

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

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About the CheckMate Project

In the contemporary digital age, the pervasive spread of propaganda, misinformation, and fake news poses significant threats to societal cohesion and the integrity of democratic systems. These malicious forms of information have the potential to polarize public opinion, creating deep divisions within communities and undermining social harmony. Moreover, they can incite violent extremism by spreading ideologies and narratives that fuel hatred and aggression. Hate speech, often a byproduct of such misinformation, further exacerbates social tensions and marginalizes vulnerable groups. Collectively, these factors contribute to the erosion of democratic foundations, as trust in democratic processes and institutions diminishes, and the public's ability to engage in informed and rational discourse is compromised.

The CheckMate project, co-funded by the European Union, emerges as a crucial initiative aimed at countering these multifaceted threats. It anticipates the creation of a best practices report on tackling misinformation and strengthening media literacy, the establishment of a CheckMate network, and the execution of information sessions and workshops to promote social dialogue and innovative solutions to misinformation. Furthermore, the project aims to produce an open-source e-course designed to enhance critical media literacy skills for adults and develop technological tools such as a metaverse platform and a web browsing extension.

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Syncnify, France



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Purpose of the Impact Assessment

The metaverse, a virtual collective space merging physical and digital realities, represents an evolution in online interaction through immersive, three-dimensional environments. Enabled by advancements in virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies, it facilitates unprecedented forms of social engagement, learning, and information sharing. However, this emerging digital landscape also amplifies concerns regarding misinformation and fake news. In the metaverse, where content is often user-generated and rapidly disseminated across networks, the spread of unverified or intentionally misleading information poses a heightened risk.

The purpose of this impact assessment is to critically evaluate the efficacy and interactivity of metaverse-based interventions as innovative, non-traditional methods for engaging participants on issues of misinformation across the project's participating countries - Austria, Italy, France, Lithuania, Greece, and Cyprus. This approach is central to the CheckMate project, which aims to develop strategies that enhance media literacy and foster public resilience to misinformation.

Given the digital nature of misinformation's spread, traditional methods alone may lack the flexibility or engagement needed to address this dynamic issue effectively. This impact assessment, therefore, focuses on examining the extent to which metaverse events can create meaningful, interactive experiences that educate and sensitize participants to the pervasive threats of misinformation, hate speech, and digital manipulation.

This assessment also examines both interactivity aspects, such as participant engagement rates, real-time response to discussions, and overall satisfaction with the virtual format. By analyzing these metrics, the present exercise seeks to determine whether metaverse-based sessions can create an equally impactful or potentially superior platform for raising awareness and promoting proactive media literacy behaviors among varied participant groups in project countries including those unfamiliar with such digital tools.

Furthermore, the report assesses the capacity of metaverse events to reach and engage audiences beyond the scope of traditional settings, including remote and digitally underserved populations within the project's participating countries who may not otherwise have access to misinformation workshops. In doing so, it explores the role of metaverse technology in democratizing educational access on critical issues by providing interactive, accessible spaces for engagement. The findings from this assessment will inform future policy recommendations and best practices, supporting the development of digital literacy frameworks that are inclusive, scalable, and adaptable to the ever-evolving landscape of misinformation.



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Scope and Methodology

The scope of the present impact assessment focuses on evaluating the impact, interactivity, and participant engagement levels within the metaverse events implemented under the CheckMate project across the participating countries of Austria, Italy, France, Lithuania, Greece, and Cyprus. Specifically, the assessment examines how effectively these metaverse-based interventions address misinformation, encourage media literacy, and promote social dialogue among diverse groups of stakeholders, including public authorities, industry professionals, and citizens.

The methodology applied in this impact assessment combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the metaverse sessions. Data collection methods include post-event surveys and real-time engagement analytics to capture the experiences of participants and assess shifts in perception and understanding of misinformation. Additionally, observational data from the metaverse platform are analyzed to gauge levels of interactivity, participation, and engagement across each of the participating countries. This mixed-method approach allows for a detailed and nuanced understanding of the metaverse events' effectiveness in promoting media literacy and critical thinking skills against the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

1. Total participant count: Number of attendees across all metaverse events,
2. Participant demographics: Distribution of participants by age, sector (public/private), and geographic representation,
3. Platform views: Number of views or visits to the platform since becoming publicly accessible,
4. Engagement rate: Percentage of participants who actively engaged in discussions and activities,
5. Quality feedback: Percentage of participants who rated the presentations and activities positively,
6. Content impact: Percentage of participants who felt inspired to take further action, such as seeking additional information on combating misinformation,
7. Workshop effectiveness: Number of participants who found thematic presentations and fact-checking workshops useful in enriching their understanding of misinformation,
8. Consensus on media literacy: Percentage of participants who agreed on the need for accessible resources and media literacy initiatives,
9. User experience feedback: Number and type of suggestions for platform improvements, especially concerning usability and language support,
10. Follow-up engagement: Percentage of participants who expressed interest in attending future events or engaging further with the platform.



