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## WORK PACKAGE N° 31

### WORKSHOP "PLAYING THE MEDIA MASTERS EDUCATIONAL GAME"

#### FAKE NEWS: CAN YOU RECOGNIZE IT?

Delivered By



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## Document Identification:

<b>Project full name</b>	Media Masters: Enhancing Media Literacy
<b>Project acronym</b>	MEDMAS
<b>Grant agreement no.</b>	<b>101148165</b>
<b>CERV Programme</b>	<b>CERV-2023-CITIZENS-CIV- Citizens' engagement and participation</b>
<b>Dissemination level</b>	Public
<b>Work Package</b>	31
<b>Partner(s) responsible (Legal Name and Short Name)</b>	Cultural Foundation 1948 CF 1948
<b>PIC Number:</b>	890348548
<b>Author(s)</b>	Maria Trillidou



EVENT DESCRIPTION	
<b>Event number:</b>	1st
<b>Event name:</b>	Fake News: Can You Identify It?
<b>Type:</b>	Workshop
<b>In situ/online:</b>	<i>In Situ</i>
<b>Location:</b>	Larnaca, Cyprus
<b>Date(s):</b>	08/01/2026
<b>Website(s) (if any):</b>	<a href="https://research.pacomonia.com/school-report-playing-the-media-masters-educational-game/">https://research.pacomonia.com/school-report-playing-the-media-masters-educational-game/</a>
Participants	
<b>Female:</b>	23
<b>Male:</b>	29
<b>Non-binary:</b>	0
<b>From country 1:</b>	Cyprus
<b>From country 2:</b>	Syria
<b>From country 3:</b>	Palestine
<b>...</b>	
<b>Total number of participants:</b>	52
	<b>From total number of countries:</b> 3



## Part I: Presentation of the activity and methodology

### ***Introduction***

The workshop ***“Fake News: Can You Recognize It?”*** was held at the Aradippou High School in Larnaca for students aged 14 to 18, as part of the European project MEDMAS. This workshop was implemented within the Modern Greek lesson through which students deal with the Mass Media unit and the aim was to raise awareness and enhance their understanding of fake news, disinformation and manipulation.

The activity began with an interactive introduction, where students were invited to answer questions via a digital tool (Mentimeter), related to fake news and daily social media sharing, allowing them to reflect on their own news consumption habits and engage with real examples of misleading information. Then, basic concepts about fake news and disinformation were presented, with examples from the Cypriot reality.

The main core of the workshop was the participation of students in the MEDMAS board game, which is based on real-life disinformation scenarios. The students worked in small groups and through a fun and experiential learning process, they had the opportunity to understand how easily one can be misled by disinformation and the deliberate dissemination of incorrect or false news. At the same time, the game highlighted the importance of collaboration, critical thinking and systematic verification to check the reliability of information.

The workshop concluded with a guided reflection session, during which students exchanged views on the impact of disinformation on society and discussed the importance of responsible use of the media. Overall, the activity contributed to the development of media literacy skills and encouraged participants to adopt a more critical and informed approach towards online and printed information.

### ***Workshop Objectives***

Based on the theme and focus of the MEDMAS project, the main objectives of the workshop were as follows:

- o Raising students' awareness of the phenomenon of fake news, disinformation and the deliberate dissemination of incorrect information in the media and social networks.
- o Strengthening students' critical thinking, so that they can question the reliability of the information they consume daily and recognize techniques for manipulating public discourse.
- o Developing basic information checking skills (fast-checking), through understanding the importance of reliable sources.



- o Promoting collaborative learning, as students worked in groups, exchanged opinions and collectively took on decision-making during the board game.
- o A clear understanding of how easily one can be misled by well-designed disinformation and fake news, especially when it is based on emotion, fear or sensationalism.
- o Encouraging responsible digital behaviour practices, such as checking information before sharing and using social media consciously.
- o Empowering students as active and responsible citizens, able to participate in public debate in an informed and critical manner.

### ***Target group & participants***

The workshop was aimed at high school students aged 14-18. Secondary school students with different levels of familiarity with social media, digital platforms and online information participated, who were invited to actively participate in group and interactive activities.

The group of participants was characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity, as it also included foreign-language students, including students with origins in Syria and Palestine. Their presence was taken into account in the design and implementation of the workshop, with an emphasis on the use of simple, understandable language and visual stimuli, in order to ensure equal participation of all.

The heterogeneity of the group reinforced the dynamics of the workshop, as it allowed the exchange of different experiences and perspectives on information, social media and the reliability of information. At the same time, it highlighted the importance of critical thinking and responsible digital behaviour in multicultural educational environments.

### ***Purpose of the workshop***

The implementation of this specific activity was deemed necessary due to the increasing exposure of young people to fake news and misinformation, mainly through social networks and digital platforms. Many students consume information without sufficient verification of the reliability of the sources, which makes it necessary to strengthen critical thinking, digital literacy and responsible information skills.

