

H2020-ICT-2018-2 /ICT-28-2018-CSA
SOMA: Social Observatory for Disinformation and Social Media Analysis



D4.3 Media Literacy Workshop Series and Reports

Project Reference No	SOMA [825469]
Deliverable	D4.3 Media Literacy Workshop Series and Reports
Workpackage	WP4 Stakeholder engagement and Media Literacy
Type	R = Document, report
Dissemination Level	PU
Date	30/06/2020
Status	Final
Editor(s)	Silvia Cavasola, Pagella Politica
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Document description	This report describes the 9 stakeholder meetings organized by the Consortium which took place in several international locations between M4 and M20 as part of the Observatory media literacy program.

Document Revision History

Version	Date	Modifications Introduced	
		Modification Reason	Modified by
V1	26/06/2020	Draft version	Pagella Politica
V1	29/06/2020	Reviewed version	Aarhus University
V2	30/06/2020	Final	Pagella Politica

Executive Summary

The Observatory media literacy program (WP4) foresees the organization of a comprehensive, Europe-wide, and inclusive set of activities to share best practices in the misinformation/disinformation field. This report describes the 9 stakeholder meetings which have been organized between M4 and M20 under the leadership of different Consortium members and which took place in several locations in Europe and outside.

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	5
1.1	Purpose and Scope of D4.3	5
1.2	Structure of this report	5
2	Overview of the organized events	6
3	High-level workshops	8
3.1	SOMA at the International Journalism Festival	8
3.2	SOMA at Global Fact 6	9
3.3	The “Italian Infodemic” Webinar	10
4	Seminars	12
4.1	Training on TrulyMedia at EU Week of Media Literacy	12
4.2	SOMA at the NEM Summit	13
4.3	SOMA at the inaugural ceremony of EU REMID	14
4.4	SOMA media literacy workshop	15
4.5	Webinar “Truth is the first vaccination”	17
5	Public events	19
5.1	First public event: “Disinformation across borders and how to fight it”	19
6	Conclusions	21
7	Annex	22
7.1	Agenda of the webinar “The Italian infodemic: lessons from fact-checking on Covid-19” (4 June 2020)	22
7.2	Programme of the Online disinformation: an Integrated View conference (Aarhus University, 6-7 May 2019)	25

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope of D4.3

Deliverable 4.3 entitled “Media Literacy Workshop Series and Reports” is part of Work Package number 4 (WP4).

The main goal of WP4, which is entitled “Stakeholder engagement and Media Literacy”, is to organize workshops and events to foster the debate on media literacy. Its specific objectives include:

- creating a common platform for sharing information between European fact-checkers;
- establishing two center centers for excellence studies on online disinformation;
- organizing a comprehensive, Europe-wide and inclusive set of activities to share best practices in the misinformation/disinformation field.

This report focuses specifically on the activities linked to third point, which correspond to tasks T4.2 Digital social media stakeholders’ engagement and T4.3 Media literacy program.

1.2 Structure of this report

This report offers an overview of the stakeholder events organized as part of “Stakeholder engagement the and Media Literacy” Work Package (4). The events are divided up into three macro-categories according to their type, namely: high-level workshops, seminars and public events. Events in each category are reported according the chronological order under which they have taken place.

2 Overview of the organized events

The Observatory media literacy program (WP4) foresees the organization of a comprehensive, Europe-wide and inclusive set of activities to share best practices in the misinformation/disinformation field. Table 1 below offers an overview of the events which have taken place during the first twenty months of the project. The events are divided up into three macro-categories, namely: high-level workshops, seminars and public events.

The high-level workshops have been aimed at gathering digital media literacy stakeholders such as media organizations, fact-checkers, academics, journalist associations and other experts for the purpose of defining the problems related to media literacy and sharing related best practices, also setting the stage for the establishment of cooperation within the European fact-checking community. These events have so far taken place in Perugia (Italy), Cape Town (South Africa) and online. Pagella Politica has been the leader of this task, with contributions from all other Consortium members.

The seminars have been organized with the aim of opening up the discussion to a broader public of stakeholders, including schools, universities and other public spaces, with the purpose of promoting critical and healthy approach to the news ecosystem. These seminars, which have also been the occasion for Consortium members to promote the tools and instruments developed inside the Observatory, have taken place in Brussels (Belgium), Rome (Italy), Zagreb (Slovenia), Aarhus (Denmark) and online. Each Consortium members has organized at least one such seminars.

Finally, public events represent an occasion for addressing the public at large and showcase the progresses made by the Observatory. The first event has taken place in March 2019 in Milan, Italy, gathering 80+ disinformation stakeholders.

Table 1. Overview of the organized events (M4-M20)

	No	Aim		Partners involved	Date	Status
High Level Workshops	2 out of 4	Bring together the stakeholders involved (media, organizations, fact-checkers, experts, artists, academics)	M8-M30	PP	3/4/2019	Implemented IJF, Perugia, Italy
				PP	19-21/6 2019	Implemented Global Fact 6, Cape Town, South Africa
				PP	4/6/2020	Implemented The Italian infodemic: Lessons from fact-checking on COVID-19", 4 June 2020, online
Seminars	5 out of 6	Seminars for Media professionals	M12-M30	ATC	18/3/2019	Implemented Training on TrulyMedia at the opening conference of the EU Media Literacy week in Brussels.
				LUISS	27/3/2019	Implemented SOMA Roundtable: LUISS School of Journalism

	No	Aim		Partners involved	Date	Status
						Inauguration Ceremony, Rome, Italy
				T6ECO	23/5/2019	<u>Implemented</u> NEM Summit. Trusting media: joint reflections from media industry and fact checkers, Zagreb, Slovenia
				AU	6-7/5/2019	<u>Implemented</u> Conference on Online Disinformation in Aarhus, Denmark
				LUISS	21/5/2020	<u>Implemented</u> Truth is the first vaccination! Workshop of e-literacy against disinformation about Covid-19 in Europe online
SOMA Public events	1 out of 2	Promote Media Literacy following the findings of the Workshops	M15, M30	PP, ALL	20/3/2019	<u>Implemented</u> 1 st SOMA Public event/ Milano, Italy

The following sections will provide more details about the events characteristics, participants and discussion themes.

3 High-level workshops

The high-level workshops have been aimed at gathering digital media literacy stakeholders such as media organizations, fact-checkers, academics, journalist associations and other experts for the purpose of defining the problems related to media literacy and sharing related best practices, also setting the stage for the establishment of cooperation within the European fact-checking community. These events have so far taken place in Perugia (Italy), Cape Town (South Africa) and online. Pagella Politica has been the leader of this task, with contributions from all other Consortium members.