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Event Design and Design

Objectives of the Metaverse Events

The primary objectives of the metaverse events within the CheckMate project are to cultivate heightened public awareness and resilience to misinformation through a digitally immersive platform that enhances media literacy. By utilizing metaverse technology, these events provide participants with a distinct virtual environment in which they engage with content specifically designed to deconstruct misinformation, identify fake news, and analyze propaganda's societal effects. Through expert-led discussions, interactive simulations, and participatory workshops, participants develop critical media analysis skills, learn to detect bias and manipulation in digital content, and are encouraged to consider the broader implications of misinformation within their respective national and cultural contexts.

Furthermore, these metaverse events aim to facilitate cross-cultural social dialogue and ignite collaborative engagement, involving a broad spectrum of stakeholders, including public authorities, educators and community members. By enabling the exchange of diverse perspectives within an immersive virtual environment, these events endeavor to bridge the gap between digital engagement and tangible social impact, establishing a collective sense of responsibility for combating misinformation.

This digital space additionally addresses the secondary objective of democratizing access to education on misinformation, reaching audiences in remote or digitally underserved areas and empowering them to act as informed agents of change within their communities, equipped with the analytical skills and insights necessary to counter misinformation and promote constructive, informed public discourse.

Overview of the Metaverse Platform Setup

The CheckMate metaverse environment was structured around five main areas, each designed to address distinct aspects of misinformation education and media literacy. The **Informative Insights area** introduced participants to key statistical data, showcasing broader trends and the societal impact of misinformation. Four primary data points were displayed to highlight essential insights into how misinformation spreads and influences public discourse. This area also included displays about the project partners, providing participants with background on the organizations involved in the initiative. Together, these elements established a foundation for participants to understand the scale of the issue and the collaborative efforts undertaken to combat it.



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The **Digital Exhibitions** offered an immersive educational experience by showcasing real-world examples of fake news and misinformation. Within the **virtual galleries**, eight carefully selected cases of misinformation were displayed, each accompanied by detailed analysis explaining its origins, intent, and consequences. In the **Virtual Museum**, participants engaged with historical exhibits that highlighted prominent cases of misinformation from the past, demonstrating its enduring impact on society and its role in influencing political and social outcomes. Additionally, the **Resource Library** provided a wealth of curated materials on media literacy, fact-checking, and critical thinking, available for participants to explore at any time for further learning. The **Central Stage** served as the focal point for live events, featuring expert panels, keynotes, and interactive demonstrations, allowing participants to engage in real-time discussions and knowledge exchange with thought leaders worldwide. Together, these areas constructed a comprehensive, interactive environment aimed at equipping participants with the skills to identify and counter misinformation effectively.

Key Themes Addressed in Each Session

The CheckMate metaverse events addressed several key thematic areas intended to deepen participants' understanding of misinformation, its multifaceted nature, and its broader societal implications. Most of the sessions commenced with a foundational presentation which explored misinformation as a pervasive issue with various manifestations, ranging from deliberate falsehoods to nuanced manipulations of factual content. This opening segment elucidated the mechanisms through which misinformation spreads, the channels through which it is disseminated, and the profound influence it wields over public perceptions and democratic institutions. Participants were actively encouraged to engage through chat and live audio, creating an interactive environment in which foundational concepts could be explored, misconceptions could be addressed, and initial insights on the topic could be shared among a diverse audience.

A central thematic focus of the sessions was the cultivation of practical fact-checking skills and enhancement of digital literacy to enable users to critically assess the credibility of digital content. This theme was operationalized in the gallery space, where participants encountered a series of curated digital exhibits illustrating misinformation forms such as deep fakes, misleading social media content, and manipulated visuals. Through immersive engagement with these examples, participants were encouraged to identify signs of falsification and discuss the indicators that assisted them in evaluating content reliability. This interactive component emphasized the essential role of digital literacy in an era characterized by increasingly sophisticated misinformation, underscoring the necessity for heightened critical engagement with digital content in both personal and public domains.



