



## March 2022

Hosted by the European Economic and Social Committee from 31 March to 1 April, this year's 'Your Europe, Your Say!' (YEYS) event will focus on disinformation and fake news. The goal is to raise awareness of disinformation as a threat to democracy and encourage the participants to become more active in the fight against fake news. The discussions will also focus on helping young people to detect disinformation easily and act against it. This digest presents a selection of publications from the European Parliamentary Research Service, which can feed into the discussions at this year's event.



### How to spot when news is fake

Infographic by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, February 2019

'Fake news' and disinformation – information deliberately manipulated with the aim of fooling people – have become an increasingly visible global phenomenon. Social media and their personalisation tools have made it easier to spread bogus stories, often using emotions to capture attention and generate clicks, for economic or ideological reasons. Even young, digital-savvy people find it difficult to identify manipulated news. This compass will help you navigate the ocean of information, and find your way through waves of lies and disinformation.

### What if deepfakes made us doubt everything we see and hear?

'At a glance' note by Philip Nicholas Boucher, EPRS, September 2021

Deepfakes are hyper-realistic media products created through artificial intelligence (AI) techniques that manipulate how people look and the things that they appear to say or do. The accessibility and outputs of deepfake generation tools are improving rapidly, and their use is increasing exponentially. A wide range of malicious uses have been identified, including fraud, extortion and political disinformation. The impacts of such misuse can be financial, psychological and reputational.

### The evolving consequences of the coronavirus 'infodemic': How viral false coronavirus-related information affects people and societies across the world

Briefing by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, September 2020

Massive waves of information, including extensive amounts of false information, have accompanied the coronavirus pandemic. False information is being spread by a number of different actors for various reasons. Deliberately deceptive (geo-)political disinformation campaigns to undermine democracies – including the EU – have been spread by authoritarian state actors and their proxies. Extremist groups have exploited the situation to spread their messaging, while others have propagated misleading information for financial gain.

### Key social media risks to democracy: Risks from surveillance, personalisation, disinformation, moderation and microtargeting

In-Depth Analysis by Costica Dumbrava, EPRS, December 2021

Social media provide individuals with new opportunities to access information, express opinions and participate in democratic processes, but they can also undermine democracy by distorting information, promoting false stories and facilitating political manipulation. This paper provides an overview of the key risks social media pose

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to democracy related to surveillance, personalisation, disinformation, moderation and microtargeting. It also discusses key approaches to tackling social media risks to democracy in the context of EU policy.

### Further reading

#### Countering the health 'infodemic'

'At a glance' note by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, April 2020

#### The EU's response to the coronavirus 'infodemic'

'At a glance' note by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, June 2020

#### COVID-19 foreign influence campaigns: Europe and the global battle of narratives

Briefing by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, April 2020

#### Trump's disinformation 'magaphone': Consequences, first lessons and outlook

Briefing by Naja Bentzen, EPRS, February 2021

#### Regulating disinformation with artificial intelligence

Study by Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA), EPRS, March 2019

#### Tackling deepfakes in European policy

Study by Scientific Foresight Unit (STOA), EPRS, July 2021

#### Support for democracy through EU external policy: New tools for growing challenges

Briefing by Ionel Zamfir, EPRS, February 2021

#### Democratic scrutiny of social media platforms and protection of fundamental rights

'At a glance' note by Tambiama Madiega, EPRS, February 2021

#### Implementation of citizenship education actions in the EU

Study by Ex-Post Evaluation Unit, EPRS, August 2021

#### European Year of Youth 2022

'At a glance' note by Pernilla Jourde, EPRS, December 2021

### More information:



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