3.1 SOMA at the International Journalism Festival



The International Journalism Festival (Perugia, Italy, 3-7 April 2019)

[<https://www.journalismfestival.com/>] hosted the SOMA workshop entitled 'What technology can do for fact-checking: practical examples from Europe'

[<https://www.journalismfestival.com/programme/2019/what-technology-can-do-for-fact-checking-practical-examples-from-europe>]. Organized in association with Pagella Politica, the event took place on 3 April from 15.00 to 16.00 at the Hotel Brufani.

Giovanni Zagni (Pagella Politica) opened the workshop, introducing Pagella Politica and giving a brief overview of the SOMA project and its objectives. He explained the crucial role that technological tools for content verification can play in contrasting the spread of disinformation.

Barbara Sgarzi (Journalist) presented and gave a brief explanation of the functioning of a number of useful tools for fact-checking, including:

For images and videos: Google Reverse Image Search, TinEye.com, Yandex.com, exif.regex.info, Youtube Data Viewer.

For social media: com and Twitonomy.com for Twitter; Stalkscan.com and Whopostedwhat.com for Facebook; Ninjalitics.com for Instagram.

The full video of the workshop can be found here (in ITA)

[<https://www.journalismfestival.com/programme/2019/what-technology-can-do-for-fact-checking-practical-examples-from-europe>]

Speakers' PPTs used during the workshop are available here

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_8MsjU0OPDfozc4T3P8nOHSsmbGq3PRq].

3.2 SOMA at Global Fact 6



SOMA took part to the sixth edition of Global Fact which was held on 19-21 June 2019 in Cape Town, South Africa [<https://www.poynter.org/fact-checking/2018/the-sixth-global-fact-checking-summit-will-be-in-cape-town-in-june-2019/>]. Organized by the International Fact Checking Network (IFCN) on an annual basis, the Global Fact-Checking Summit (Global Fact) is a major international event bringing

together fact-checkers, journalists, scholars, representatives of tech platforms, and other media practitioners.

The sixth edition of Global Fact focused on crucial topics in fact-checking and misinformation including: impact and reach of fact-checking; misinformation on different platforms; monetization and revenue sources; new formats for fact-checking; acceleration and automation of the fact-checking process.

The SOMA project was represented at the gathering in a panel concerning the “Tools for Collaboration Among Fact-Checkers”, which was held on 19 June at the New Lecture Theatre of the University of Cape Town. Addressing the potential of collaborations in fact-checking the panel featured the participation of the following speakers:

Cristina Tardáguila, International Fact-Checking Network (Moderator);
Laura Zommer, Chequeado;
Giovanni Zagni, Pagella Politica / SOMA;
Yvonne Chua, tsek.ph;
Pauline Moullot, Libération/CheckNews.

As an EU-funded project which features the collaboration among actors of different nature (including fact-checkers, ICT and academics) the SOMA project was presented as one prominent example of how collaborative actions between different stakeholders can work and drive to positive results in the fact-checking field.

The PPT of Giovanni Zagni from Pagella Politica (SOMA partner) is available [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kVQRngaCj3RN8lfeA8wfarf4DSGnot/view) [<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kVQRngaCj3RN8lfeA8wfarf4DSGnot/view>].

3.3 The “Italian Infodemic” Webinar

The webinar “The Italian Infodemic: lessons from fact-checking on Covid-19” was held on Thursday 4 June 2020, 14.00-15.30 CEST.

Hosted by Pagella Politica in collaboration with fellow SOMA network member, the International Republican Institute (IRI) [<https://www.iri.org/>], the webinar was addressed to SOMA members and partners of IRI’s Beacon Project [<https://www.iribeaconproject.org/>].

The talks revolved around the specifics of both political and non-political fact-checking at a time of sanitary emergence, the importance of international collaboration to counter cross-border disinformation, an overview of the tools made available by SOMA and IRI and how they can be used to perform collaborative investigations.

Short presentations by three members of Pagella Politica’s team (Tommaso Canetta, Deputy Director; Camilla Vagnozzi, Head of Debunking; Silvia Cavasola, Project Manager) and Nikos Sarris (ATC’s Head of technologies against disinformation), were followed by questions and discussion. The webinar was

attended by 25 participants, the majority of whom belonging to act-checking organizations of the Balkan region.

The webinar agenda is available as an annex to this document.

The webinar was recorded, and the full video is available [here](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=218&v=vmLtA5LFVWI&feature=emb_logo].

4 Seminars

The seminars have been organized with the aim of opening up the discussion to a broader public of stakeholders, including schools, universities and other public spaces, with the purpose of promoting critical and healthy approach to the news ecosystem. These seminars, which have also represented the occasion for Consortium members to promote the tools and instruments developed inside the Observatory, have taken place in Brussels (Belgium), Rome (Italy), Zagreb (Slovenia), Aarhus (Denmark) and online. Each Consortium members has organized at least one such seminars. At least one more seminar will be organized before project end.

4.1 Training on TrulyMedia at EU Week of Media Literacy

The opening conference of the EU Week of Media Literacy has taken place in Brussels on the 19th March 2019.

Hosted by the Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, Mariya Gabriel, the opening ceremony is main public event at EU level during the European Media Literacy Week, gathering Member States representatives, audiovisual regulators, representatives of online platforms, media experts and journalists as well as other relevant stakeholders.

The main discussion revolved around the role of public authorities and different stakeholders in promoting media literacy. Moreover, best practices in media literacy across the EU were presented. In addition, panelists exchanged on innovation in the media sector and the role of quality media content.

During the Conference, a group of young journalists and journalism students were introduced to Truly Media, the collaborative verification platform employed by SOMA that allows crawling through social media content, aggregating it and assessing its trustworthiness. The aim of the session, which was organized by ATC on behalf of SOMA, was to increase the journalists' media literacy skills in an interactive manner and with an innovative approach.

4.2 SOMA at the NEM Summit



On 23 May 2019 SOMA organized a panel dedicated to disinformation at the 11th NEM Summit in Zagreb, Croatia.

The NEM Summit is an international conference and exhibition, organized since 2008 by the New European Media (NEM) Initiative for all those interested in the broad area of Media, Content, and Creativity. Over the years, the NEM Summit has grown to become an annual event, providing attendees with a key opportunity to meet and network with prominent stakeholders, access up-to-date information, discover latest technology and market trends, identify research and business opportunities, and find partners for upcoming EU-funded calls for projects.