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Another pivotal theme was the historical context of misinformation, presented through a virtual museum tour designed to illustrate its influence on significant historical events. This segment allowed participants to engage with digital artifacts that highlighted misinformation's role in shaping public opinion and impacting pivotal moments in history, thereby offering a longitudinal perspective on the issue. Situating misinformation within a historical framework enabled participants to contextualize its modern-day manifestations, recognizing it as part of a broader continuum rather than a purely contemporary challenge. This historical dimension aimed to deepen participants' comprehension of misinformation's enduring societal impacts, nurturing an awareness of its long-term implications and reinforcing the imperative for sustained, informed efforts to mitigate its influence. Through these curated thematic areas, the sessions equipped participants with essential analytical tools, historical perspectives, and critical skills necessary to confront and counter misinformation effectively in their respective communities.

Participant Demographics and Engagement

This section of the report focuses on participant demographics and engagement levels during the CheckMate metaverse events across Austria, Italy, France, Lithuania, Greece, and Cyprus. By analyzing the diverse backgrounds of attendees - such as age, educational background, professional affiliation, and prior exposure to misinformation - this section aims to understand how these factors influence engagement patterns within the metaverse environment. This analysis is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness of the events in fostering media literacy and combating misinformation, while also showcasing the responsiveness and interest of participants in all 6 EU countries toward alternative networking options. Insights gained will provide a clearer understanding of how different participant profiles engage with the content and interactive elements of the sessions, revealing the overall impact of the initiative on diverse audiences.



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On October 9th, 2024, the BürgerInnen Forum Europa successfully hosted a metaverse networking event in Austria. Planning for the event commenced in the summer, involving the establishment of an agenda and the invitation of keynote speaker Dietmar Pichler from the DisInfo Resilience Network. The event was meticulously organized, featuring an invitation designed according to the brand identity of the CheckMate project and widely disseminated through personal contacts and community groups. A total of 30 participants registered, with a commendable turnout that maintained an average online participation level of approximately 20 to 23 attendees throughout the session, which lasted from 17:45 to 19:00 CET.

The event attracted a diverse range of participants, primarily targeting key stakeholders involved in the CheckMate project while also welcoming a broader audience interested in media literacy and digital competence development. Among the 30 participants, the majority fell within the 18 to 40 age range and represented both public and private sectors. Notably, the event included international participants from the Netherlands and France, enhancing the discussion with varied perspectives. Key stakeholders, including representatives from major adult education providers and the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, Health, Care, and Consumer Protection, contributed to a rich dialogue, further augmented by contributions from younger participants associated with the Austrian Service Abroad.

The program commenced with an introduction to the metaverse platform, enabling participants to familiarize themselves with its features and technical requirements. Following this initial orientation, Dietmar Pichler delivered an interactive presentation addressing the pressing issue of misinformation and its detrimental effects on trust in democracy within the European Union. Participants engaged in a subsequent discussion, sharing experiences and insights on various initiatives aimed at combating disinformation, which fostered a collaborative environment.

The event concluded with an extended opportunity for attendees to further explore the platform's features, allowing them to immerse themselves more deeply in its capabilities and interactive elements. Feedback collected from participants reflected a general satisfaction with the event's overall format, highlighting the engaging and interactive nature of the experience, which successfully captured their attention and facilitated meaningful exchanges. However, several attendees did report encountering navigational challenges, suggesting that certain aspects of the platform could benefit from improved user guidance or more intuitive design elements to enhance accessibility and ease of use.



Syncnify organized a metaverse event in France on October 29, 2024, focusing on the theme of misinformation in the digital age. The planning process aligned with the overall project objectives, employing a strategic promotional approach that included social media outreach and in-person interactions to maximize visibility and encourage participation.

The dissemination efforts successfully generated a registration list of 33 individuals, reflecting the event's broad appeal. Ultimately, 26 participants attended the one-hour session, which took place from 16:00 to 17:00 CET, highlighting the relevance of the content to the target audience.

The event attracted a diverse group of participants, ranging in age from their mid-20s to late 50s, including professionals from both educational and industry sectors. Many attendees had prior involvement with similar digital initiatives, which contributed to a foundational understanding and enthusiasm for the session's focus on media literacy and digital competence.

Throughout the event, participants displayed high levels of engagement, actively exploring the metaverse as an innovative tool for educational and professional development. This mix of younger and more seasoned professionals enriched discussions, reflecting a shared commitment to integrating digital competence and media literacy into their respective practices, thereby fostering advancements in both industry and education.

The one-hour session featured a comprehensive agenda designed to provide an immersive experience on misinformation. It commenced with an introduction and icebreaker, followed by a presentation on "The Anatomy of Misinformation," which detailed its types, mechanisms, and societal impacts. Participants then engaged in a Fact-Checking Workshop, where they analyzed curated examples of misinformation, enhancing their practical skills in content evaluation.

