Twitter in August 2022 of a distant star, "the Proxima Centauri, the closest star to the sun, located 4.2 light-years away." Thousands of his Twitter followers took the post seriously and retweeted it or copied it on other social media. But soon fellow scientists and common-sense people concluded that the star could be nothing more than a slice of chorizo sausage.
	Nikki Tutorials' forced coming out	In January 2020, beauty guru Nikki de Jager, also and best known as Nikki Tutorials, announced that she was transgender. However, she did not do so voluntarily. Malicious people had discovered her gender identity and threatened to make it public. They tried to blackmail Nikki with that. It was a reason for Nikki to take the flight forward and bring the news of her transgender identity online herself. This unit elaborates on this example of malinformation.
4 – The Structures of Fake News	1984	In George Orwell's "1984" dystopian novel, the protagonist Winston Smith works at the Ministry of Truth. His job is to constantly adapt the past to new interpretations, because there is one all-powerful Party, that keeps an eye on everything and everyone, whose decisions have primacy over the past – for example, if it decides that Oceania, the empire it controls, has suddenly made peace with Eurasia, while at war with it for years before, the past must be adjusted. This novel, published in 1949, serves as an example of a society entirely based on fake news.
	Keith Richards is God and Saint	A picture with Keith Richards holding a newspaper in his hand with the headline "Pope Declares: Keith Richards is God" goes back to 1972. In the top: a report declaring that Pope Francis had canonised Keith Richards in front of a large crowd in St. Peter's Square. The reason? Keith Richards had performed two miracles, thus filling the conditions to be canonised by the Catholic Church: one of Richards' miracles was, according to the Pope, the fact that he had taken more drugs than any other mortal human being; the second, that he lived to tell about it. It is clear that the news of Richards' canonisation is fake. It is meant to be humorous and many will have laughed at it.

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

Unit(s)	FN items	Description
5 – Fake news more in detail: the agents 6 – Fake news more in detail: the message 7 – Fake news more in detail: the interpreters 8 – Islamic State and Covid: a digital ethnography 9 – Bill Gates and the pandemic 10 – Asian man in Cairo kicked out of taxi	Islamic State and Covid: "it is caused by our enemies"	Like all terrorist movements, based on religion or not, Islamic State was confronted with the coronavirus entering its territories and ranks. It had to formulate an answer to the question why it hit the organisation as well, what to do about it, and what the cause of it was. Without any empirical evidence, Islamic State related the cause of the disease to God, who supposedly used the virus to punish the Chinese, then to lead Shiites to give up their faith, and to punish the Crusader nations. These allegations might stimulate Muslims in the West sensitive to Islamic State's ideology to spread these rumours, as such ignoring the fact that the virus will spread regardless of the ideology or religion of its victims.
	Bill Gates and the pandemic	On a Romanian Orthodox-Christian website, an article misrepresents a claim by Bill Gates regarding the next possible pandemics of the future. The title can be translated to "Bill Gates is preparing another new global pandemic, there will be another pathogen next time". This item aims to pull in readers with its sensationalist title and the use of an inaccurate translation of his speech from a conference in Munich.
	Chinese man in Cairo kicked out of taxi	In March 2020, a person of Asian descent was kicked out of a taxi in the middle of chaotic Cairo traffic as he was coughing and the driver feared Corona transmission. The maker of the footage heard people shouting 'Corona. Corona' and 'kick him out'. The incident took place at the beginning of the worldwide spread of the Corona virus and was rooted in the declarations from the Egyptian officials, who assured citizens that the virus wouldn't strike Egypt because "it lives in China, not in Egypt".

Table 5. Presentation of "The Nature of Fake News: Past and Present Tendencies".

As mentioned, this module serves as an introduction to the theme of FN, in order to learn about the production, spread, and consumption of FN across the time and in different political and ideological contexts. It can be used in different ways. As a first option, the reader can decide to explore the sections in the presented order or in a more flexible way, in a process of autonomous learning. A second one is the inclusion of the reading and documentation about the past and the tendencies of FN in structured teacher education programmes, meaning that this volume can be used as assigned literature for the courses. In the scope of CoMMiTTEd, and as we will see in the next section, the activities and readings in this introductory module were organically integrated in the tasks of the more specific interactive teacher education e-modules.