### ***Workshop Methodology***

The workshop was based on the principles of non-formal education and experiential learning, emphasizing active participation, collaboration and critical investigation of information. Game-based learning, teamwork and participatory discussion methods were used, aiming at the active involvement of students and connecting theory with real examples from their daily digital experience.



The workshop structure included the following stages:

 **Interactive introduction**

The workshop began with a short ice breaker, utilizing the digital tool (Mentimeter), through which students were anonymously asked to answer short questions related to headline news and viral videos shared on social media. This stage served as an activation of interest and as a recording of the participants' initial perceptions.

 **Short theoretical introduction**

This was followed by a presentation of key concepts such as fake news, disinformation and media manipulation, accompanied by examples from the Cypriot and European reality.

 **Experiential Activity: Media Masters Board Game**

The students were divided into small groups and participated in the MEDMAS educational board game. Through real-life disinformation scenarios, they were asked to identify fake news, think critically, discuss the possible answer to the question, and understand the mechanisms of digital manipulation.

 **Discussion and reflection**

After completing the game, a guided discussion was held, during which students shared experiences and concerns, reflected on their choices, and discussed their role as responsible media users.

***Conclusions and closure***

The workshop concluded with a summary of the key points and highlighting the importance of critical thinking, responsible information, and the use of fast-checking tools in students' daily digital lives.



## Part II: Detailed workshop analysis and key findings

In the initial stage of the workshop (ice breaker), interactive questions were used through the digital tool Mentimeter, aiming to activate students, record their initial perceptions and introduce key concepts around fake news and disinformation.

Indicatively, students were asked to answer the following questions:

- ❖ **Associative approach:** *"What word comes to mind when you hear the term "fake news"?"*

This question was used to capture students' first impressions and feelings about the concept of fake news.

- ❖ **Self-assessment of skills:** *"Do you think you can understand if a news story is fake?"*

The question highlighted the students' level of self-confidence and opened a discussion around overestimation or doubt in their personal skills.

- ❖ **Fake scientific claim:** Viral video: *"If you put a spoonful of olive oil in water, you can tell if it is contaminated."*

The question contributed to understanding the spread of simple but inaccurate claims through videos shared massively on social platforms such as Tik Tok.

- ❖ **Immediate reaction scenario:** *"You receive a message on Viber that says: "Don't go to school tomorrow, explosives have been found". What do you do?"*

The scenario was used to discuss issues of panic, responsible reaction, cross-checking information and communication with official authorities.

The students' responses revealed different levels of confidence and served as a starting point for a discussion on disinformation techniques, emotionally charged messages and the role of algorithms in the dissemination of content. At the same time, illustrative examples of false or misleading news from different subject areas were used in order to familiarize students with various forms of disinformation. Specifically, examples of news stories that make use of the invocation of scientific authority without sufficient documentation were presented, as well as scenarios related to international events, highlighting the role of anonymous online accounts and the speed of dissemination of unconfirmed information. In addition, examples of public discourse with a strong emotional charge were used, so that students could understand how the way an information is presented can affect its perception.

Particular emphasis was placed on the evaluation of news headlines that included numerical data without a clear context or reference to sources, enhancing the discussion on the importance of documentation and cross-referencing information.



A central part of the workshop was the participation of students in the MEDMAS board game. Students were divided into small groups and, through dialogue and argumentation, were asked to manage scenarios of disinformation, propaganda and to separate false from true news.

Through this experiential process, students realized how easily one can be misled by fabricated or misleading information, but also how personal biases influence judgment and connected learning with practical examples.

The interactive nature of the activity demonstrated that the “traps” of the game often work as in the real environment of social networks, demonstrating how easily even an informed person can be misled. Overall, it emerged that playful and experiential education can be more meaningful and effective than traditional forms of teaching in combating disinformation.

The Media Masters activity contributed significantly to the understanding of disinformation on a practical level. Participants had the opportunity not only to recognize but also to feel how disinformation works, within a safe, collaborative and interactive environment. It is one of the most powerful experiential methods of the MEDMAS project and can be used more widely in university departments, schools, youth organizations and non-governmental organizations.

#### **The main outcomes of the workshop included:**

- Increased understanding of disinformation mechanisms
- Recognition of key information manipulation techniques
- Development of critical thinking skills
- Strengthening collaboration and group decision-making

### **Part III: General conclusions of the workshop**

The workshop had a positive impact on students in terms of knowledge, attitudes and skills, as it highlighted the importance of an experiential and participatory approach in educating young people on disinformation and digital literacy. Through play, discussion and reflection, students gained a substantial understanding of the risks of uncritical consumption and dissemination of news.