A virtual museum tour provided historical context, showcasing significant instances of misinformation throughout history. The event concluded with a Networking and Idea Exchange segment, allowing participants to share insights and strategies for addressing misinformation within their communities.

Overall, feedback indicated that participants valued the interactive and immersive nature of the event, although some expressed a desire for extended discussion and follow-up sessions to delve deeper into the complexities of the subject matter.



The Italian metaverse event held on October 22nd by Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo “Danilo Dolci” gathered a diverse group of 28 participants, with a peak of 30 users engaging on the platform. Planned a month in advance, the event was designed to explore misinformation and digital literacy in an immersive digital space. The session included interactive workshops and live discussions aimed at deepening participants' understanding of media literacy challenges, as well as practical demonstrations of digital tools used to identify and combat misinformation. Additionally, the event featured a collaborative Q&A segment, encouraging participants to share their insights and experiences.

Promotion was carefully coordinated through sponsored posts on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, along with an article on CSC's website to attract a range of attendees interested in digital media. Mr. Leandro Salvia, an experienced journalist and advocate against misinformation, was selected as the guest speaker to provide insights and possibly contribute as a policymaker in future project phases.

The participants, aged from under 30 to over 60, brought a range of experiences to the discussion, with some already engaged in previous project phases and others drawn by curiosity about the metaverse platform itself. This diversity added depth to the session, as participants shared unique perspectives on how misinformation impacts various age groups and backgrounds. Invitations sent via email lists, combined with social media outreach, helped reach people with varying familiarity with digital literacy, enhancing engagement across different experience levels.

The event's structure allowed for a gradual introduction to the virtual space, beginning with a 30-minute exploration period. At 4:50 pm CET, CSC representatives introduced the organization and the project's achievements in combating misinformation. Mr. Salvia's talk, “Conscious Use of the Web,” examined the social and psychological effects of misinformation, emphasizing the susceptibility of certain populations, like youth and individuals with limited internet skills, to fake news. He detailed the role of journalism in the digital age and discussed the ways social media shapes public opinion. The Q&A session afterward gave participants a chance to discuss specific concerns and gain further insights directly from Mr. Salvia.

While feedback on the content was overwhelmingly positive, some technical challenges arose. Audio difficulties were reported by several participants, and some platform features were unclear, which limited avatar interactions and engagement. Additionally, minor glitches and lag affected some users, though the platform performed relatively well on smartphones, despite limited functionality.





On October 23, 2024, the metaverse event organized by VŠĮ Socialinių Inovacijų Centras in Šiauliai, Lithuania, successfully engaged a diverse group of 29 participants, including educators, students, a lawyer, and social workers. The event aimed to address the pressing issue of misinformation and its implications for society. Participants were invited through outreach to various local institutions, with the event accessible via both the Metaverse platform and Zoom.

The demographic profile of attendees ranged from 18 to 60 years old, all of whom expressed a keen interest in understanding the methodologies of disinformation, its terminology, and strategies for identification. Notably, many participants reported having encountered disinformation in their daily lives, underscoring the relevance of the topic.

The two-hour event comprised a structured agenda that included multiple thematic segments designed to enhance participants' knowledge and skills related to misinformation. It began with a brief welcome and overview, followed by a presentation titled "The Anatomy of Misinformation," which elucidated the various forms of misinformation and its societal impacts.

Participants then engaged in a fact-checking workshop, allowing them to explore practical tools for verifying information. The program also included a segment on historical instances of misinformation, providing a contextual understanding of how such phenomena have evolved over time. The event culminated in a networking and idea exchange session, fostering collaborative discussion among attendees regarding misinformation in Lithuania and potential solutions.

Feedback gathered during the event indicated a strong consensus among participants regarding the urgency of addressing misinformation. Many attendees highlighted the need for accessible fact-checking platforms to empower ordinary citizens in discerning reliable information. While participants generally appreciated the content and functionality of the Metaverse platform, some expressed challenges related to logging in, particularly among older individuals. Suggestions for improvement included offering the platform in Lithuanian and addressing the specific learning needs of different age groups.

Overall, the event underscored the significance of media literacy and the potential for innovative platforms to engage citizens in meaningful discussions about misinformation, with many attendees acknowledging the lack of similar initiatives in Lithuania.



On October 2nd, the Athens Lifelong Learning Institute hosted a metaverse event that engaged 36 participants, including educators, media experts, and members of the general public. The session commenced with an introduction to the Institute and an overview of the CheckMate project, which set the context for discussions on misinformation and disinformation. Participants were subsequently familiarized with the Metaverse platform, where half of them successfully accessed the environment while the others were guided through the process via a Zoom screen share.

