

ID: MSCA-19-Picone02

Discipline: Journalism

Title: Dealing with Toxic News

Abstract: The project starts from the observation that the news environment is polluted with disinformation that makes media harmful rather than beneficial for democracy. It takes a media repertoire approach to disinformation, which has the benefit of not studying various of its emanations in isolation from each other. The project will analyse citizens' practices to cope with information in such a 'toxic' news environment. It will investigate 1) how citizens evaluate what they see as trustworthy and believable, 2) which individual- and collective-level factors shape different coping strategies and 3) how these can be traced to psychological, cultural, socio-economic and socio-political roots. The project relates to the theme of democratisation of information and expertise.

We are open to qualitative and quantitative analyses. The quantitative data will be provided by the Digital News Report Survey executed by our collaboration partner, the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. The qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured, elicitation interviews.

Current initiatives to tackle disinformation at the European level focus on strengthening media literacy and supporting investigative journalism. While this approach is valuable, it also poses challenges as to how citizens can incorporate these skills in their daily news routines. A deeper understanding of citizens' coping practices can help policy makers and media educators to develop initiatives aimed at improving current coping practices and will win citizens' acceptance.

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