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

4.2 THE INTERACTIVE E-MODULES

4.2.1 Organisation and structure

The two developed teacher education e-modules are organised into five parts each (Figure 5):

- a first one more related to discovery activities, where teachers can contact with the concept and examples of FN and raise their awareness regarding the information disorder problem;
- a second part focused on theoretical documentation, to learn more about FN;
- a third one directed to empirical analysis, so the user can work hands on by deconstructing their own piece of information;
- a fourth part that highlights didactic implementation, by transforming FN into pedagogical resources; and
- a fifth part of self-reflection and assessment, to synthesise and evaluate all the work done.

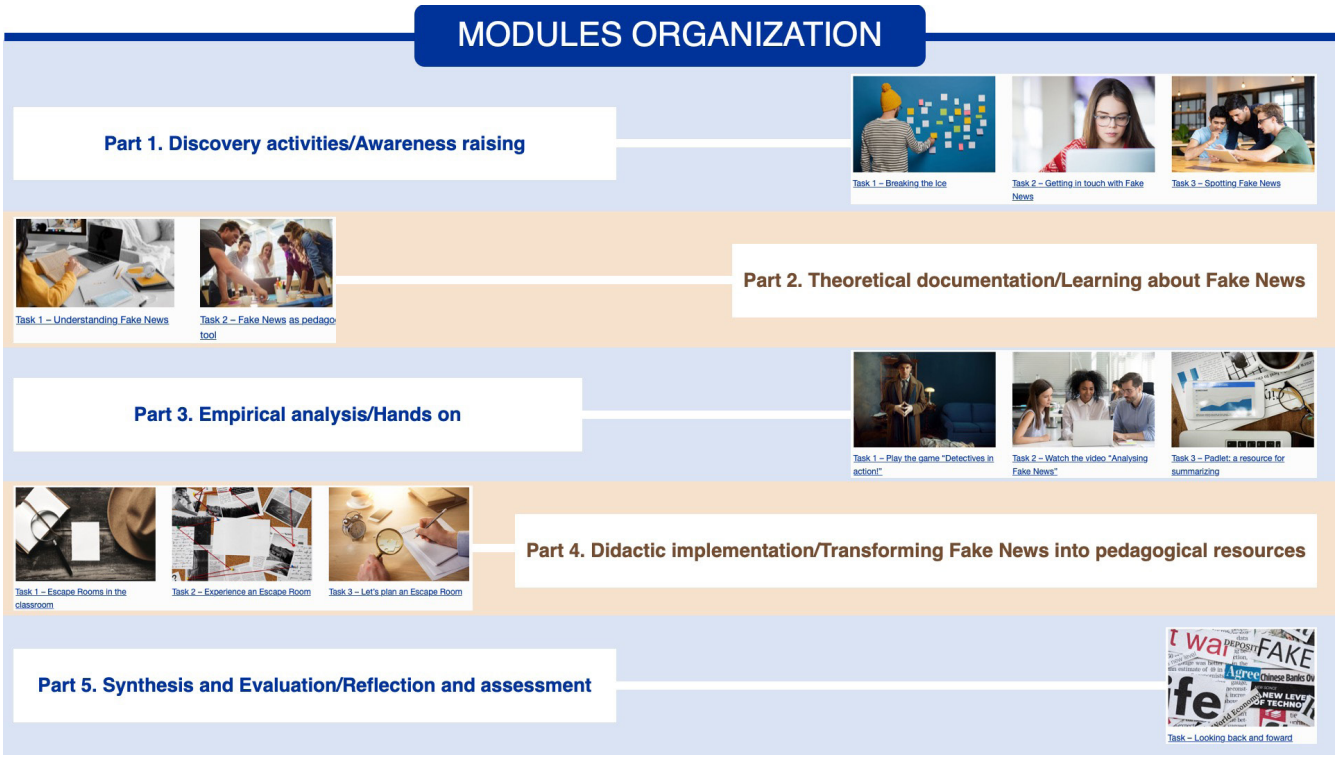

Figure 5. E-Modules: organisation and structure.

Furthermore, each part contains one or several tasks, structured according to aims, guiding questions and resources, that were developed considering an expected time duration - which is necessarily different for all of them. It is also important to note that both e-modules can be explored through a guided path, suggested by the proposed organisation, or independently. This flexibility allows the construction of diverse teacher education scenarios, based on a new (re)configuration of the task structure, with the possibility of moving them back and forward.

4.2.2 Content

In this section, the two training e-modules will be presented, as far as the content is concerned. For a better understanding, two subsections were created, one for each module.

