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FAKE NEWS AND THE SPREAD OF ONLINE (MIS)INFORMATION

Abstract

The phenomenon of misinformation by means of fake online news is an up-to-the-minute topic, important for the field of communication sciences, now more than ever in the spotlight. This article describes the phenomenon of “fake news” and several important concepts in the field such as *alternative media*, *alt-right media* and *alt-fact*, *gatekeeping* and *gatewatching*, *post-truth politics* and *fact-checking*, *fake news detection* and *automated deception detection*. Starting from the premise that the study of misinformation, manipulation, propaganda and online fake news is even more important when looked at as part of a crisis (understood as a time of turmoil and confusion), we will turn our attention to the crisis affecting people’s trust in the traditional media, as well as to the dangers of overconfidence in the online media, by relying on a case study (the representation of fake news on Romanian online media platforms).

Keywords: fake news, media, manipulation, propaganda, fact-checking

Introduction

We will begin our discussion of concepts such as persuasion, influence, misinformation, manipulation, propaganda by referring to Article nr.19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which certifies the right of every person to receive and disseminate information or ideas by any means:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek and receive impartiality; to receive and disseminate information and ideas by any means and independently of state borders. (UDHR, 1948: 5-6)

In this quotation we find the grounds for spreading information and ideas in one’s own interest, but contrary to the interests of others. This article, which expresses human rights and freedom, does not refer to truthfulness at all or, in other words, it does not prevent the reception and dissemination of untrue or false information. What is fundamentally missing from this statement is the fact that everyone has the right to receive and disseminate “true information”, not just “information”, as stated in the cited article. This omission from Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is possibly what allows the influence of persuasion through word, sound and image in all its forms to lead to misinformation, manipulation, propaganda and fake news.

Due to the fact that the masses get their main information from the media, it goes without saying that the media can also become a tool of manipulation and propaganda. The tremendous influence exerted

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by media institutions was proven in 1938, when Orson Welles, who was leading a theater troupe (Mercury) at the time, caused a mass panic through a radio show in which he staged and audio-edited a science-fiction novel about the Martian invasion of Earth. According to the script, the Martians had landed in the state of New Jersey and were planning an attack on New York City. The theater program was broadcast at prime time, and listeners believed that creatures from other planets had invaded America and stormed police stations for help, gas masks and weapons.

Princeton University conducted a study to measure the impact the show had on the inhabitants and found out that more than one million individuals were affected. It should be noted, however, that although Orson Welles specified at the beginning of the show that it was fiction, the information issued did not reach the receivers. As pointed out by Coman: “The relationship between media and society can be seen in terms of general consequences (media functions), influences (media effects) or global missions assigned to these systems (media roles).” (Coman, 2007: 107, translation mine)

Although this radio event did not have as its ultimate goal the manipulation of the masses, the way was opened for manipulating the public through misinformation, manipulation and propaganda.

An Outline of Terms and Concepts

Misinformation is the deliberate dissemination of false or inaccurate information, taken out of context publicly or apparently accidentally, with the clear purpose of influencing public opinion, foreign governments or commercial competitors. One way of counteracting misinformation is by resorting to crossreferencing (see Coman, 2007: 118):

Cross-referencing involves finding at least two sources from which the journalist collects information about a particular event. This rule is especially valid in the case of facts and events whose development and implications are not sure or in connection with which there are conflicting opinions and accounts. It is recommended to contact, as much as possible, all those involved in the development of the facts, in order to record all their points of view and opinions. When there are different points of view, partial information, by omitting the opinion of one / some of the actors or neglecting to collect the reaction of one / some of the parts concerned or involved is equivalent to a misinformation. (Coman, 2009: 84)

Information poisoning is a vaguer term, associated with misinformation, diversion, discredit or defamation, as a concentrated and sustained effort through media channels.

Manipulation is “the action of ending a social actor to think and act in a way compatible with the interests of the initiator” (Vlăsceanu, *apud* Coman, 2007: 117) using persuasion techniques, persuasion that changes or deliberately distorting information, leaving the public with the impression that it has total freedom of thought, analysis and decision.