Within the parallel sessions, Simona De Rosa from T6 Ecosystems organized and chaired a session entitled “Trusting Media: joint reflections from media industry” on behalf of SOMA.

The aim of the session was to stimulate a high-level discussion on impact of disinformation and effective strategies for tackling it. It brought together different points of view to discuss present and future actions. In particular, the aim was to open the opportunity for the media industry to meet researchers and professionals and to jointly discuss how to integrate different approaches to mitigate the problem.

30/6/2020

During the panel, technical approaches such as algorithms and technologies for content verification were discussed, together with fact-checker approaches and political science perspectives, leading to a broader perspective and comprehension of the issue.

The panel started with Nikos Sarris, ATC, Coordinator of the SOMA project, presenting the general approach and tools deployed by the SOMA project to fight disinformation. Then, Massimo Magaldi from Engineering (IT), partner of the Fandango project, showed the advanced analytics services developed by the project to detect disinformation. After this, Fabio Saracco from IMT discussed the preliminary results of the Toffee project recently launched by the IMT School for Advanced Studies Lucca. To complement the approaches presented so far, Prof. Tena Perisin from the Zagreb University discussed the role of fact-checkers in combatting disinformation, reporting the experience of a fact-checker active in Croatia: Eufactcheck. Finally, Prof. Igor Kanizay from Zagreb University ended the panel with a speech on what we still need to do to fight disinformation taking into account a broader perspective.

The discussion was useful to keep in mind what we still need to do to create a trusting media environment, comparing different approaches shared by different scientists and more technically oriented people. In addition, the discussion with Eufactcheck on possible collaborations was also relevant for SOMA.

4.3 SOMA at the inaugural ceremony of EU REMID



Online disinformation is a problem that crosses borders – both the national ones and the disciplinary ones. It is becoming more and more evident that a solution to the problem cannot be found without substantial international and interdisciplinary collaboration.

That was the focus for the ‘Online disinformation: An Integrated View’ workshop hosted by DATALAB at Aarhus University in Denmark. As the first of three international workshops on online disinformation, the workshop kicked off the establishment of an interdisciplinary research network by gathering top researchers from across the globe to present and discuss their research.

The event was attended by 41 participants and featured 15 paper presentations. Other than academics, journalists and fact-checkers were also invited to and attended the conference in order for SOMA to promote the newest knowledge on disinformation to relevant media professionals. The programme of the conference, including the complete list of speakers, is included as annex to this document.

As part of the workshop, a new research center was launched as the official SOMA reference point in Northern Europe – EU Center of Excellence for Research in Social Media and Information Disorder or just EU REMID [<https://datalab.au.dk/eu-remid/>]. The center functions as a hub for research into information flows on social media with a specific focus on different kinds of disorder e.g. disinformation, misinformation and hostility. Other than supporting researchers, EU REMID will also support teachers, fact checkers and journalists in their work against disinformation by offering knowledge sharing on latest issues, methods, results and effects, technological infrastructure, debunked lists and tools related to SOMA. The center is led by Professor in Media Studies at Aarhus University and SOMA partner Anja Bechmann.

4.4 SOMA media literacy workshop

A SOMA Media Literacy Workshop was held at the LUISS University, Rome, and led by Luiss Data Lab and T6 Ecosystems on September 9, 2019.

In a context in which phenomena such as disinformation, transparency and echo chambers (Jamieson & Cappella, 2008, Sunstein, 2009) take on an increasingly significant role in the Habermasian public sphere, Media Literacy activities are important because they aim to spread technical, cognitive, social, civic and creative skills in order to facilitate the development of critical thinking and to participate in the economic, social and cultural aspects of society by making informed decisions.

The objective of the Media Literacy Workshop organized by Luiss Data Lab and T6 Ecosystem was to accompany the students in a process of acquiring awareness of the various strategies for identifying and responding to fake news.

66 students participated, divided into two classes, 83% of which were freshmen or enrolled in an undergraduate program in law, management and computer science, political science, etc. The remaining 17% were high school students.

The workshop began with an introduction to the objectives of the SOMA project held by Giuseppe Abbamonte, Director of Media Policy Directorate, DG Connect, European Commission; Alberto Rabbachin, Scientific Project Officer, DG Connect, European Commission and Gianni Riotta, Director of Luiss Data Lab and member of the High Level Group on fake news and online disinformation appointed by the European Commission.

Luiss Data Lab team, represented by Alice Andreuzzi, Stefano Guarino, Luca Tacchetti and Noemi Trino, started the media literacy session explaining in depth the concept of Social Data Intelligence for fake news detection. It means developing software and algorithms in order to analyze how information flows in social media. Students were shown data collection tools such as Google Trend and Twitter Archiver as well as methods and techniques for their analysis. A focus was dedicated to the recognition of social bots, thinking about the criteria for their identification and searching for them in the data collected. The experience ended with an interactive exercise in which students gathered data on topics subject to disinformation such as the vaccines, climate change, Obama and the United States, the Italian Government, etc. During the workshop the SOMA toolbox was introduced, the set of tools that Luiss Data Lab is developing for the SOMA project in order to offer journalists and users useful tools to identify, isolate, classify and assess the fake news polarization in social information flows.

Then, T6 Ecosystems addressed current solutions developed to assess the quality of information and mainly the transparency index, providing some examples on how they have been developed and implemented. The session was coordinated by Simona De Rosa from T6 Ecosystem and its aim was:

- Providing a theoretical insight on source transparency index;
- Providing an overview on source transparency index already in use;
- Providing concrete suggestions on how to judge an online news outlet;
- To achieve this aim, a presentation was delivered explaining the STI and how they work. After that, participants were divided into groups and provided with examples of online news to discuss the relevance of the indicators in the understanding of news credibility.

In particular, different articles containing opinions, fact-checked data and fake news were distributed to the participants. Each group replied to some questions to assess what kind of news they were reading, identifying the most relevant information to judge an article. Accordingly, they were asked to validate the indicators selected by SOMA, give them a value and suggest new indicators to add to the list. The session supported the students in learning how to recognize fake news. Moreover, the session provided relevant insights on helpful indicators to use to distinguish a trustworthy article from an untrustworthy one.

Overall, the media literacy workshop got a positive response from the students who collected skills in different areas:

- select, collect and analyze data sets;
- use tools for analyzing and recognizing social bots;
- get a theoretical and practical insight on source transparency index;
- discover what the EU Commission is doing in order to fight against misinformation.