The module "Developing intercultural competence through the analysis of Fake News on migrants and minorities"

This module has the general aim of developing skills of interpreting and relating to Otherness through the analysis of FN and its mechanisms of othering. Taking that into account, teachers will analyse FN, understand what it is, the mechanisms behind it and its main targets. For that, different strategies and (multilingual) resources are used, encompassing theoretical concepts and practical activities, with special emphasis on the potential of escape rooms as a pedagogical tool to promote and develop intercultural competence in this specific topic. As mentioned in the previous section, this module is divided into five parts, which are set out in the table below.

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Part	Description
1 – Discovery activities (8 hours)	In this section, you will reflect about the following issues: How much time do you spend online per day? How much information consumption does that time translate into? Have you ever wondered whether a lot of that information could be fake? In this sense, how can we filter this false information? Thus, in this first part of the module, you will analyse FN and understand what it is and which mechanisms are used to create it. Besides that, you will be able to analyse FN text, images and the relationship between both, identifying their stylistic and visual features. Finally, the tasks will also enable you to recognise and reflect on the consequences intended for each FN.
2 – Theoretical documentation (4 hours)	After getting to know a little better the concepts related to FN and false information, you must now focus on their main targets. Why are minorities and vulnerable people so many times framed as scapegoats? What's the role of the media in the processes of stereotyping and othering? In this section, we intend to develop your critical perspectives on the listed topics, through scientific texts and theoretical knowledge, with the ultimate aim of raising awareness about the value of understanding stereotyping and othering for teaching and learning.
3 – Empirical analysis (3 hours)	Now that you've travelled over a short path along false information and FN, and after getting in touch with their main targets, we shall move forward to the operationalisation of the theoretical knowledge into resources for the deconstruction of stereotyping and othering. Here, you will test different resources to identify linguistic mechanisms and strategies that are used to construct and/or reinforce stereotyping and othering processes.
4 – Didactic implementation (13 hours)	In this longer section, we intend to present and to highlight the potential of escape rooms as a pedagogical strategy and resource, pointing out their added value for the development of intercultural competence related to FN. Furthermore, you will be able to experience an escape room and look at reports from educational actors that have already played them. And, finally, we challenge you to design (and implement and evaluate) an escape room activity that deconstructs processes of othering in the media.
5 – Synthesis/ Evaluation (2 hours)	For the last part of the module, we created opportunities for you to reflect upon your participation in it, assessing how your intercultural competence developed. Besides, you will also be encouraged to identify possible areas of professional knowledge to be further deepened.

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Next, you have an overview of the specific tasks and objectives linked to the operational training work at each part of this module.

PART 1 – DISCOVERY ACTIVITIES	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – What's the length of (false) information you consume? (2 hours)	To contact with a pre-selected pool of news and Fake News, identifying the distinctive elements.
2 – What makes Fake News, Fake News? (2 hours)	To identify elements in Fake News that manipulate or distort the facts.
3 – Is all Fake News fake or even news? (2 hours)	To understand why Fake News is an unclear concept and why alternative terms could be preferable.
4 – Never have I ever created Fake News (2 hours)	To create Fake News for every category of false information (mis, dis and malinformation).
5 – Fake News has always existed (Optional) (2 hours)	To know more.

PART 2 – THEORETICAL DOCUMENTATION	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Reflecting about (dis/mis)information (1 hour)	To understand how (dis/mis)information shapes our beliefs about minorities and migrants.
2 – Media, stereotyping and othering (45 minutes)	To understand the role of Media in stereotyping and othering.
3 – Why is it important to reconstruct Fake News? (45 minutes)	To understand that the ability to reconstruct Fake News about minorities is part of intercultural competence and critical citizenship.
4 – What about the value of understanding stereotyping and othering for teaching and learning? (1h30min)	To reflect upon the added value for teaching and learning of understanding the mechanisms of stereotyping and othering in the mass media.

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PART 3 – EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Play the game "Detectives in action!" (1 hour)	To try out the game as if you were one of your students.
2 – Watch the video "Analysing Fake News" (1 hour)	To identify linguistic mechanisms leading to stereotyping and othering by watching a video.
3 – Padlet: a resource for summarising (1 hour)	To summarise the specific strategies creating the othering of migrants and minorities through the use of an oriented padlet.