Throughout the event, educators and media professionals particularly recognized the platform's potential for addressing misinformation and integrating advanced technologies into their pedagogical and professional practices. The session concluded with an open discussion on future applications of the Metaverse, fostering a collaborative atmosphere for exploring innovative solutions.

The participant profile revealed a predominance of educators, comprising 23 of the attendees, who exhibited a high level of engagement and actively contributed to discussions regarding the integration of digital competence into educational frameworks. Their enthusiasm for media literacy and the enhancement of digital skills underscored the significance of equipping individuals with the necessary tools to navigate the complexities of misinformation. In addition, 13 participants from various sectors, including law enforcement, library services, IT, and academia, demonstrated varying degrees of interest, with those possessing academic and technical backgrounds showing a moderate to high engagement level. The presence of a media literacy expert further enriched the discussions, providing advanced insights and fostering dialogue on future strategies for digital competence development.

Feedback from the event was predominantly positive, highlighting the Metaverse platform's potential as a transformative tool across diverse settings, including education and technology. Many educators expressed interest in leveraging the platform to enhance interactivity within their classrooms, while media professionals recognized its applicability in facilitating their work. Participants provided constructive suggestions for platform improvements, such as language support, content customization for different age groups, and the development of an augmented reality application.

Although some technical challenges were noted - particularly regarding the registration process and ease of use for elderly participants - overall, the platform was well-received as an engaging and innovative space for addressing the pressing issues of misinformation and digital competence.





On October 22nd, Neapolis University of Pafos conducted a metaverse event in Cyprus, aiming to deepen understanding and engagement with issues surrounding misinformation and media literacy. The event brought together 17 participants, including young professionals and mid-career individuals, spanning an age group of 24 to 50 years. This assembly facilitated an in-depth and focused exploration of misinformation's impact on contemporary society, with participants from various professional and academic backgrounds contributing unique perspectives to the discussion.

The event's agenda was structured to maximize the potential of the metaverse platform. The opening presentations delivered an analytical overview of the mechanisms through which misinformation erodes public trust, with particular emphasis on democratic processes and societal cohesion.

Following these presentations, participants engaged in a series of interactive workshops designed to develop their practical skills in media literacy. These workshops featured real-time fact-checking exercises and scenario-based simulations, enabling attendees to critically assess the reliability of digital content and apply their knowledge in realistic settings.

Feedback from the event showcased the effectiveness of the metaverse environment in enhancing the educational experience. Participants articulated an appreciation for the immersive nature of the platform, which allowed for dynamic interaction and a heightened sense of presence. The virtual setting resulted in a rich dialogue and collaborative exchanges, promoting an atmosphere conducive to critical thinking and peer learning. Nonetheless, some participants highlighted challenges related to navigating the metaverse interface, particularly for those less familiar with advanced digital tools.

The event reaffirmed the necessity of integrating media literacy into both educational curricula and professional training programs. Participants collectively recognized the pressing need for resources that empower individuals to critically evaluate digital information and resist the pervasive threats posed by misinformation.

This recognition aligns with the broader objectives of the CheckMate project, which seeks to equip citizens with the knowledge and skills required towards an increasingly complex digital landscape. The discussions held at Neapolis University of Pafos provided valuable insights into the potential of metaverse technology as an innovative pedagogical tool, while also offering constructive feedback to guide the development of more inclusive and user-friendly future initiatives.



Findings and Analysis

Impact on Media Literacy and Critical Thinking

The findings from the impact assessment of the CheckMate project's metaverse events revealed significant insights into participant engagement and perceptions regarding misinformation across various contexts. Based on the KPIs introduced, the events attracted a diverse group of stakeholders (166 in total across 6 EU countries), predominantly within the age range of 18 to 40, representing both public and private sectors. The platform itself garnered over 1.200 views since becoming publicly available (free of charge). The interactive structure of the events, featuring presentations on the detrimental effects of misinformation and its implications for trust in democratic processes, facilitated rich dialogue and collaborative exchanges among participants. Feedback indicated a strong appreciation for the event formats with 78% of participants stating that the event encouraged them to seek additional information ways to combat misinformation.

Participants consistently demonstrated high levels of engagement and a proactive interest in exploring the educational potential of the metaverse platform with 70% of them praising the quality of the presentations and activities. Structured agendas that included thematic presentations, fact-checking workshops, and interactive discussions not only enriched participants' understanding of misinformation but also underlined the importance of integrating media literacy into various professional and educational contexts. Additionally, there was a strong consensus (80%) on the urgency of creating accessible resources and platforms that empower ordinary citizens to discern reliable information. Suggestions for improving usability, particularly for older participants, and enhancing the platform's language support were frequently highlighted.