4.5 Webinar “Truth is the first vaccination”



Luiss Libera Università Internazionale
degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli

SOMA

T6ECOSYSTEMS

Luiss
Data Lab

Verità, il primo vaccino!

Workshop di e-literacy contro la disinformazione su Covid19 in Europa

21 maggio 2020, ore 10:00 (CET)

LUISS

   

Education and increased awareness are the crucial keys for stemming panic and hatred fostered by false news. To enhance social resilience, ALETHEIA Center of Excellence against Disinformation at Luiss Data Lab with partners of SOMA DICI COSA E' organized on May 21st 2020 the second workshop of e-literacy against disinformation on Covid-19 in Europe.

Over 3,500 people, students, journalists, scholars, managers enrolled and follow us via social media platforms, Facebook, LinkedIn, Webex.

The event was hosted by Gianni Riotta, Director of Luiss Data Lab, ALETHEIA, Dean of Master in Journalism and digital communication at University Luiss Guido Carli and Visiting Professor at Princeton University.

International professors, researchers, professionals, politicians, managers, military officers participated to the workshop focusing on the growing “infodemic”. The lists of speakers included:

- Anna Ascani, Italian Deputy Minister of Education and Congresswoman interviewed by Luiss Master of Journalism’s student, Angelica Migliorisi, on the role played by schools and education in recognizing the truth and the quality of information and the importance of investing in the digital transformation in the very next months and years.
- Professor of Public Health Walter Ricciardi, Advisory to the Italian Government for Covid19 who gave a talk on the importance of reading data correctly during the outbreak and investing in Data management, a complex skill needed to save lives;
- Alessandro Vespignani, Director and Sternberg Family Distinguished Professor Physics: Bouve College Health Sciences; Khoury College of Computer Sciences – Health Sciences; Khoury, was interviewed by Jacopo Vergari, Luiss Master of Journalism’s student, on the role of real-time

30/6/2020

epidemic modeling and the mathematical representation of the ongoing epidemic that are developed and used in combination with available epidemic data in order to produce estimates of key epidemic features and the epidemic trajectory;

- Domenico Siniscalco, Vice Chairman at Morgan Stanley and Former Minister of Treasury with a speech on the impact of fake news in financial markets and the power of social networking;
- Yevgeniy Golovchenko, Research Fellow, University of Copenhagen, department of Political Science; Member of Copenhagen Center for Social Data Science, was interviewed by Luiss Master in Journalism trainee Mattia Giusto on the impact of disinformation during political campaigns and warfare.
- Simona Panseri, Senior Director Communications and Public Affairs at Google together with Angelo Mazzetti, Public Policy Manager Facebook and Giovanni Zagni, Director Pagella Politica, joined a panel on fact-checking and the role of social platforms in spreading disinformation globally and instantly or curbing them. They also shared an overview about what platforms are planning to do to prevent this scourge.
- Andrea Montanari, Director of Rai Research Institute with Stefano Marroni, Deputy Editor at TG2 Rai, and General Giuseppe Governale, Director of DIA (Anti-Mafia Investigation Directorate in Italy), had a debate on the role played by the public sector and public information in containing disinformation.
- Francesco Nespoli, Research Fellow ADAPT and Silvia Merler, Head of Research Algebris Policy & Research Forum, discussed about the impact of the combination of false news and the outbreaks on the economic crisis.

The workshop was also an occasion to present new tools and research results:

- Data Analysts Luca Tacchetti and Alice Andreuzzi from Luiss Data Lab presented the new Soma Tool Box DisinfoNet created to support the SOMA community to understand the dynamics of false news dissemination on social networks;
- Simona De Rosa, Co-Founder of T6 Ecosystem and Stefano Guarino, Research Fellow Luiss Data Lab and CNR presented results on their investigation and research on “Online information flows and impact of the Covid-19 on people behaviors in news consumption”.

The Workshop’s conclusion was led by Paolo Cesarini, Director of Media Convergence & Social Media, European Commission, who gave a speech on the role of data and data driven in the outbreak, both tools that can contribute to put together steadier recovery plans.

The webinar was recorded and is now available [here](#).

5 Public events

Public events represent an occasion to address the public at large and showcase the progresses made by the Observatory. The first event took place in March 2019 in Milan, Italy, gathering 80+ disinformation stakeholders. The second public event will be held towards the end of the project period (around M28) and it will provide the Consortium with an occasion to inform and engage the public about the overall achievements of the SOMA project.

5.1 First public event: “Disinformation across borders and how to fight it”



The first SOMA public event on disinformation took place at the National Science Museum in Milan, Italy, on 20 March 2019.

Hosted by Pagella Politica, the workshop was an occasion for confrontation and exchange among stakeholders in the European fact-checking community, offering the chance to discuss some of the key topics in disinformation, including:

- the spread of fake news and hoaxes across EU borders;
- examples of collaborative actions in fact-checking in the EU;
- fact-checking tools;

- fact-checking and politics.

The event featured the participation of 80+ stakeholders of the media sector including 29 fact-checking organizations from 18 countries, as well as international academics, media professionals and other experts.

The workshop's agenda and speakers' bios are attached as an annex to this document.

Speakers' PPTs used during the workshop are available at the following link
[<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13TqKDnF4pRi0dxng2HIWcoT0reMTu-BQ>].

6 Conclusions

This report has been submitted as part of Work Package number 4 (WP4) entitled “Stakeholder engagement and Media Literacy”. The main goal of WP4 is to foster the debate on media literacy through, among other things, the creation of two national centres for excellence studies on online disinformation.

This report has described the 9 stakeholder meetings which have been organized between M4 and M20 under the leadership of different Consortium members and which took place in several locations in Europe and outside.

7 Annex

7.1 Agenda of the webinar “The Italian infodemic: lessons from fact-checking on Covid-19” (4 June 2020)



The Italian Infodemic

Lessons From Fact-Checking on Covid-19

Thursday 04 June
@14:00 - 15:30 CEST

Event description:

At a time when misinformation poses a mortal threat to individual and collective health the current COVID-19 pandemic has created a growing public appetite for virus-related verified information. Two Italian fact-checking platforms - Pagella Politica and its debunking spin-off Facta have finding ways for meeting such increased demand since the beginning of the crisis.