PART 4 – DIDACTIC IMPLEMENTATION	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Escape Rooms in the classroom (2 hours)	To understand the potential of Escape Rooms as pedagogical tools to collaboratively solve a challenge on the topic of intercultural competence and Fake News.
2 – Experience an Escape Room (2 hours)	To experience an Escape Room.
	To comprehend the experience an Escape Room can provide to its users.
	To reflect on the potential of Escape Rooms in the classroom/as a pedagogical tool.
3 – Let's plan an Escape Room (2 hours)	To learn how to plan an Escape Room as a pedagogical task.
	To get acquainted with tools to be used to create an Escape Room.
4 – Escape Rooms in action (4 hours)	To plan an Escape Room, with the goal of fostering intercultural learning and "savoir comprendre" skills.
5 – Self-reflection (not mandatory)	Implementation and reflection upon the implemented Escape Room.
6 – Let's take a look at more Escape Rooms! (3 hours)	Peer evaluation of Escape Rooms created.

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PART 5 – SYNTHESIS/EVALUATION	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Individual assessment (1 hour)	To contact with a pre-selected pool of news and Fake News, identifying the distinctive elements.
	To allow for an individual assessment.

This digital and interactive e-module intends to empower teachers and teacher trainers with skills and resources to tackle the FN phenomenon, thus contributing to their professional development. It fosters the growth of knowledge on the FN topic, promotes the acquisition of didactic and digital competences, and enables contact with pedagogical materials to use in educational contexts. Additionally, it also provides recommendations for their use in the classroom. Considering that the main focus of this module is on developing skills of interpreting and relating to Otherness, the tasks also enhance the user's awareness on how minorities and migrants are often targets in FN, which uses them as scapegoats for societal problems in general.

The module "From detecting to using Fake News as pedagogical tools in educational settings: focusing on the development of the intercultural competence"

This module deals with FN in educational scenarios, such as reflecting upon the use of FN as pedagogical tools and exploring its pedagogical potential; developing professional knowledge and skills about the implementation of FN in specific and/or across subject areas of the curriculum; and reflecting on how the pedagogical work with FN can enhance students' and teachers' intercultural competence. Therefore, teachers will learn about students' contact with FN and their opinions on FN as a topic for the classroom, and will also reflect on the possibilities and potentialities of its integration into the classroom. To this end, access will be provided to informational and pedagogical resources that guide the users in the construction, implementation and evaluation of a lesson plan. Below, we detail what each part of the module is about.

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Part	Description
1 – Awareness Raising (3 hours)	Do you know what FN is and how to distinguish factual from false information? Is all false information equally damaging and manipulative? Is all FN equally damaging for minorities? And why is it that minorities are such a popular target of FN producers? In this first part of the module, you will reflect about your own experiences of consumption of FN by referring to your own difficulties in identifying them. You will also reflect on what your personal learning goals in terms of professional development are for this module.
2 – Learning about Fake News (4 hours)	In this section, you will develop your theoretical knowledge about this information disorder. Following our selection of theoretical sources, you might be able to reflect on the nature of FN and on how it is related to lack of digital and media literacy as well as critical thinking skills. This reflection paves the way to thinking about how to integrate this knowledge into future lesson planning.
3 – Hands On (4 hours)	Until now, we have discussed what FN is and what makes it difficult to identify and categorise it. Deconstructing FN is not always an easy task, namely if you want to introduce it in the classroom, as pedagogical resources. In this part of the module, you will go beyond your own considerations of what FN is and look into and reflect on the work of fact-checking platforms. You will also acquire technical skills to develop your own discourse and **multimodal analysis** of FN and get to work hands-on by deconstructing you own piece of disinformation. The main idea is that you will be able to reuse these skills in the classroom.
4 – Transforming Fake News into pedagogical resources (7 - 11 hours)	The time has come to think about how to integrate FN into your teaching. In this part of the module, you will be called to develop a specific pedagogical sequence. To do that, you will learn about projects trying to address FN at school as well as the students' perspectives. Drawing on that knowledge, the aim is to design your own learning activity that makes use of FN. Ideally, you should focus on FN about minorities in order to promote intercultural competence. You will be asked to think about the specific goals of your classroom activity while transforming FN into a pedagogical resource.
5 – Reflection and assessment (2 hours)	In this last part of the module, you will be asked to reflect upon the influence that your participation in the tasks had on your professional development. What have you learned and which skills do you think you should develop further? Are you planning on further implementing lessons about FN and intercultural learning in your teaching?

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PART 1 – AWARENESS RAISING	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Breaking the Ice (30 minutes)	To contact with the topic of FN.
2 – Getting in touch with Fake News (30 minutes)	To get in touch with hard data about FN.
3 – Spotting Fake News (2 hours)	To look for FN, explain the difficulties in identifying them and make a preliminary list of characteristics.
	To relate to the characteristics of the texts, ideological bias, agendas, etc.
	To define FN and compare your definition to the glossary of the project.

