

Workshop - part I



Stockholms
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Public Sector Innovation, Dealing with Misinformation

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What the afternoon looks like!

Time	The day
13:45 – 14:15	Public Sector Innovation - Dealing with Misinformation, Vasilis Koulolias – eGovlab Stockholm University 5 GROUPS BO1 – BO2 – BO3 – BO4
B1	Vassilios Peristeras, Asst. Prof. International Hellenic University
B2	Stefan Decker, Director Fraunhofer FIT, Professor, RWTH Aachen, Germany or Marijn Janssen, Professor in ICT & Governance, Delft University of Technology, The Netherlands
B3	Joep Crompvoets, Professor 'Information Management in the Public Sector', KU Leuven Question # 4
B4	
B5	
15:30–16:00	Coffee Break
16:00–16:15	Report Back: Gideon Mekonnen Jonathan
16:15–17:00	Public Sector Innovation, Workshop - part II, Plenary presentations & overall discussion, Discussion coordinators: Vasilis Koulolias & Joep Crompvoets

Public Sector Innovation... dealing with misinformation

- Based on the OECD definition, Public-sector innovation involves the significant improvements in the services that government has a responsibility to provide, including those delivered by third parties;
- Providing the content of these services and the instruments used to deliver them is key;
- while the current state of misinformation in social media and other media outlets pose a key threat to the state of our democracy, governance and national security.

effects to public sector

Misinformation generates misperceptions, which have affected policies in many domains, including economy¹, health², climate change³, foreign policy⁴.

What is misinformation?

...false or inaccurate information which is deliberately intended to deceive.



"How accurate is our misinformation?"

in the *age of misinformation* and *post-truth*,
misperception has become dangerously
common.

A threat to our structure...

- The World Economic Forum listed *digital misinformation* as a key challenge to modern societies in their 2013 report¹;
- Misinformation has become a common part of our digital media environments² and is compromising the ability of our societies to form informed opinions and policies³.

¹[Howell 2013] ²[Fricker et al., 2014],

³[Flanagin et al., 2000; Rieh et al., 2007; Kata et al., 2010; Castillo et al., 2011; Lewandowsky et al., 2012].

...Perception affects stakeholder's (constituency and elected official's) recognition and interpretation of information, and how they respond to this information...

Considering...

- Today, around half the world's population have access to the Internet, where they can create, propagate, and consume information instantly and globally.
- Currently, 28% of time spent online is dedicated to social media¹
- 51% of people use social media as their source of news, with Facebook being the top used social media platform for finding, reading, and sharing news²

effects....

...conceptualisation and formulation of policies are heavily influenced by public perception.

In 2016, ‘post-truth’ was chosen by the Oxford Dictionary as the word of the year, after achieving a 2000% increase “in the context of the EU referendum in the United Kingdom and the presidential election in the United States”.

Shifts in news sources...

- The European Commission's "Media use in the European Union" survey in 2015 found that social media is growing as the source of news in Europe, whereas TV, radio, and written press are on the decline¹
- This demonstrates the high and rapidly growing impact of online media on perceptions of current affairs and policies

In spite of the rising addiction to rapid consumption of online news information, the public sector, citizens and current technologies are yet to adapt to the age of misinformation, where incorrect or misleading information is intentionally or unintentionally spread¹.

Trying to deal with the issue...

- In reaction, Facebook and Google announced plans for combating the spread of fake news on their platforms.
- Google hopes to restrict serving ads on suspicious pages, and Facebook stated that they will develop tools for better detection and reporting of fake news and clickbait posts, to thwart their spread on their platform.

Trying to deal with the issue...



Trying to deal with the issue...

On another front, more than 110 independent fact-checking groups and organisations emerged online around the world over the past decade, and half of them were established in European countries.

(e.g., *FactCheckNI.org* in Northern Ireland, *FullFact.org* in the UK, *Snopes.com* and *RootClaim.com* in the US, and *PagellaPolitica.it* in Italy, to name just a few).

Trying to deal with the issue...

- The practitioners behind these organisations see themselves as journalists,
 - providing independent professional fact checking to the public on various current news and information;
 - aim to provide an impartial validation of misinformation, to inform the public, governments, and policymakers.

Trying to deal with the issue...

Challenge: unable to keep up with the high volume
of misinformation generated online

Our challenge...

- disconnected from where the crowds read, debate, and share misinformation with little or no awareness of any invalidations offered by the fact checkers.
- we lack tools and strategies for infiltrating social media echo-chambers, and struggle to draw the attention of the citizens that are mostly in need of corrective information.
- simply publishing corrective information by fact checkers is often regarded as insufficient for changing misinformed beliefs and opinions

Trying to deal with the issue...

Some technologies have been developed to aid in the battle against misinformation. For example:

- i. Fake News Alert and B.S. Detector are browser extensions that warn users about hoax news and clickbait sites. Some of the limitations of these tools include
- ii. only alerting to manually created lists of hoax sites (fake, clickbaits, misleading),
- iii. providing alerts without any rationale or explanation of their decisions, and
- iv. disengaging stakeholders by regarding them as passive consumers rather than active co-creators.

Trying to deal with the issue...

Others focused on developing techniques for automatically identifying

- i. fake news¹,
- ii. rumour posts² and disputed arguments³,
- iii. measuring posts' credibility⁴,
- iv. validating specific claims⁵,
- v. or tracking the spread of misinformation⁶.

Let's try to develop a framework ...

...for such technological advancements to succeed in tackling misinformation at the broader scale, they need to be:

extended, integrated, and embedded into a co-creational ecosystem of policies, stakeholders, and tools, to achieve a more collaborative and effective management of misinformation, and to persuade more informed behaviours.

Things to consider

Tackling the new societal challenge of misinformation requires strengthening stakeholders' resilience to misinformation by promoting:

- 1) Empowerment, by raising individual and collective awareness of current misinformation content and sources,
- 2) Engagement, by fostering networking and cross-communication between all stakeholders,
- 3) Education, by informing stakeholders of advanced misinformation analysis results and predictions, and
- 4) Encouragement of all stakeholders to play a role in detecting, in/validating, and combatting misinformation.



Results from recent CIO discussion:

Recommendations:

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Recommendations:

Government should recognize policy & funding to create **policy framework**:

- Legal framework – legal consequences to those who share fake news
- Education & raising awareness how determine
- Openness of government – proactive way to publish information
- To encourage and provide funding to design technology solutions to detect misinformation and technology solutions
- International cooperation (e.g.. ICA, OECD, WB .. Or partnership with like-minded countries like OGP)
- Law enforcement and penalties to people responsible for misinformation

Note: government should **not** limit freedom of expression



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Thank you!
Break out session...