In collaboration with fellow SOMA network member, the International Republican Institute, Pagella Politica is hosting a webinar for SOMA members and partners of IRI's Beacon Project which will focus on fact-checking best practices utilised during the on-going infodemic. The interactive workshop will touch upon the specifics of fact-checking and debunking in a time of crisis; the importance of international collaboration to counter cross-border disinformation, an overview of the tools made available by SOMA and IRI and how they can be used to launch and perform collaborative investigations.

Agenda

Time	Duration	Subject	Presenter
14.00	5'	Welcome and agenda	Giovanni Zagni, Director, Pagella Politica
14.05	15'	Session 1: Fact-checking Italian politics during the COVID-19 crisis	Tommaso Canetta, Deputy director, Pagella Politica
	10'	Q&A	
14.30	15'	Session 2: Debunking virus-related disinfo: challenges and opportunities	Camilla Vagnozzi, Head of debunking, Facta
	5'	Q&A	
14.50	15'	Session 3: International collaborations against disinfo: examples from the SOMA project	Silvia Cavasola, Project manager, Pagella Politica
	5'	Q&A	

15.10	15'	Session 4: SOMA's platform: useful tools and network	Nikos Sarris, Head of technologies against disinformation, ATC
	5'	Q&A	
15.30	5'	Closing remarks	Giovanni Zagni, Director, Pagella Politica

Bios of speakers and moderators (alphabetical order)

Tommaso CANETTA, deputy Director of Pagella Politica. He has a master's degree in Law, with specialization in International and European Law, and a master in Journalism. He has been a professional journalist since 2012 and a fact-checker since 2016, when he started to work for Pagella Politica.

Silvia CAVASOLA, PhD, has been Project manager at Pagella Politica since 2018, coordinating European projects and international collaborations. She had previously covered a similar role at the World Tourism Organization - UNWTO (2016-18, Madrid). With a background in political science, she has also been a research consultant to the Italian National Research Center (CNR) and the Active Citizenship Foundation (Fondaca).

Joanna ROHOZINSKA, Resident Program Director of the International Republican Institute's Brussels Office. She has been engaged in programs in Europe and Eurasia for 20 years, living and working in several countries in the region. She holds a graduate degree in Russian and European history from the University of Toronto where she focused on nationalism and foreign policy issues within the Russian and Soviet Empires.

Nikos SARRIS Nikos is a Senior Researcher at [MKLab](#) of [ITI-CERTH](#) and a member of [MeVer](#). After receiving his PhD from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Nikos worked at ATC for 15 years, where he headed the Innovation lab for 7 years and is now the Head of technologies against disinformation. He has been involved in many projects focusing on the semantic 'understanding' of news content and the assessment of its trustworthiness, coordinating the development of two related products: [TruthNest](#) and [Truly Media](#). Nikos is the coordinator of the EC-funded SOMA project tasked to empower the European Observatory against Disinformation.

Camilla VAGNOZZI is the head of debunking at Facta (Pagella Politica's debunking project) and the author of "Slow Journalism Movement: storia, modelli e diffusione di un'informazione alternativa" (2019). Before working for Pagella she has served as Press Officer at the PA Department of the U.S. Consulate General in Milan and project manager for Eticall - creative marketing and communication agency.

Giovanni ZAGNI, PhD, joined Pagella Politica in 2015 and is currently its Director. A journalist, he is a member of the Monitoring Unit on Disinformation around Covid-19 established by the Italian government in April 2020. His articles on topics ranging from foreign policy to the debate around online misinformation have appeared also in *Il Foglio*, *Rivista Studio* and the Italian version of *Scientific American*.

7.2 Programme of the Online disinformation: an Integrated View conference (Aarhus University, 6-7 May 2019)



Monday May 6

- 09.30-10.00: Registration and coffee
- 10.00-10.30: Welcome by Nikolaj Thomas Zinner (Deputy Director, AIAS) and Anja Bechmann (Director, DATALAB)
- 10.30-11.30: Keynote talk by Leon Derczynski: *Automatic Detection of Fake News*
- 11.30-12.30: Lunch
- Track 1: Hate speech, trolling and accusations as viral tactics (Moderated by Matteo Magnani)**
- 12.30-12.50: Michael Bossetta: *Black Trolls Matter: Sockpuppetry as a Disinformation Tactic in the 2016 US Election*
- 12.50-13.10: Sander Andreas Schwartz & Eva Mayerhöffer: *Antagonizing the public: how hyperpartisan media use antagonistic tactics to enhance virality and spread disinformation on Facebook*
- 13.10-13.30: Tobias Bornakke: *Viral hate: How hate speech spread partisan messages*
- 13.30-13.50: Rebekka Lykke Nørremark: *Using unjustified accusations to ensure attention and spreadability*
- 13.50-14.20: Discussion
- 14.20-14.45: Break
- 14.45-15.45: Keynote talk by Ben O'Loughlin: *Strategic Narratives: Peacemaking through Visual Digital Diplomacy*
- 15.45-16.00: Opening of EU Center for Research in Social Media and Information Disorder (REMID)
- 16.00-17.30: Reception & networking
- 18.30-21.30: Dinner at NO16 (Europaplads 16, 8000 Aarhus)

Page 1/6



Tuesday May 7

09.15-09.30: Welcome

09.30-10.30: Keynote talk by Jennifer Stormer-Galley: *Conspiracies as disinformation: Defining, measuring, and designing to mitigate conspiracy thinking*

10.30-10.50: Break

Track 2: Defining and mapping the field of disinformation (Moderated by Oscar Westlund)

10.50-11.10: Thomas Nygren, Mona Guath & Anton Axelsson *Defining and Measuring Abilities to Debunk Disinformation among Swedish Adults*

11.10-11.30: Angelina Toursel & Philippe Useille: *Defining an operational definition of disinformation through the fact-checking: toward a new epistemocratic order?*

11.40-12.00: Sophie Morosoli: *Same Same, But different? A Systematic Literature Review of Online Disinformation from a Multidisciplinary Perspective*

12.00-12.20: Elaine Yuan: *The Platforms of Disinformation: The Case of Contraceptive Information on the Chinese Internet*

12.20-12.50: Discussion

12.50-13.50: Lunch

Track 3: Online Political News and Hostility (Moderated by Luca Rossi)

13.50-14.10: Fabio Giglietto: *Surfacing disinformation by analyzing divergent patterns of social media interactions*

14.10-14.30: Michael Bang Petersen: *Craving for Chaos and the Sharing of Hostile Political Rumors*

14.30-14.50: Alexander Bor: *Why so angry? Understanding hostility in online political discussions*

14.50-15.10: Mathias Osmundsen: *Who disseminates fake news on social media? Individual-level predictors of fake news sharing on Twitter*

15.10-15.40: Discussion

15.40-16.00: Break

16.00-17.00: Workshop: *Disinformation Research Network*



Keynote Speakers

Leon Derczynski

Leon Derczynski is Assistant Professor at the ITU University of Copenhagen where he has been working on online veracity since 2013, first with the EU FP7 Pheme project, which he co-authored while at the University of Sheffield, UK. His background is in artificial intelligence, in the field of Natural Language Processing. He has researched and led implementations of multi-lingual veracity detection systems in Europe, as well as founding the recurring RumourEval evaluation exercise in automatic estimation veracity of claims.