PART 2 – LEARNING ABOUT FAKE NEWS	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Understanding Fake News (3 hours)	To read theoretical texts on the topic of FN (definition, difficulties etc.).
	To produce a presentation on one of the suggested topics (individually or in groups): Fake News: definition difficulties, difficulty in categorising Fake News, difficulties in identifying Fake News, Fake News and digital literacy, Fake News and critical thinking, Fake News and information literacy.
2 – Fake News as a pedagogical tool (1 hour)	To discuss the potential of FN for future lessons.
	To work on strategies to detect and analyse FN.

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PART 3 – HANDS ON	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Encountering Fake News (30 minutes)	To create a personal list of the characteristics of FN.
2 – Identifying Fake News (30 minutes)	To compare lists of how to identify FN, circulating on the internet.
	To understand and reflect about the work of fact-checking platforms.
3 - Reconsidering self-perceptions of Fake News (2 hours)	To revise the list of criteria to identify FN made in the first part by adding or removing elements.
4 – Analysing Fake News (2 hours)	To analyse FN (identified in Part 1) based on a database template.

PART 4 – TRANSFORMING FAKE NEWS INTO PEDAGOGICAL RESOURCES	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 - Seeing Fake News from a pedagogical perspective (2 hours)	To get informed on information literacy and critical thinking in educational contexts.
2 - Fake News from the students' perspectives (1 hour)	To discover didactic principles of FN from the pupils' perspectives.
	To sum up the pupils' perspectives on the use of FN as pedagogical resources.
3 – Planning a learning activity with Fake News (4 hours)	To plan a learning activity, based on Tasks 1 and 2, which can be implemented in different subject areas.
4 – Experimenting with Fake News at school (4 hours)	To implement and reflect upon the implemented pedagogical sequence.

PART 5 – REFLECTION AND ASSESSMENT	
Tasks	Aim(s)
1 – Looking back and forward (2 hours)	To evaluate the module through a collective oral discussion (focus group) (not mandatory).
	To write a reflective assessment.

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

Overall, this interactive e-module aims to nurture the comprehension of the FN theme, as well as to develop discourse analysis competences related to this specific field, to encourage teachers to bring FN into the classroom. On top of that, the development of didactic competences stands out, related to the transformation of FN items into pedagogical resources (and their use in real school contexts), and the enhancement of teachers' intercultural competence, fostering awareness of the consequences of stereotyping and othering processes.

4.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

The two interactive teacher education e-modules, complemented by the introductory one, are suitable to be used both by independent and institutional users. In what follows, we present some guidelines for their use in each of these contexts.

4.3.1 As a self-training e-module

These e-modules can be used in a self-learning context, either in initial teacher education, as a training support resource, or in-service education, in a professional development perspective, or postgraduate teacher education or, simply, by individuals that want to learn more about this topic.

In initial teacher education, it is extremely important to enhance the development of autonomy and to cater for the transition from one school level to the other, in this case when entering higher education. This can be addressed in different curricular units, mainly in online courses, and our e-modules can become one of those courses. Additionally, in the context of transition from secondary to higher education, with the increasing digitalisation of teaching and learning practices, digital literacies are important to succeed academically. For example, students need to develop literacies to: i) navigate across different teaching and learning platforms, like Moodle, EAD Box, MOOC; ii) use resources such as Padlets, Forums, Chats, etc.; iii) create resources such as videos, audios, multimodal texts, e-books, podcasts. In any of these situations, teachers can monitor/follow the learning process and provide feedback. Students can learn autonomously and freely or following semi-guided lines, according to their needs or learning rhythms, with moments of reflection. The exercise of critical thinking is quite relevant to lead one to think about FN, or to create arguments in order to face fallacious news. Students do not need to be at school to learn these things, they can be at home, or somewhere else.

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In in-service teacher education, the articulation between theory and practice is likely to be explored by sharing examples provided by in-service teachers. As **creating resilience to deal with FN is one of the most important issues nowadays,** it is crucial to integrate modules dealing with strategies to debunk them in advanced training, specialist training, and open courses. Precisely because in this situation the target is constituted by teachers, professionals that are already working, and have strict working schedules, the possibility of being able to update their knowledge at times when they are available is fundamental. However, this does not mean that they do not have deadlines indicated in the schedule of each module, according to the trainer's own criteria. Each module may have different tasks, and each task has specific instructions related to timing and contents, as well as resources to be used by the in-service teachers - these tasks may be replayed with their pupils in small projects, for example. The teacher educator, according to his/her own instructions, can monitor the development of the performance of each task and can give suggestions aimed at improvement so that in-service teachers can obtain good results.