Propaganda is a systematic form of intentional persuasion that seeks to influence the emotions, attitudes, opinions, and actions of a target audience for ideological, political, or commercial purposes, through the controlled transmission of unilateral messages (factual or not), through media channels. (see Coman, 112)

According to Ellul (1973: 216), there are three types of propaganda:

- *white propaganda*, which has an identifiable source and is characterized by milder methods of persuasion
- *black propaganda* which is identifiable as coming from a source, but in reality hides the origin of the message and comes from another, and
- *gray propaganda*, that has no identifiable source.

Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky discuss propaganda models and suggest that subject selection is one of the main ways in which the media contributes to establishing the “economic, social and political agenda of privileged groups that dominate national society and the state” (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009: 190).

The way the message is produced is one of the most important aspects, because it is in a system of interdependence with the discovery of how the media reflects reality.

The gatekeeping theory relies on studies on the news selection process in the newsroom that were first conducted by Manning White in 1950. White wanted to discover how to control the production of news and to locate the factors that determine this control. The research was taken to a deeper level by Galtung and Ruge, in 1973, who defined journalism practice as “a process of successive selections, according to a number of values or information criteria that affect the perception of events.” (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009: 94)

This series of successive selections is called *gatekeeping*, being defined as the process of selecting, writing, editing, positioning, programming, repeating information that ultimately becomes news.

There are several informational factors that are used in selecting news:

- *frequency*: distance in time from the event;
- *intensity*: in order to become news, an event must pass a certain threshold of attention from the public;
- *univocity*: the more unambiguous an event is, the faster it will be told;
- *importance / significance*: the degree of familiarization of the public with the information;
- *consonance*: the more the event corresponds to the public’s expectations, the sooner it will become news;
- *surprise*: an unexpected event, which goes beyond the usual horizon;
- *continuity*: even if an event has passed the last information threshold, the story can continue, the public background being already set; it is often encountered in the case of political subjects;
- *structure of the publication*: a balance will be sought between the genres / types of news;
- *reference to elite nations or personalities*: the involvement of important and influential nations or politicians will attract attention, the effects being proportional;
- *personalization*: events that are associated with the actions of some people will be considered with a higher informational value than those with abstract, structural topics;
- *negativism*: the more negative the event, the faster it becomes news, the phrase “bad news is good news for the press” being already well known.

Galtung and Ruge (q. in Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2009) have established that if an event satisfies as many informational factors as possible from those mentioned above, it is more likely that it will become news and the editorial staff will decide to publish it. Once a news item is selected, and is passed through the initial filter, it will be built on the basis of the highest informative value, at which point a distortion of reality can take place. These two stages lead to a constructed image of social reality, not to a purely objective account of society.

As far as online media is concerned, there have been many news sites that have easily gained a large audience, although they do not have a clear origin, do not present themselves with an editorial team and publish unsigned and unassumed articles. The headlines in their subjects contain lighter or more pronounced hints of *yellow journalism*, many of which are based on clickbait (messages such as “see here” and “you won’t believe it”), but beyond that the content is most often truncated or completely fake.

Fake news refers to deliberate misinformation through the print media, by transmitting totally false or out-of-context information. Fake news is written and published with the intention of misleading in order to gain financially or politically, often with sensational, exaggerated or false titles that attract attention. Fake news mainly uses clickbait headlines to increase the number of readers, regardless of the veracity of the published articles. There is not much research in the field, the concept being one that has recently appeared in both the public and academic circles, but there are few specialized articles that deal with this topic.

The new media have led to the emergence of news sites that due to the lack of content regulations in online journalism cannot be controlled or held accountable for certain slippage. Basically, anyone can build a platform to publish content and sell it as real news.

There are major consequences to this. Information intoxication by propagating documented articles poorly or not at all, manipulation by materials that support certain political parties or that modify information to create feelings of panic or revolt lead not only to the creation of a “journalistic reality”, but to the shaping of the “unrealities” in which the uninformed, gullible and easily influenced consumer will live. These beliefs will determine his / her daily activity and will influence other individuals as well.

An article published on TED blogs recalls that in 2016 researchers at Stanford University found that in the US, many students could not distinguish between a news story, an opinion piece (or an editorial) and an ad (advertising type). The researchers then noted that “this lack of media education makes young people vulnerable and manipulated by false news.”