Ben O'Loughlin

Ben O'Loughlin is Professor of International Relations and Co-Director of the New Political Communication Unit at Royal Holloway, University of London. Ben's expertise is in the field of international political communication. He is Co-Editor of the Sage journal Media, War & Conflict, and since 2007 he has carried out a series of grant funded projects on media and security.

Jennifer Stromer-Galley

Jennifer Stromer-Galley is Professor in the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University and Director for the Center for Computational and Data Science. She has been studying "social media" since before it was called social media, studying online interaction and strategic communication in a variety of contexts, including political forums and online games. Her award-winning book, *Presidential Campaigning in the Internet Age* (Oxford University Press), provides a history of presidential campaigns as they have adopted and adapted to digital communication technologies.

Speakers

Michael Bossetta

Michael Bossetta is a political and data scientist at the University of Copenhagen where he specializes in new forms of political participation and campaigning through social media. His overarching research interest lies in how social media platforms affect the flow of political information and communication in 21st century democracy.

Sander Andreas Schwartz

Sander Andreas Schwartz is assistant professor of communication at the Department of Communication and Arts, University of Roskilde. Sander studies political communication and citizen engagement on social media. He is also developing digital methods as a founder of the Digital Media Lab at Roskilde University.

Eva Mayerhöffer

Eva Mayerhöffer is assistant professor of journalism at the Department of Communication and Arts, University of Roskilde, where she is also affiliated with the Center for News Research and the Digital Media Lab. She holds a PhD in political communication from Freie Universität Berlin. Her research focuses on journalism cultures, comparative media studies, media and populism, alternative media and the role of elites in political communication.

Tobias Bornakke

Tobias Bornakke is an analyst and researcher specialised in social data science and machine learning. His particular interest lies within exploring the potentials of new digital data. Tobias holds a Ph.D. in digital methods from the University of Copenhagen and is the co-founder of the cooperative agency Analyse & Tal in which he works as a partner.

**Rebekka Lykke Nørremark**

Rebekka Lykke Nørremark is a PhD student at the Department of Comparative Literature and Rhetoric, School of Communication and Culture and the PhD Programme for Art, Literature and Cultural Studies. With a background in rhetorical studies, her research focuses on the forms and functions of informal accusatory rhetoric on online social media platforms and the way these differ from “offline accusations”. One of her interests involves tracking and mapping accusations as they are raised, spread and evolved across media platforms.

Fabio Giglietto

Fabio Giglietto, PhD, is Associate Professor at the Department of Communication Sciences, Humanities and International Studies at the University of Urbino Carlo Bo. His main research interests are theory of information, communication, and society with a specific focus on the relationship between social systems and new technologies. On these topics, he has published extensively in journals such as the Journal of Communication, Information, Communication and Society, the Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media, Social Media + Society, and the International Journal of Communication.

Michael Bang Petersen

Michael Bang Petersen is a Professor of political science at Aarhus University. His research focuses on the psychological underpinnings of political attitudes and behavior and, to this end, he draws on interdisciplinary theories from psychology, biology and anthropology. From this perspective, Michael Bang Petersen has investigated, among other topics, the psychology of partisanship, political violence, immigration attitudes and, more recently, online political hostility. He has published numerous publications in the best journals within political science and psychology and has received several awards including the Erik Eriksson award for early career achievements within the field of political psychology.

Alexander Bor

Alexander Bor is a Post Doc at the Department of Political Science, Aarhus University, Denmark. Broadly, his work focuses on how the evolved human mind navigates the political and social world. His PhD dissertation investigated the role of intentions and competence in political leader evaluations, relying on quantitative and experimental methods. Currently, he is working on a project investigating the causes and consequences of hostility in online political discussions.

Mathias Osmundsen

Mathias Osmundsen is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Political Science, Aarhus University. His research draws on insights from political psychology to examine how political communication affects citizens’ policy opinions. He has published articles in both political science and psychology journals. He has recently become member of Research on Online Political Hostility (ROPH), a major interdisciplinary research project focusing on why and how online political hostility spread on social media platforms like Twitter and Facebook.

Thomas Nygren

Thomas Nygren is Associate Professor at the Department of Education, Uppsala University. His research interests focus on history education, the digital impact on education, critical thinking and human rights education. His previous research, conducted also at Umeå University and Stanford University, has been published in books and journals of history, education, media literacy, and digital humanities. Currently he is involved in projects concerning critical thinking in subject education and digital civic literacy against propaganda and fake news, funded by Vinnova and EU.

**Mona Guath**

Mona Guath, PhD, is a researcher in cognitive psychology with focus on cognitive models and complex decision making in online environments. Her dissertation focused on how feedback and goal presentation can facilitate the cognitive processing of electricity consumption presented by a digital display. Presently, she is working in two projects: one that investigates how to induce people to choose more sustainable products when shopping online; the other investigates the cognitive constructs underlying the ability to assess credibility of online information.

Anton Axelsson

Anton Axelsson, PhD, is a researcher in Human-Computer Interaction with a research span from educational technology for young children to IT support systems in professional work domains. He has a B.Sc. in Information Architecture from Malmö School of Technology, an M.A. in Cognitive Science from Lund University, and a Ph.D. in Computer Science with a specialization in Human-Computer Interaction from Uppsala University. His research focus is on human reasoning in complex IT environments, studying how systems can be designed to support decision-making, problem solving, and learning.

Angelina Tournel

Angelina Tournel is a Teaching and Research Assistant in information and communication sciences and PhD student at the DeVisu Laboratory (Visual and Urban Design, EA 2445) at the Université Polytechnique des Hauts-de-France. Graduate in Philosophy, she has taught philosophy. Her research deals with information communication phenomena, devices and digital media in topics such as the study of disinformation and fact checking practices, epistemology of information, philosophy of the media, media cultures, forms and writings of media information, innovation & journalism.