To sum up, independent of training modalities - initial teacher education, in-service teacher education, individuals or even postgraduate education -, the course is divided into parts and each part has different tasks. Furthermore, the user can choose specific parts and activities of the two e-modules, combine them according to their interests, in what could be called an "e-module à la carte", which would be more individual-oriented. It is desirable to have a balance in the number of tasks to be carried out in each module and between theory and practice. Throughout the course, trainees can write reflections or upload the tasks they have completed to a course Forum, or to a Padlet. In this way all participants can see the work done by everyone and reflect on the practices. The follow-up throughout the course can be done in different ways, depending on the course objectives. The teacher educator may intervene only if requested by the trainees, or because he/she verifies that it is needed. Another possibility is to assign a critical friend (it can be a fellow teacher) to each participant, in order to assist in and support the process of professional development. This modality can be certified, just like any other course developed in a classroom in the presence of a teacher. Although this modality is generally used in areas such as science, it is also worth using it in the area of social sciences, humanities and languages.

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4.3.2 As part of a teacher education programme

Regarding teacher education programmes, we suggest three educational settings in which the e-modules can be implemented:

- Initial teacher education
- In-service teacher education
- Postgraduate teacher education

4 THE TEACHER EDUCATION MODULES

Initial teacher education

In initial teacher education, at undergraduate level and at professional master's level (1st and 2nd Bologna cycles), the two e-modules can be integrated into the curricula of different disciplines (theoretical-practical and practical) with the aim of developing competences related to the development of: knowledge regarding the understanding and discussion of concepts associated with FN; communication, language and literacies (namely digital); applied knowledge, in order to promote the ability to read the social reality and problematise issues related to FN; evaluation and **critical discourse analysis.** The work around the development of these competences may integrate disciplines within the curriculum on initial teacher education programmes such as: didactics of languages, sociology of education, psychology of education, citizenship and educational intervention, educational technologies, creativity and expressions, and also in components of initiation to professional practice, through the conception and implementation of pedagogical-didactic projects that integrate the FN as a didactic resource.

In the context of initial training programmes, the two e-modules can also contribute to the development of transversal competences, through their implementation in training contexts involving different curricular areas, with the possibility of constituting micro-credentials to be developed in different contexts of formal and non-formal education - schools, study centres, libraries, living science centres, museums, etc.

In-service teacher education

In-service teacher education can take on different formats, according to the objectives and expectations of the trainees, and can be configured in:

- **training courses,** specifically addressed to teachers who work in areas directly linked to the theme in question (language, citizenship, technologies, history); these courses are planned, structured, and organised in different parts, usually comprising a theoretical or theoretical-practical component. The theoretical part can encompass the treatment of the concepts associated with FN and the theoretical-practical the possibility of its application to pedagogical projects. A methodological possibility would be the development of action-research projects, conceived individually or collaboratively, curricularly and locally inserted, to be developed with students or with the different educational actors. These training courses would presuppose the evaluation of professional development, and might be accredited and certified, with impact on teachers' career progression;

- **short-term teacher education programmes,** mainly of the awareness-raising type, transversally addressed to teachers of all areas and to all elements of the school community, and this training may be accredited in training courses;

- **pedagogical projects,** to be developed in schools, integrated in continuous training actions, involving different educational actors and in a logic of research-action and participatory research. Such a project can be developed in groups of different sizes and characteristics, encompassing students, teachers (of different years, school subjects, and curricular department) or even the whole school community.

Postgraduate teacher education

Postgraduate teacher education, both at (research-based) master's and doctoral levels, in a life-long learning perspective, is a relevant setting for the use of the e-modules. In this case, in addition to their use in specific subjects, such as those explained above, in relation to initial teacher education, **the e-modules can be integrated, with adaptations, into the research projects of (student) teachers.**

In such a perspective, a variety of educational research projects are suitable for the use of these e-modules, especially those aimed at understanding how to raise teachers' and students' digital literacy, thus allowing for the articulation between training and research, and methodologically framed by research-action and participatory approaches.

Additionally, postgraduate training includes specialisation courses that do not confer a degree. In this case, parts of a theoretical-practical nature may be developed in some curricular units, which may involve the development of pedagogical projects.