Research in social psychology shows us how strongly the individual is influenced, at the level of his attitudes and behaviors, but also of his social interaction with different groups or with others, but also by the different situational contexts he faces. A multitude of field studies and laboratory experiments show how vulnerable we are as individuals when these situational contexts are influenced or manipulated, and this is because we have a very limited ability to identify the influences or manipulations they contain. In addition, with the digital revolution, the situational contexts which are potentially manipulating have increased exponentially.

Furthermore, media education can only play a central role in this whole process of adaptation. It has only been a few years since we started to understand how social networks work and, especially, what devastating tools they can represent in the hands of the malevolent. It will be years before we find the technical solutions that can protect us, especially those most vulnerable among us to whom media education will not achieve its goals.

We have come to live in what Ralph Keyes (2004) called the “post-truth age”, an age in which it does not matter who tells the truth, but it matters who imposes first his point of view in the eyes of others, whether or not they have a real point; moreover, as shown by social networks in particular, the appeal to emotions helps the most to impose a point of view, and, when this emotional rollercoaster starts, nothing can stand in its way, and the truth becomes a negligible quantity in the eyes of the public.

Nowadays, visions of the world fueled by all these conspiracy theories and growing radicalism go hand in hand. Therefore, we experience a deep crisis of knowledge, an epistemic crisis, because we are too little interested in the truth and too much in the desire to convince. The search for the truth and its valorization has always been the basis of our educational process.

Fortunately, according to the new study “Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2021”, made by Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism from the University of Oxford, in Romania:

trust in media increased slightly, while trust in social media decreased. The most trusted brands try to offer a balanced picture while many other brands have a reputation for sensationalist or partisan coverage. Seven out of ten respondents declare they used more than seven different sources per week, online and offline (a constant in the last five years). (Radu, 2021)

At the same time, according to the survey “Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake news and disinformation online. April 2018”, published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Commission, more than a third of respondents at European level (37%) say that they encounter, every day or almost every day, news that misreport reality or are even false, and another third (31%) say that this happens at least once a week. The survey conducted by Edelman shows another worrying thing, 63% of people say they do not know the difference between true journalism, rumors and untruths, and 59%, that it is increasingly difficult to distinguish the news produced by prestigious media organizations.

In the European Union, according to “Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake news and disinformation online. April 2018”, published by Eurostat in April 2018, a proportion of 5% of European citizens say they are not at all confident that they know how to identify news or information that misrepresents reality or are false, and 21% say they are not very confident and only 15% consider that they are very confident that they know (Flash Barometer, 2018: 15). In the case of Romanians, 4% say that they are not at all

confident, 11% that they are not very confident, and 27% consider that they are very confident that they know how to identify news or information that misrepresents reality or is false (*ibidem*, 16).

Regarding the phenomenon of fake news, 56% of the respondents from the 40 countries analyzed said that they are worried about what is true and what is false in online news, in Romania, this being indicated by 58% of respondents, as shown by the study “Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2021” proposed by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford. (Newman *et al.*, 2020: 19).

Paradoxically, the digital revolution, which practically puts the whole world at our feet and which we can access by simply opening our smartphone, could, in fact, push us to close ourselves even more in even smaller universes formed by the simple coordinates of our simple bubble-filter. Users send information posted by their close contacts, friends they have on social networks, without necessarily checking or even considering whether this information is true. “The more common the information, the more we tend to trust it and the less we use critical thinking to evaluate it. This makes us easy victims in the face of those who would seek to manipulate us”. (Vilmer *et al.*, 2018: 42)

Jean-Baptiste Jeangène Vilmer *et alii* (2018) say that sharing the content posted by our friends on social networks favors the spread of the most interesting or outrageous content because it is most likely to make us react, whether it is true or not. The phenomenon contributes to the polarization of public opinion by reducing the visibility of nuanced content, which is considered less interesting. This business model is optimized for profit rather than truth and values fake news. (Vilmer *et al.*, 2018: 42).

Nuria Lorenzo-Dus *et al.* (2011) explains that the polarization of the group is also favored by the psychological distance and de-individualization between online participants, which contributes to rudeness. (Lorenzo-Dus, *apud* Lewandowsky *et al.*, 2017: 360).