The use of the MEDMAS board game proved to be particularly effective, as it offered a safe and creative framework for experimentation, in which students could make mistakes, discuss and learn through experience.

Overall, the workshop contributed substantially to the objectives of the MEDMAS project by strengthening critical thinking, responsible digital behaviour and the active participation of students as informed and aware citizens.



## *Annex I – Ice Breaker: Questions and examples used*

### **1. Word Cloud**

What word *comes* to mind when you hear the term “fake news”?

### **2. Ranking – Self-assessment**

*Do you think you can tell if a news story is false?*

### **3. Multiple choice – News title**

*“RED ALERT: German scientists warn of population collapse”*

### **4. Multiple choice – Social media post**

*Reporting an account for Cyprus’ involvement in a military conflict.*

### **5. Multiple choice – Political video**

*Claims about birth subsidies for immigrants.*

### **6. Scale – TikTok video**

*Claim about detecting water contamination with olive oil.*

### **7. Visualization – Research title**

*Frequency of news checking by young people in Cyprus.*

### **8. Open Question – Instant Message Scenario**

*Message on a messaging app with a risk warning.*



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## Materials:



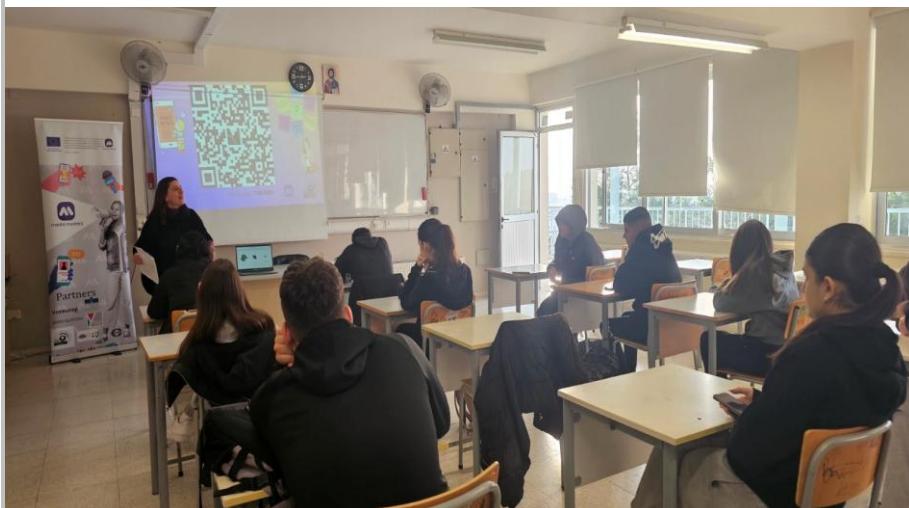
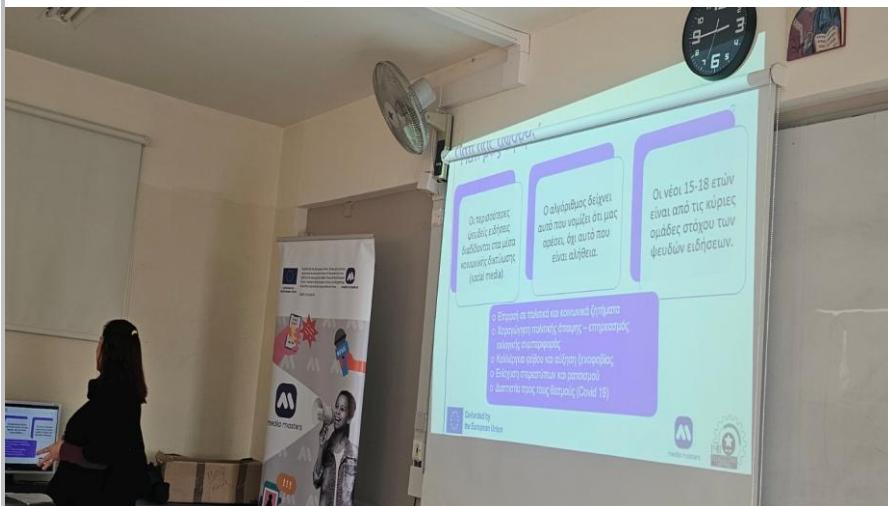


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## Photos of the workshop



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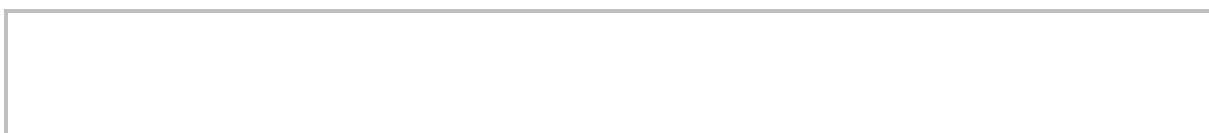
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HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0		Initial version

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