5 CONCLUSION

The message of our times seems to be "the SARS-COVID pandemic is gone, but the FN remains". This leads us to the need to build resources that are not exhaustive in their temporality but can be seen and reviewed in the light of new pandemics, events, or happenings. In other words, we need resources that are transversal to various issues, that are resilient to the passage of time, the emergence of new historical circumstances, and the surge of new technologies and digital environments with the potential to create even more realistic FN (such as chatbots and ChatGPT). What seems to remain is not so much the COVID pandemic, but the perennial nature of two problems, which, having intersected in the past, will certainly be present in the future: **the circulation and consumption of FN and the targeting of migrants and minorities in these discourses.** Based on the recognition of this issue, the CoMMiTTEd group considers that it is **essential to develop transversal competences** (such as those listed in tables 1 and 2) to combat FN, in teachers and students, and to design teacher training programmes (initial and continuing) that include them in their contents.

Consequently, the message we attempted to transmit in this e-handbook is quite straightforward: although there is nothing particularly new in the phenomenon of FN today, given the unprecedented exposure of all members of our society to digital technologies and social networks, it is of utmost importance to treat this problem seriously. This is especially true for the emerging generation - today's schoolchildren, who often tend to receive most of their information from social networks via random posts or through subscription to various celebrities and influencers.

This e-handbook therefore not only poses the problem but also describes and offers some ready-to-use tools that, we hope, will be of use to those who already teach digital literacy or some topics related to it or are interested in introducing these into their curriculum or into extra-curricular activities. These tools are: 1. a general overview of the current state of affairs in the field of FN in particular and digital and media literacy studies in general and the importance of these studies for the general public; 2. a detailed description of this project; 3. a description of the multilingual FN observatory, where FN related to the theme of COVID-19 and migrants is presented and analysed in five languages (section 3) with suggestions for use, and 4. a description of two teacher education e-modules, also accompanied by suggestions for use (section 4).

Apart from these evident uses we discussed above, with this e-handbook that wraps up the outcomes of the CoMMiTTEd project, we hope to contribute to three important issues existing in contemporary pedagogy:

- preparing teachers to work efficiently in an online environment without losing the quality of teaching;

- creating new contexts for teaching and learning, and for teacher education (either in autonomously or integrated in teaching programmes);

- serving education professionals who are engaged in developing their skills and in searching for new teaching materials for updating teaching materials and introducing new, relevant topics are of key importance for the professional development of teachers.

5 CONCLUSION

CoMMiTTEd particularly drew attention to the mechanisms behind the generation of FN and its consequent circulation by using the example of the recent COVID-19 pandemic and the role migrants and minorities were ascribed in it. We hope that the mechanisms we uncovered for scapegoating migrants and minorities in FN as well as the resources created will raise our target audiences' awareness about these issues, and we hope these resources will be useful in other contexts. The information we presented in this e-handbook is far from being exhaustive, but we have contributed to raising awareness of mechanisms of othering that target vulnerable groups and are used with pseudo explanatory power in times of crisis. Even if the COVID pandemic disappears, CoMMiTTEd and its products are a wake-up call for challenges to come and serve the development of a public memory, letting us learn from the past to build more just and equal, less biased societies. Being aware of FN about migrants and minorities during the COVID pandemic prepares us to deal with FN about the same groups during other troubled times to come.

CoMMiTTEd contributes to raising awareness of mechanisms of othering that target vulnerable groups and are used with pseudo explanatory power in times of crisis.

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7 GLOSSARY

If you don't find what you are looking for, you might want to try the following glossaries:

-Fake News (and how to fight it): Glossary: https://libraryguides.mdc.edu/FakeNews/Glossary
-Dealing with propaganda, misinformation and fake news: https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/dealing-with-propaganda-misinformation-and-fake-news
-Fake news glossary: Top 10 words to know: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/zf89vwx

AGNOTOLOGY:
Field studying how the strategy of deliberately instilling doubt and/or ignorance is routinely used by politicians and corporations with the purpose of increasing their profit.

ASTROTURFING:
The attempt to create an impression of widespread grassroots support for a policy, individual, or product, where little such support exists. Multiple online identities and fake pressure groups are used to mislead the public into believing that the position of the astroturfer is the commonly held view.

BIAS:
Distorted judgement in favour of or against a particular individual/group of individuals/ phenomenon, etc.

CLICKBAIT:
Clickable internet content, such as headlines and images, that is supposed to take the reader to another website (sometimes, several websites). Clickbait content is typically misleading as it meant only to grasp the reader's attention.

CONSPIRACY THEORY:
A theory that explains an event as being the result of a plot by a covert group or organisation; A belief that a particular unexplained event was caused by such a group. The idea that many important political events or economic and social trends are the products of secret plots that are largely unknown to the general public.