Thus, we have been facing a pronounced crisis of the traditional media model in the last decades of the last century and which today is shaken to its core both as a business model and as a journalistic practice. This crisis, felt in an economic way by the media institutions, is experienced as a crisis of confidence.

This whole phenomenon of misinformation, manipulation, propaganda and digitally spread fake news finds a fertile ground in all these crises the modern society is going through. Proof is the high level of public penetration of fake news and the success of platforms that support such practices encouraged by the high trust that social network users have in the content distributed through them.

Case Study: Representation of Fake News on Romanian Online Media Platforms

The issue of false news became much more discussed in the (Romanian, but also international) public space after Donald Trump’s victory in the presidential elections in the United States of America. Many voices argued that fake news sites have influenced the electorate’s decision. It was also circulated and later confirmed by the former president, Donald Trump, that social networks and the spread of messages through them helped him win the election, in an interview with *the Financial Times*.

During the debates, the name of a Romanian, Ovidiu Drobotă, who owned such a fake or out-of-context news site, on which he intensively published materials during the state elections, was also discussed. According to the HotNews.ro news site, his name is also associated with the site www.expunere.com, although, officially, it does not appear in the publication’s archives. The reporting and documentary journalism platform PressOne also notes that, in the spring of 2016, on his Facebook profile, Drobotă appeared as CEO and owner of Expunere.com. In the meantime, this information has vanished.

As I mentioned before, fake news is that text that deliberately omits certain information, takes statements and/or facts out of context and even presents completely false information. In order to establish how we differentiate a real news site from one that presents false press materials, we have developed some criteria:

- the fake news site does not have an editorial office presented in its description and does not have an assumed signatory (*i.e.* an editor) of the articles presented; any media institution that enjoys credibility, from international ones like CNN and BBC, to Romanian ones like TVR and PROTV, have always been represented by a newsroom, by a team that assumes the articles and shows, signs them and presents them in the most transparent way possible to the general public; the fact that a site that promises truthful press materials does not have a public editorial team who signs the articles and a short biography is a criterion in its designation as a fake news site;
- the fake news site does not have a transparent contact address and a contact person, useful and even necessary for a possible right of reply;
- the fake news site does not publish details about the sources of the articles, nor does it provide data about the sources of the photos it uses; normally, the photos can come either from a photojournalist of the editorial office or from a photo agency such as Mediafax Foto, Inquam Photos etc., and their origin must be specified;
- the fake news site does not mention an editorial office, so it does not provide any details about the individuals or legal entities behind it.

In the context of today's media landscape, where breaking news and tabloidization predominate, such fake news sites, which appeared out of nowhere, are gaining more and more public. For starters, let us take a look at some of the fake news sites we have covered in this research.

The selection of sites was made according to the audience they enjoy (*i.e.* the number of people accessing the content), making a descending ranking with the number of appreciations of the first Facebook pages related to those sites that coincided with the criteria by which I was determining whether a site had fake news or not.

This ranking of the first pages (*i.e.* those that enjoy a large number of users) was done with the help of the Monitoring Service of Facebook Pages in Romania, FaceBrands, in the general news category. It should be noted, however, that the registration of the pages in the Monitoring Service is voluntary, so the research was limited to the first of those registered on FaceBrands.

It should be noted that these pages are ranked according to the number of appreciations according to FaceBrands over accredited media institutions with a tradition in Romania. For example, the news agency AgerPres and the newspaper *România Liberă* are placed after the first five Facebook pages chosen for our research. Also, the News.Ro news agency is after the first eight pages. The PressOne report and documentary journalism publication, mentioned for the fake news materials, is also positioned after the first five pages.

The page named Expunere.com related to the homonymous site is the best known of all, being in the public attention as a result of the wave of information according to which a Romanian contributed to the fate of the US presidential elections by creating a site on which he published false news. It also enjoys the highest number of likes on Facebook, but, as we will demonstrate during the research, also the highest number of likes of the articles posted, their distribution and related comments. The Facebook page has the description "Mission: Save Romania", and the cover picture shows an elderly man, who comes from rural areas, carrying a bundle of straw in the back, the image being framed in the geographical shape of the country, forming a tricolor. This image, associated with the presentation of the page, brings to mind nationalist ideals. According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language (1998), *nationalism* is defined as a political doctrine based on the (sometimes exaggerated) defense of national rights and aspirations. The site meets all the criteria to be considered a fake news site.