Shifts in Perspectives on Misinformation

The impact assessment revealed notable shifts in participants' perspectives on misinformation following their engagement in the CheckMate project's metaverse events. Initially, many attendees perceived misinformation as a somewhat abstract or distant issue, often viewing it primarily through the lens of its occasional personal encounters. However, through interactive discussions and thematic presentations, participants began to recognize the pervasive nature of misinformation and its detrimental effects on societal trust and democratic processes. This transformation in understanding highlighted the importance of acknowledging misinformation as a critical issue that requires proactive measures from both individuals and communities.



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Additionally, the events cultivated a deeper awareness of the mechanisms through which misinformation spreads, prompting participants to critically evaluate the sources of information they consume. Workshops focused on fact-checking techniques and the identification of misleading content empowered attendees to approach information with a more discerning eye. As participants engaged in collaborative discussions, they shared experiences and strategies for combatting misinformation, which not only reinforced themselves but also created a sense of collective responsibility in addressing this pervasive challenge. This shift from passive consumption of information to active engagement in media literacy marked a significant development in participants' outlooks.

Moreover, the collaborative nature of the events contributed to a broader understanding of the social implications of misinformation. Participants expressed an increased recognition of how misinformation could exacerbate social divisions and contribute to the marginalization of vulnerable groups. Discussions surrounding the historical context of misinformation illuminated the long-standing consequences of misleading narratives, reinforcing the urgency of fostering media literacy and critical thinking skills across diverse populations. As a result, the CheckMate project's metaverse events effectively shifted participants' perspectives on misinformation, transforming it from an isolated concern into a shared societal challenge that demands ongoing dialogue and concerted efforts for resolution.

Insights from Metaverse Discussions

The discussions held during the metaverse events under the CheckMate project underscored the critical importance of digital literacy, particularly for older generations, in identifying misinformation and fostering protective measures against its spread. Participants recognized that older individuals often face unique challenges when engaging with digital platforms, which necessitates targeted initiatives to enhance their ability to critically evaluate online content. By improving digital literacy, older adults can better discern credible sources and engage in informed discussions about current events, ultimately empowering them to address the complexities of the digital world with greater confidence. The consensus among participants highlighted the necessity of prioritizing educational programs tailored to the needs of older generations, ensuring they are equipped with the skills required to identify misinformation effectively.

The metaverse discussions also raised the need to engage younger generations in addressing misinformation through alternative, interactive methods. Participants noted that while younger individuals are typically more adept at using technology, they still require guidance in developing critical media literacy skills. The metaverse platform was identified as a unique opportunity to create immersive learning experiences that resonate with younger audiences.



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Interactive workshops and collaborative discussions within the metaverse can capture the interest of these digital natives, facilitating a deeper understanding of misinformation's implications while encouraging proactive engagement in combating it. The feedback from participants reflected a strong desire to leverage such innovative approaches to enhance media literacy education and training provision among youth.

Furthermore, the metaverse served as a valuable space for promoting intergenerational dialogue, facilitating exchanges of knowledge and experiences between older and younger participants. The collaborative environment allowed attendees to share insights regarding their experiences with misinformation, creating a mutual learning opportunity that benefited all age groups. Older generations were able to impart their historical context and experiences, while younger participants contributed their technical skills and familiarity with digital platforms. This intergenerational interaction not only enhanced digital literacy across demographics but also strengthened community bonds, reinforcing the notion that a collective effort is essential in addressing misinformation.

The discussions held across all project countries proved the metaverse's potential to support the development a more informed society, capable of recognizing and resisting the pervasive threat of misinformation through collaborative learning and engagement.



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CHECKMATE METAVERSE EVENTS

PRIMARY OUTCOMES

Notable Figures from the Evaluation of the Metaverse Platform

166

Participants during the Metaverse Events

A total of 166 individuals from diverse backgrounds participated in 6 metaverse events held across Austria, Italy, France, Lithuania, Greece, and Cyprus.

1.200

CheckMate Metaverse Platform Views

A total of 1.200 users have viewed and engaged with the CheckMate Metaverse platform, which is publicly accessible and free.

75%

Satisfaction rate

The metaverse events received high marks showcasing strong satisfaction with the event's structure and coordination. Participants also praised the quality of the presentations and activities, with 70% rating them as excellent.