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CRITICAL CULTURAL AWARENESS:
Critical cultural awareness means being sensitive to the differences and similarities between two cultures when communicating or interacting with members of other cultural groups. Cultural sensitivity involves inculcating values, attitudes, and knowledge that display openness and respect for different cultures, religions, languages, manner of dress, and communication styles. Cultural awareness is often used interchangeably with other terms, such as 'cultural safety' and 'cultural competence.' Yet again, as we are warned by theoreticians from different fields (see Rampton, 2016), critical cultural awareness should not fall into the ready-made celebrations of 'anything goes' and of 'permanent overarching hybridity'.

CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS (CDA):
A branch of discourse analysis rooted around the concept of power and power imbalance. In general, CDA assumes that power is a key element of each and every act of sociation. Especially institutional reproduced power is central to CDA. The purpose of CDA is thus to analyse and interpret opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, stigmatisation and stereotyping via overt and covert power and control as manifested in and through language.

FAKE NEWS:
News that is "completely made up, manipulated to resemble credible journalism and attract maximum attention and, with it, advertising revenue". But the definition is often expanded to include websites that circulate distorted, decontextualised or dubious information through – for example – clickbaiting headlines that fail to reflect the facts of the story, or trigger bias.

GASLIGHTING:
An elaborate and insidious technique of deception and psychological manipulation, usually practiced by a single deceiver, or "gaslighter" on a single victim over an extended period. Its effect is to gradually undermine the victim's confidence in [their] own ability to distinguish truth from falsehood, right from wrong, or reality from appearance, thereby rendering [them] pathologically dependent on the gaslighter in his thinking or feelings. This term is derived from the title of a 1938 British stage play, Gas Light, which was subsequently produced as a film, Gaslight, in the United Kingdom (1940) and the United States (1944).

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION:
Education systems across the globe aim to give learners, during their school education, language and intercultural competences that enable them to operate effectively as citizens, to acquire knowledge and to develop open attitudes to otherness: this vision of the teaching of languages and cultures is referred to as intercultural education.

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MEME:
An idea, behaviour, style, or usage that spreads from one person to another in a culture; an amusing or interesting picture, video, etc., that is spread widely through the Internet.

MULTIMODALITY:
Multimodality is the application of multiple modes within one medium. For example, understanding a televised weather forecast involves understanding spoken language, written language, weather specific language, geography, and symbols. Multiple literacies or "modes" contribute to an audience's understanding of a composition.

MULTIMODAL ANALYSIS:
Multimodal discourse analysis names a range of approaches to studying social interaction and meaning as multimodal, that is, produced with and through multiple modes. However, multimodal discourse analysis is not about identifying and studying modes as isolated but rather about understanding the world that is made by and surrounds human beings as multimodal products.

OTHERING / OTHERISATION:
Manipulative attitudes toward others. Making particular individuals/group of individuals look different in a negative way, differentiating "them" from a supposed "us". Othering is often used with the purpose of making minority groups scapegoats for certain events.

POST-TRUTH:
An adjective relating to circumstances in which people respond more to feelings and beliefs than to facts (see also vox populi vox dei related phenomena).

PREJUDICE:
Negative preconceived attitude toward a particular group of people, phenomenon, etc. Prejudice is usually associated with unsubstantiated dislike and distrust.

SHAREBAIT:
Website content that exists only to be shared, aimed at generating advertising revenue, especially at the expense of quality or accuracy.

STEREOTYPE:
An action or a message that is a by-product of the act of conforming to a fixed or general pattern. This noun refers especially to an often oversimplified or biased mental picture held to characterise an individual as having the typical, often negative features, of a group to which that individual belongs.

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STIGMA:

Stigma is an attribute that conveys devalued stereotypes. Following Erving Goffman's early elaboration of the concept (1969), psychological and social psychological research has considered how stigma operates at the micro-level, restricting the well-being of stigmatised individuals. More recently, sociologists have considered the macro-level dimensions of stigma, illuminating its structural causes, population-level consequences, and collective responses.

WOKE / WOKEISM/ WOKERY:

Attitudes of people who demonstrate an overly sensitive reaction to social and political issues. Wokeism is usually associated with extreme liberal and extreme left political movements.

YELLOW JOURNALISM:

A term used in the United States for the use of cheaply sensational or unscrupulous methods in newspapers, etc. to attract or influence readers.

Project 2020-1-DE01-KA226-HE-005742