The InfoAlert News page related to the site www.infoalert.ro has as description the text "News and news from all over the world", and in the title it resorts to the noun *alert* which induces the idea of the importance of the news presented here. Among the classic categories in the menu of a news site such as Home, News, Recommendations, Health, Religion, on this site the categories Mysteries, Unusual and Shocking are also found. The site has a contact form, but does not provide clear information as to whom a possible message reaches. Otherwise, the site meets all the criteria to be considered a fake news site.

The page named News Romania has a headline similar to a recently established news agency, made up mostly of the former Mediafax editorial team called News.Ro. It is related to the site www.stirilero.com, it does not have a description of the page, and as a cover photo it uses only the phrase *breaking news*, which aims at increasing the sense of importance of the information presented and distributed here.

From the way these pages are posting on Facebook we can also see the way the titles of the published materials are written. The link does not reveal more from the article, but only presents the title and a photo. The titles are more of an incentive, they produce emotion to the consumer being tempted to click to find out the promised information.

While publications considered professional in Romania such as *Digi24*, *Adevărul*, *Mediafax* have adapted to the new media, posting more and more often video content (often even live) to attract consumers, the fake news sites, that promise true and unfiltered news, but which deliver poorly documented or deliberately out-of-context information still rely (successfully) on link distribution. Probably, the age segment of the public and, to a certain extent, its demographic origin (urban / rural), also contribute in part to these figures. Some pages rely on the creation of a presentation inclined towards nationalism, homeland, appealing to Romanian traditional myths.

It should also be emphasized that the production of text materials is one of the simplest and least expensive. If for photographic, video or audio materials you need equipment, but also certain production knowledge in the field, text materials are much easier, faster and less expensive to make.

The purpose of our paper is to highlight the impact that these fake news sites have on users, to see how the message spreads. All ten sites chosen for analysis meet the established criteria and cater directly for a large number of users. The number of users who appreciated the Facebook pages related to the chosen sites is so far the research (July, 2021) of 981,549, but we specify this number subject to observation that it is possible that some Facebook users may have liked more pages than those included in our research, therefore, this number could have a margin of error.

For the qualitative analysis, I focused on three of the most distributed articles, one on each page analyzed. Since I used an online source, the data was collected using a computer. We used a software program to collect data from social networks, called FacePager.

With the adoption of the General Data Protection Regulation in the European Union, since 2018 applications such as facepager or netvizz, which would normally have helped us to obtain exact numbers of the spread of false news through the Facebook pages we analyze, no longer offer such information, that is considered to be personal. Therefore, we will limit ourselves to the analysis of the most followed texts from the last month for each page, data obtained by manual search and comparison.

The Type and Significance of the Post

Of the three posts analyzed (one of the most distributed on each page), half addressed nationalist issues, which aroused either feelings of revolt against foreigners and the phenomenon of globalization, or feelings of national pride in the case of the best articles the doctor is Romanian.

These posts were also the ones that recorded, in their turn, the most numerous distributions, appreciations and comments. The titles approached were titles made according to the incentive construction methods, which would attract the public to access the news, which would create from the start the premises for the call to the emotional function.

One of the most serious problems identified was the fact that one of the most distributed posts contained erroneous medical information, taken out of context (drugs do not cure diseases, they are just some business of some global corporations). This type of posting can create feelings of panic especially among the uninformed, undocumented and uninformed audience.

An important aspect of composing these pages is how they choose to distribute information to the public. Link posts predominate for nine out of three pages analyzed. Only the InfoAlert News page registers a higher number of photo-type posts. In the photo chapter, they are also distributed with figures

that exceed the threshold of one hundred by the News Romania page, the other pages registering lower figures. In the category of video posts, the only pages that are required in the chart are the News Romania page and the Expunere.com page.

Six out of ten titles analyzed used many exclamation marks. The stake of these titles is double. We want to appeal to the emotion, to the feelings of the audience and cause them to share the message with other people.