18 - 60

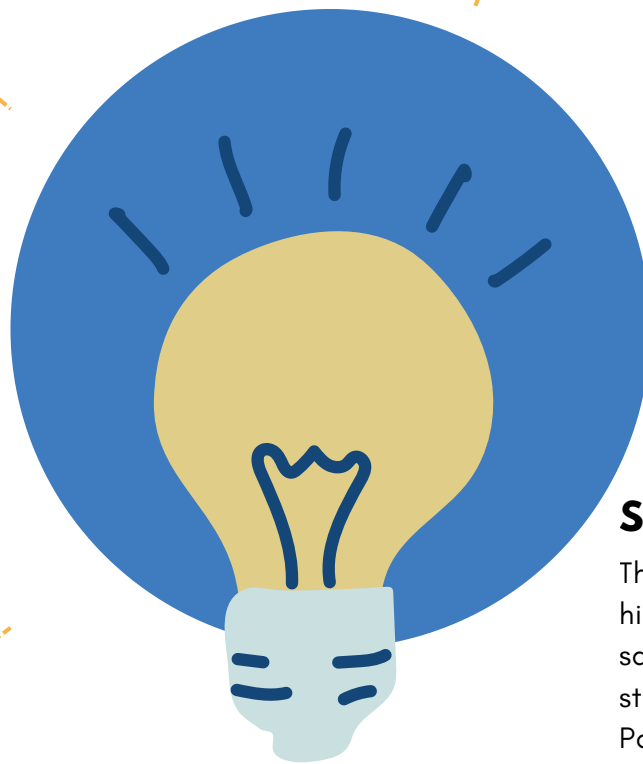
Age Range

Among the participants, students and recent graduates made up 33% of attendees, while communications specialists comprised 30%, indicating a balanced mix of emerging professionals and industry experts.

75%

Improved Awareness on Digital Literacy

The event proved to be impactful in raising awareness about media literacy. Furthermore, 78% of participants stated that the event encouraged them to seek additional information ways to combat misinformation.



Recommendations and Best Practices

Suggested Improvements for Future Events

The feedback collected from participants of the CheckMate project's metaverse events revealed several areas for improvement that could enhance the overall effectiveness and accessibility of future sessions. Even though a user's manual was distributed to participants prior to the realization of each event, a primary suggestion was the need for improved user support, particularly for participants who may not be familiar with navigating virtual environments. Participants expressed that providing comprehensive tutorials or introductory sessions prior to the main events would help mitigate technical challenges and foster a more inclusive atmosphere. Such preparatory measures would enable attendees to engage more fully with the content and interactive features of the platform, ultimately enhancing their learning experience.

As the metaverse is still in its initial stage, participants also emphasized the potential benefits of incorporating such digital means into different teaching and learning initiatives. The immersive nature of metaverse technology can facilitate a more engaging and hands-on approach to learning about complex subjects such as misinformation and digital literacy. By providing realistic, interactive experiences, this approach can enable users to apply their knowledge and develop practical skills in identifying and combating digital manipulation. Moreover, integrating the metaverse into educational activities can cater to different learning preferences, enhancing inclusivity and participation across diverse audiences.

Another critical area for improvement identified by participants was the incorporation of multilingual support to accommodate a diverse audience. Many attendees noted that the availability of resources and content in multiple languages would significantly increase accessibility for non-native speakers and facilitate broader participation across different regions. This enhancement would not only make the metaverse events more inclusive but would also promote a richer exchange of ideas and perspectives among participants.

Finally, participants highlighted the importance of extending the duration of discussions and workshops to allow for deeper exploration of complex topics related to misinformation and media literacy. While the structured agendas were generally well-received, many attendees expressed a desire for additional time to engage in meaningful dialogue and collaborative problem-solving. By lengthening these interactive sessions or offering follow-up workshops, organizers could provide participants with the opportunity to investigate deeper the subject matter, share experiences, and develop actionable strategies for combating misinformation.



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Strategies for Enhancing Media Literacy

The discussions during the CheckMate project's metaverse events yielded several key findings regarding effective strategies for enhancing media literacy among participants. One prominent finding highlighted the value of integrating interactive workshops that promote active participation and practical application of media literacy skills. These workshops enabled participants to engage directly with real-world examples of misinformation, providing them with the analytical tools necessary to assess the credibility of sources and differentiate factual content from misleading information. This hands-on approach not only deepened participants' understanding of media literacy concepts but also empowered them to apply these skills in their everyday lives.

