NEWSLETTER | UPDATE AUTUMN 2020

ERUM is an Erasmus+ funded project. It is carried out by university partners from Cyprus, France, Greece, Lithuania, Luxembourg and Spain under the coordination of the University of Vienna (Austria) and focuses on the question how universities and media professionals can work together and learn from each other to improve the quality of information amidst changing and dynamic flows of information. Within the project, various events will bring together journalists, researchers and students. In addition, freely accessible materials such as reports, guidelines and open educational resources for higher education institutions will be produced.

As we are one year into the project, we decided it is about time to look back at the milestones that could already be achieved despite the current COVID-19 crisis and give an outlook on what is yet to come in the forthcoming months.

MEDIA REPRESENTATION
OF CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS

Thanks to the great dedication and intensive cooperation of all project partners, we were able to finalise a general report and five case studies on the subject of mis- and disinformation in late spring. The case studies deal with controversial topics such as the 5G network, the outbreak of COVID-19, climate change and reporting on migration and refugees.
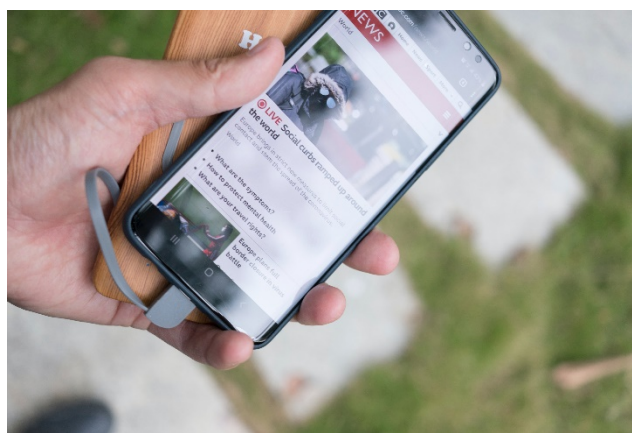

Photo: Stanley Ng via Pexels

In the individual case studies, at least 30 newspaper articles (from national as well as international periodicals) were examined with regard to mis- and disinformation, which all lead to different results. For example, while in the case study about 5G, about a third of the selected articles misrepresented the subject by disinforming (intentionally spreading misleading information), the number was significantly less for the reports concerning coronavirus and climate change scepticism. Throughout the project, the partnership will use these case studies for educational purposes.

The reports can be downloaded through the following link: https://projects.uni-foundation.eu/erum/#resources

GUIDELINES FOR EVIDENCE-BASED COMMUNICATION

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The guidelines for evidence-based communication are one of ERUM's milestones, which will support students, journalists and researchers in the development of their science communication competences and will allow them to reflect on the role of the media in communicating science and research to a non-scientific audience. The guidelines build upon the previous research experience by the ERUM project team, addressing controversial issues and their discourses in the news media.

To highlight good practices in science journalism, we are currently conducting a survey amongst journalists and media professionals that will be completed by the end of November. **The survey is available online through the following link:** https://forms.gle/VpHMLmBbQuyP4imDA . Principal investigator is Prof. Kristina Juraite from Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuania (Kristina.juraite@vdu.lt).

EVENT ON THE 14TH OF DECEMBER 2020: OPENING SCIENCE
Online conference on scientific vulgarisation in mainstream media

The European Commission is currently working to implement a comprehensive set of actions to tackle the impact of online mis- and disinformation in Europe. These initiatives have particularly increased in the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused massive disinformation campaigns. This raises the broader question of disinformation and misinformation in the field of science.

In this framework, the European University Foundation is organising an online conference that will take place on the 14th of December 2020 from 10am to 4:30pm. The event will bring together **media professionals, academics and representatives from the EU institutions** and will include exchanges and discussions on how universities and media professionals can learn from each other to increase the quality of information. Furthermore, the popularisation of scientific information through media will be discussed based on the outcomes that the project has reached so far, which will also be presented by the members of the consortium.

More detailed information on the programme will be available through the website in the forthcoming weeks!

Registration is possible through the following link and will be open until the 1st of December: https://projects.uni-foundation.eu/erum/online-conference-scientific-vulgarisation-through-mainstream-media/

OUTLOOK: WHAT'S NEXT TO COME?

In the forthcoming months, we will begin our work on our third output, which lies at the centre of our project. It involves the **creation of innovative learning material for university students from all study fields with the aim to deepen their knowledge about mis/disinformation**, equip them with critical thinking skills to improve their resilience towards "fake news" and raise awareness about its impact on our society. The material will attempt to cover the need for student-centered learning and provide access to tools and information on debunking methodologies.

Furthermore, we are organising an intensive study programme hosted by the University of Versailles for students of journalism and professionals entitled "**Which guidelines for evidence-based communication?**," which will take place from 1st to 5th of March 2021. The aim is to help participants to better understand how research-based journalism is implemented and how to promote scientific content for general audiences. Each student will be awarded with 3 ECTS. All students, journalists and teachers will be issued with a certificate of attendance.
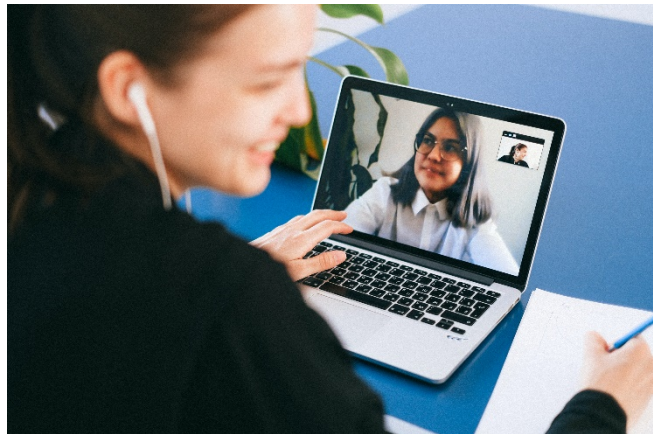

Photo: Anna Shvets via Pexels

ERUM ON SOCIAL MEDIA
For regular updates follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@ERUMproject)
or join our Linkedin-group (ERUM – an Erasmus+ Project)!

THE ERUM PARTNERS