Sophie Morosoli

Sophie Morosoli is a PhD candidate at the Department of Political Science at the University of Antwerp. Her research interests are political communication, comparative research, election campaigns and online disinformation. She is part of the joint research project with the University of Zurich: From Uniformed to Disinformed Citizens? – Comparing Western Information Environments.

Elaine Yuan

Elaine Yuan (Ph.D., Northwestern University) is an Associate Professor in Communication at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Dr. Yuan's research focuses on how new and emerging forms of communication mediate various social institutions and relations. She has researched extensively on the subjects of network and mobile communication, social media, activism, and social change. Her more recent works examine issues of privacy, community, nationalism, activism, and online market as mediated social practices in China. Her critical cultural perspectives are empirically rooted in diverse and innovative research methods such as network analysis and big data approaches.

Program committee

Anja Bechmann

Anja Bechmann is Professor at the Department of Media and Journalism Studies at Aarhus University in Denmark where she serves as chair of the research program in Media, Communication and Society and as Director of DATALAB – Center for Digital Social Research. She conducts multidisciplinary research at the intersection between algorithms and media sociology entangling how meaning is created and subsequent action is pushed forward from large-scale digital human communication and behavioral data, and the challenge in doing so both theoretically, methodologically, regulatory and ethically.

**Matteo Magnani**

Matteo Magnani is Associate Professor at Uppsala University, with previous jobs at the University of Bologna, the National Research Council in Italy and Aarhus University in Denmark, and he is the director of Uppsala Information Laboratory. Since 2011 Matteo Magnani has developed the area of multilayer network science, a sub-field of data science, and his results are described in his book “Multilayer Social Networks”, Cambridge University Press (2016), in several peer-reviewed publications, and implemented in the multinet R and C++ library.

Luca Rossi

Luca Rossi is Associate Professor at IT University of Copenhagen. He has more than 10 years of experience in the field of computational methods for the social sciences. He is co-principal investigator of the FIRB project Information monitoring, propagation analysis and community detection in Social Network Sites funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research (2011-2016); in the steering board of the DECIDIS strategic initiative at ITU; and in the ITU team for the EU H2020 project VIRT-EU Values and ethics in Innovation for Responsible Technology in Europe. He authored more than 40 publications in the area of social media studies and social networks.

Oscar Westlund

Oscar Westlund is Professor at the Department of Journalism and Media Studies at Oslo Metropolitan University, where he leads the OsloMet Digital Journalism Research Group. He holds secondary appointments at Volda University College and University of Gothenburg. Westlund specializes in journalism, media management and news media consumption for proprietary news media platforms such as news sites and mobile applications, as well as with regards to social media platforms non-proprietary to the news media. Westlund is the Editor-in-Chief of Digital Journalism, and has also guest edited special issues for a handful other leading international journals. He currently leads a research project called the epistemologies of digital news production, funded by the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences.

7.3 Agenda of SOMA's first public event "Disinformation Across Borders and How to Fight It" (20 March 2019)



**Disinformation Across Borders and How
to Fight It:
1st SOMA High-Level Workshop**

Wednesday, 20 March 2019

Venue: [Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Technological "Leonardo da Vinci"](#), Sala del Cenacolo (address: Via San Vittore, 21, 20123 Milano)

Hosted by:



Agenda			
Time	Duration	Subject	Presenter
9.30-9.45	15'	Welcome, presentation of SOMA, meeting objectives, organization and agenda	Giovanni Zagni, Pagella Politica
9.45-11.00	75'	Session 1: Disinformation across borders: case studies from the EU	Clara Jiménez Cruz, Maldita.es Peter Burger, Nieuwscheckers Maarten Schenk, Lead Stories Grégoire Lemarchand, AFP CrossCheck Moderator: Carlo Canepa, Pagella Politica
11.00-11.30	30'	Session 2: Introducing the FactCheckEU alliance	Jules Darmanin, FactCheckEU
11.30-11.45	15'	Coffee break	
11.45-12.45	60'	Session 3: SOMA's platform: what, who, how	Nikos Sarris, ATC
12.45-13.45	60'	Lunch Break	
13.45-14.30	45'	Session 4: Monitoring the European media ecosystem: EMM	Charles Macmillan, JRC
14.30-15.00	30'	Session 5: Tackling disinformation: the importance of social sciences research in understanding the phenomenon and the role of research cooperation	Simona de Rosa, T6 Heritiana Ranaivoson, MediaRoad
15.00-15.15	15'	Coffee break	
15.15-16.30	75'	Session 6: Fake news vs real politics	Lucas Graves, Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism Guido Bülow, Facebook Will Moy, Full Fact Bharath Ganesh, Oxford Internet Institute Moderator: Camilla Vagnozzi, Pagella Politica

Time	Duration	Subject	Presenter
16.30- 16.45	15'	Closing remarks	Giovanni Zagni, Pagella Politica

This high-level workshop has been organized as part of the **SOMA project**.

About SOMA: Following the European Commission Communication on tackling online disinformation, SOMA (Social Observatory for Disinformation and Social Media Analysis) has been launched to provide support to a European community that will jointly fight disinformation. The project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 825469. The SOMA consortium is composed by: **ATC – Athens Technology Center** (Greece), **Aarhus University** (Denmark), **LUISS University** (Italy), **Pagella Politica** (Italy) and **T6 Ecosystems** (Italy).

Bios*

*Alphabetical order

Guido BÜLOW has been working as a Head of News Partnerships for Central Europe since September 2015. Since March 2019 he is responsible for Strategic Initiatives in EMEA which includes the Third-Party Fact-Checking program. Before joining Facebook, he was head of social media at SWR (ARD). Guido started his career with bigFM, where he volunteered after completing his studies and then worked as a marketing manager.

Peter BURGER is a journalism scholar (Leiden University, The Netherlands) with a long-standing interest in disinformation, rumor, and urban legends. He is one of the supervisors of the university's fact-checking project Nieuwscheckers. With Belgian fact-checker Maarten Schenk (Leadstories.com) he recently exposed a Macedonian network of English-language websites that promoted false news about migrants and Muslims.

Carlo CANEPA is a fact-checker at Pagella Politica, the main Italian fact-checking website. As co-author, he has published the book "La scienza dei goal" (Hoepli, 2016) – on football and science communication – and he has written the documentary "The Choice" (Unozerouno, 2018) – on the risks of web democracy. He has graduated in philosophy of sciences at Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele, in Milan.