Distributions help pragmatically to obtain advertising contracts and ideologically to send a false or out of context message to masses of people, who will gradually begin to think through the thinking filter of the sites they follow.

The sites do not provide details about the editorial teams, do not have a transparent contact menu (for a possible right of reply), do not have a public office and do not provide information about the source of the photos, but sometimes mention the source of certain information used in composing materials.

The titles chosen work only as a hook for the reader. Their strategy is based on the gathering of clicks, and then of distributions, promising materials that will shock, from which the public will learn new things, not addressed by other media institutions. In reality, as we have shown during the research in the qualitative analysis, the articles are either completely false information, or information taken out of context, or taken from other news agencies where only the title is changed to provoke a certain type of emotion causing access to the material.

The Impact of Posts on the Public

In Romania, the level of trust in such sites is the highest of all European countries. Thus, 5% of Romanians stated that they fully trust the news and information obtained through social networks and messaging applications (compared to 2%, the EU28 average), and 34% stated that they tend to trust the news and information obtained through social networks and messaging applications (compared to 24%, EU28 average), according to “Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake news and disinformation online. April 2018”, published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Commission, in April 2018 (2018: 9).

At the same time, according to the same study, 2% of Europeans have total trust in web hosting sites and podcasts and 25% are tempted to believe in their posts; as far as online social networks and messaging applications are concerned, 2% of Europeans are convinced by them and 24% are ready to be convinced (2018: 9). Regarding Romanians, the survey also shows that 4% do believe in web hosting sites and podcasts and 29% are tempted to trust them (*ibidem*). Globally, a survey conducted by Edelman in 28 countries shows that search engine trust and social networking platforms are on a downward slope.

Globally, according to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2020, conducted by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at Oxford University in 40 countries, 20% of respondents said they were worried about the false and misleading news coming from news websites and news applications and 40% in those coming from social networks (Newman *et al.*, 2020: 20).

We therefore have a local and European media market in which the internet and social networks are increasingly becoming a source of political information, 1 in 4 Europeans (26%) trusting the information obtained through social networks and messaging applications, according to „Flash Eurobarometer 464: Fake news and disinformation online. April 2018”, published by Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Commission (2018: 9). A paradoxical situation, if we correlate it with the way citizens relate to fake news and the risks that they consider to represent for democracy, in general, but also for their own nations. So, at European level, people seem to understand the effects that fake news can have on society and on democracy in general.

According to the quoted survey, 85% of Europeans consider that the existence of news that misreports the reality or is even false is a problem for their country, at least to some extent (*ibidem*, 4). And a similar value, 83%, say it is a problem for democracy in general. These views are consistent across all EU Member States, with at least 70% of respondents in each country seeing false news as a problem in their country and at least 74% linking this to democracy in general.

However, when it comes to the responsibility to counteract this dangerous phenomenon, if we look at the survey data cited above, only 1 in 3 Europeans (32%) believe that the responsibility to stop the spread of false news lies with them, the citizens (*ibidem*, 4). Almost half of the respondents (45%) believe that journalists should most likely act to stop the spread of false news, with other responsible authorities being, in this order, national authorities (39%), media and broadcasting management (36 %), citizens themselves (32%), online social networks (26%), EU institutions (21%) and non-governmental organizations (15%). As for the Romanians, they consider that this responsibility belongs to journalists (41%), media and broadcasting management (34%), national authorities (31%), citizens themselves (27%), online social networks (20%), non-governmental organizations (12%) and EU institutions (11%) (*ibidem*, 26).

Conclusions

It could be argued that the above data have a strict statistical value, but we consider this information useful for the present research because it expresses exactly those trends that shape the media spectrum of the last two decades and that explains many of the challenges brought by digitalization. However, we believe that the growing trend of trust in online information sources regardless of their degree of credibility, otherwise quite easy to verify, combined with the increasing emphasis on the manipulation of the online environment by various actors, can lead us to talk currently about online trust as a vulnerability. We will only be able to overcome this vulnerability through mass media education, which will provide citizens with all the skills needed to identify attempts at fraud, deception, misinformation, manipulation and online propaganda.

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