



NEWSLETTER | UPDATE SPRING 2022

ERUM is an Erasmus+ funded project that has been carried out by Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Cyprus University of Technology, European University Foundation, University of Alcalá, University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, and Vytautas Magnus University under the coordination of the University of Vienna between November 2019 and May 2022. The project has brought together students, researchers and journalists through different study programmes and conferences to strengthen media and information literacy and discuss the impact of mis- and disinformation on our societies, the role of evidence-based communication as well as the relationship between the media and research institutions. In this newsletter, we look back on our final conference, introduce you to our open educational resources for higher education as well as our policy recommendations and reflect about ERUM's impact in the future.

FIGHTING THE BATTLE OF MIS-/DISINFORMATION ONE ACTION AT A TIME

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There is no denying that mis- and disinformation gained incredible momentum in the past couple of years, particularly after the outbreak of the pandemic. On one side, what the United Nations and the World Health Organization have identified as infodemic has once more confirmed that no topic is immune to such phenomena, not even science-related subjects. On the other hand, this stressed how important it is to make sure that quality information is perceived as a public good, and as such, it demands to be safeguarded not only by individuals but also by the (democratic) institutions.

Therefore, counteracting the spread of disinformation and misinformation requires an active engagement and concerted efforts from multiple stakeholders, including the media industry, Higher Education Institutions, and policymakers. Indeed, the circulation of false content is a real risk that can undermine the democratic process, have an impact on decision-making, or polarise public discourse around issues of migration, climate change, etc.

For the past 3 years, ERUM project partners have been analysing the evolving trends on disinformation and misinformation in the academic and media landscapes. The lessons learnt, the insights gathered, and the resources produced have been transformed into a set of actionable policy recommendations, which target mainly policy makers, higher education institutions and media organisations.

Read more about the policy recommendations and access them here: <https://projects.uni-foundation.eu/erum/fighting-the-battle-of-mis-disinformation-one-action-at-a-time/>



ERUM LEARNING MODULES NOW AVAILABLE AS OER

One of the main deliverables of the ERUM project was the production of learning material to foster students' media and information literacy as well as transversal skills such as critical thinking. In this context, we developed 15 learning modules that focus on issues related to mis- and disinformation and allow for an integration into diverse fields of study. The learning modules address controversially discussed topics that are prone to false information (such as migration, 5G or global warming), provide introductory knowledge in relation to "fake news", conspiracy myths and science communication as well as methodological know-how when it comes to visual analysis, reporting on scientific issues or audiences of scientific information.

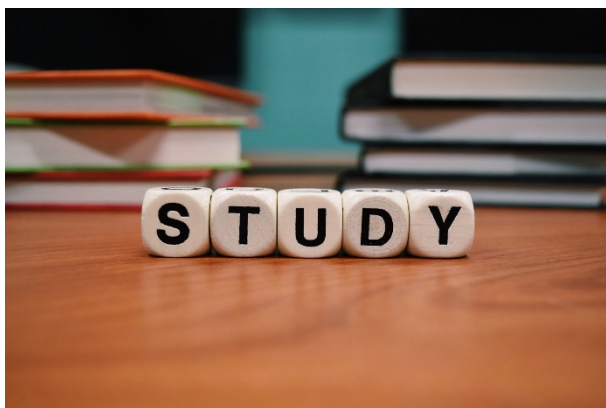


Photo: Pixabay via Pexels

All learning modules share a common organisation, include activities developed with H5P – an open-source collaboration framework – and can easily be embedded in different learning management systems. The modules, produced by the teams of Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Cyprus University of Technology, University of Vienna, University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines and Vytautas Magnus University with the support from the University of Alcalá are now available as Open Educational Resources through a central online repository developed by the European University Foundation.

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Access the learning modules here: <https://erum.uni-foundation.eu/>

A MEANINGFUL CLOSING CONFERENCE

Facts & Figures | Evidence-based Information in Contemporary Societies: The Role of Academia and the Media

On April 28th an interested audience from higher education and media institutions as well as (non)governmental bodies was introduced to the project's final outcomes and had the chance to follow discussions in Vienna as well as online. Three thematic workshops in the morning allowed participants to familiarise themselves with our learning modules accessible as open educational resources.

In the afternoon, we assessed the impact of COVID-19 on the relationship between the media and journalism with the help of assistant professor Fabiana Zollo from Ca'Foscari University of Venice and Austrian journalist Katharina Kropshofer. Together with the audience, new avenues for collaboration between research and media stakeholders to strengthen the quality of information in crises were explored. The event was concluded with the panel "Reshaping policies to fight mis- and disinformation" joined by Julia Haas from the OSCE Office of the Representative on Freedom of the Media, Katharina Kropshofer and assistant professor Ioanna Kostarella (member of the ERUM consortium).



Based on our policy recommendations the panellists together with the audience discussed interventions on different levels to enhance media and information literacy, increase the collaboration between the media and academia as well as support independent journalism and regulate online environments.

Find out more about the event here:

<https://projects.uni-foundation.eu/erum/erums-closing-conference-mil-and-policy-recommendations-revisited/>



NOW ONLINE: ERUM VIDEO

The video „Have you ever fallen for Fake News“? gives a short introduction to the ERUM project and the learning modules, which are accessible on the [ERUM Open Educational Repository](#). The video was produced by the European University Foundation and it is now available online.

You can access the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmiFmyYPNTU>

WHAT'S NEXT?

Our project is officially ending this month, but we will continue to distribute the outcomes within our universities and beyond. Not only have we developed a useful set of recommendations, but with our reports on controversial issues, the guidelines for evidence-based communication and finally yet importantly the learning modules, we have created hands-on material for higher education targeting transversal skills highly relevant to navigate the multiple crises we are confronted with. And while the materials will find their way in curricula and courses for students of higher education, we will certainly continue our efforts to strengthen collaboration between media professionals and higher education institutions to limit the spread of dis- and misinformation. For regular updates follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) (@ERUMproject) or join our [Linkedin-group](#) (ERUM – an Erasmus+ Project)!

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