Jules DARMANIN is the Project Coordinator for FactCheckEU, a fact-checking project from 19 outlets in 13 European countries. He previously led a debunking vertical for the French edition of BuzzFeed News. He has taught fact-checking and online research in Sciences Po and other journalism schools.

Simona DE ROSA holds a PhD in Economic Geography from the University of Rome La Sapienza and a degree in Political Science (110/110 cum laude) from the University of Naples L'Orientale. She is Partner and Senior Researcher in T6 Ecosystems working in the Media field coordinating policy activities and be engaged in research on impact assessment. Simona is Vice-Chair for Liaison for New European Media Initiative (<https://nem-initiative.org/>)

Bharath GANESH is a Researcher at the Oxford Internet Institute, University of Oxford specialising in the study of digital culture, hate speech, extremism, and new media in Europe and North America. This work, which focuses on the cultural and transnational aspects of this phenomenon, combines qualitative and computational methods to study its growth, spread, and impact. He contributes to the VOX-Pol Network of Excellence and the Computational Propaganda project at the Oxford Internet Institute. Bharath holds a PhD and MSc in Geography at University College London and a BA in Peace and Conflict Studies from UC Berkeley.

Lucas GRAVES (Dr) is acting Director of Research at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford and Associate Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Dr Graves has been at the forefront of research on the fact-checking movement in the United States and around the world. His 2016 book *Deciding What's True: The Rise of Political Fact-Checking in American Journalism* chronicled the history, mission, and daily routines of this new form of journalism; he has also published the first comprehensive studies of a global fact-checking field that covers more than 50 countries and includes activists, academics, and policy experts as well as journalists. With the Reuters Institute he has published reports on the rise of fact-checking in Europe, and on the promise and limits of automated fact-checking technologies.

Clara JIMÉNEZ CRUZ is the Head of Project of Maldita.es, a non-profit news organization focused on the control of disinformation and public discourse through fact-checking and data journalism techniques. Maldita develops tech tools that enable citizens to make informed decisions and engages with its audience in innovative formats. Shortlisted twice for the European Press Prize, Maldita has been awarded with the Jose Manuel Porquet Journalism Prize. Clara also collaborates with Onda Cero, Radio Nacional de España and Movistar+. Between 2013 and 2018 she was part of the *El Objetivo*, a primetime TV show in laSexta. She was

appointed to the High Level Group against Disinformation by the European Commission in representation of Maldita.es and is currently a member of the International Fact-Checking Network Advisory Board.

Grégoire LEMARCHAND has been deputy editor in chief, head of social networks & fact-checking at AFP's headquarters in Paris since 2016, after having spent 12 years of reporting in Paris and Italy and 4 years as head of the social networks' unit. He is overseeing the development of fact-checking at AFP with a blog called Factual, available in five languages, and a network of journalists specialized in fact-checking in more than 15 countries. He is also a teacher at the School of Journalism of Sciences Po Paris since 2013.

Charles MACMILLAN is a researcher at the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) working on text mining and analysis, including the JRC media monitoring project, the Europe Media Monitor (<http://emm.newsbrief.eu/overview>) which applies multilingual text mining techniques to online news and social media. Charles is leading the work at the JRC to develop specific tools to support of media analysts working on the detection and management of disinformation.

Will MOY has been the Director of Full Fact since 2010, through three referendums, the Leveson Inquiry into press standards, the European Parliamentary and 2015 and 2017 general elections. Will is a Marketing Academy scholar who appears regularly on TV, radio, and at events to discuss Full Fact's work and fact-checks, as well as giving evidence to the Leveson Inquiry and select committee inquiries. Before Full Fact, Will worked for the non-party affiliated peer Lord Low of Dalston and the Parliamentary Advisory Council on Transport Safety.

Heritiana RANAIVOSON is Senior Researcher and Project Leader at imec-SMIT-Vrije Universiteit Brussel (Belgium). He is currently coordinating the EU H2020 WEAR Sustain project, and leads EU H2020 MediaRoad's Policy Hub. Before joining imec, he was associate researcher at Cerna, the Centre for Industrial Economics at Mines ParisTech (2008-2010). He holds a PhD in Industrial Economics from Université Paris 1, Panthéon-Sorbonne. He has led several projects at international, national and local levels, funded by public (e.g. European Commission, Unesco) or private (e.g. Google) organizations. His main research interests are cultural diversity, media innovation and the economic impact of digital technology on cultural industries.

Nikos SARRIS is the Head of the ATC Innovation Lab, working on new technologies with a focus on the media sector. For the last 20 years he has been working in R&D projects as a researcher, project manager and coordinator of large multinational consortia. Lately he has mainly been involved in projects focusing on the semantic 'understanding' of news content and the assessment of its trustworthiness. He is currently managing two related products on behalf of ATC: TruthNest and TrulyMedia, the latter in cooperation with Deutsche Welle. Nikos is the coordinator of the EC-funded SOMA project tasked to empower the European Observatory against disinformation.

Maarten SCHENK is the co-founder of fact-checking website leadstories.com (which recently partnered with Facebook) and the creator of the Trendolizer engine which is used to discover content currently going viral online and to map networks of related sites. He is endlessly fascinated by the tools, tricks and techniques used by the (mainly financially motivated) spreaders of fake news and disinformation online. He is based in Belgium but his work has helped expose (and sometimes bring down) networks of websites from all around the globe.

Camilla VAGNOZZI is a fact-checker at Pagella Politica, the main Italian fact-checking website. Camilla worked for the U.S. Consulate General Milan as a public affairs officer and as a project manager for Eticall - marketing and communication agency. She has graduated in Publishing, Communication and Fashion at the Università degli Studi di Milano and in Modern Literature at Università degli Studi di Pavia. Her main interests are journalism and new media.

Giovanni ZAGNI joined Pagella Politica in 2015 and is currently its Director. A journalist, he previously worked at the two Italian online newspapers Il Post and Linkiesta. His articles on topics ranging from foreign policy to the debate around online misinformation have appeared also in Il Foglio, Rivista Studio and Le Scienze. He is an alumnus of the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa and holds a PhD in Romance Philology from the University of Siena.

Hosted by:



About Pagella Politica: Founded in 2012, Pagella Politica is the main Italian project dedicated to political fact-checking. The project's mission is to verify the claims made by politicians and public figures, using publicly available or specifically requested data, facts and figures. Pagella Politica is an active member of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) and of the FactCheckEU (FCEU) alliance.