Another significant finding from the discussions emphasized the importance of collaborative dialogue in promoting media literacy. Participants noted that creating spaces for open discussions allowed them to share their experiences and insights related to misinformation and media consumption. This collaborative atmosphere not only enriched the learning experience but also established a sense of community and shared responsibility among attendees. Engaging in conversations that encompassed diverse perspectives and cultural contexts further enhanced the depth of understanding, enabling participants to appreciate the complexities surrounding misinformation in a globalized environment. Such peer-to-peer interactions proved invaluable in reinforcing media literacy concepts and promoting critical thinking skills.

Additionally, the discussions underscored the potential of leveraging technology to create engaging digital resources for enhancing media literacy. Participants recognized that gamified learning experiences and interactive online tools could significantly boost engagement and motivation, particularly among younger audiences. Incorporating elements such as quizzes, simulations, and scenario-based learning can provide immersive experiences that educate participants about misinformation while allowing them to practice and refine their media literacy skills in a supportive environment.

Moreover, participants highlighted the need for continuous support and follow-up opportunities to sustain the momentum of media literacy learning beyond the metaverse events. Providing ongoing access to educational resources, discussion forums, and expert-led webinars was suggested as a way to reinforce the skills and knowledge gained during the sessions. This sustained engagement could also refine a sense of accountability and commitment among participants, encouraging them to remain proactive in combating misinformation. Under this scope, establishing a network of media literacy advocates within and across the participating countries could facilitate knowledge-sharing and collaboration, ensuring that the impact of the CheckMate project extends beyond its initial events.



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Best Practices



Insights gathered from the CheckMate project's metaverse events revealed a range of best practices for enhancing media literacy among participants. A fundamental practice highlighted the importance of incorporating interactive learning methodologies that actively engage attendees. Workshops centered on real-world examples of misinformation enabled participants to hone their critical evaluation skills in a collaborative environment. This experiential approach not only deepened their understanding of media literacy concepts but also empowered them to feel more confident in their ability to identify credible information. By prioritizing interactive elements, digital literacy initiatives can significantly bolster the educational effectiveness of future media initiatives.

In addition to interactive formats, fostering collaborative dialogue emerged as a crucial best practice. Establishing spaces for open discussions allowed participants to share their experiences and perspectives regarding misinformation, which enriched the overall learning experience. Participants emphasized the value of exchanging insights and diverse viewpoints, enabling a comprehensive exploration of misinformation's complexities in various contexts. This approach not only reinforced media literacy concepts but also set in place a sense of community and shared responsibility among attendees in the fight against misinformation, making collaborative dialogue an essential component of effective media literacy programming.

Furthermore, the discussions highlighted the significant role that technology plays in advancing media literacy initiatives. Effective strategies mentioned included the creation of engaging digital resources, like gamified learning experiences and interactive online platforms, which are especially appealing to younger audiences. Participants also emphasized the importance of ensuring equitable access to these technological tools to enhance the overall effectiveness and reach of media literacy programs. Tackling the digital divide is essential, as unequal access to technology can undermine the success of such initiatives, particularly for marginalized or underserved populations. The discussions focused on the need for inclusive strategies that promote equal opportunities for participation, such as providing offline resources or developing hybrid learning models tailored to different levels of digital literacy.



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Summary of Key Impacts

The CheckMate project's metaverse events have produced significant impacts on participant engagement (166 participants in total across 6 EU countries - 1.200 platform views) and awareness regarding misinformation and media literacy. Through interactive workshops and collaborative discussions, participants demonstrated enhanced critical thinking skills, with a notable percentage (75%) reporting increased confidence in their ability to identify misinformation and discern credible sources.

The events successfully attracted a diverse audience, predominantly within the age range of 18 to 60, and provided a platform for participants to share insights and experiences related to misinformation, fostering a sense of community and collective responsibility. Feedback indicated a strong appreciation for the interactive nature of the sessions (70%), highlighting the effectiveness of the metaverse as a medium for delivering educational content on media literacy. Importantly, although the events have concluded, the metaverse platform remains accessible online and free for stakeholders, allowing them to utilize the resources or plan their own individual activities.

Lessons Learned

Several key lessons emerged from the implementation of the metaverse events, emphasizing the need for continuous improvement in future initiatives. Firstly, the importance of enhancing user support became evident, particularly for older participants who may encounter navigational challenges in virtual environments. Providing comprehensive tutorials and technical assistance prior to events can significantly enhance participant engagement and learning outcomes.

In addition, promoting collaborative dialogue among participants proved essential in reinforcing media literacy concepts, as open discussions allowed for the exchange of diverse perspectives and cultural contexts. Lastly, the integration of multilingual support and engaging digital resources was highlighted as important for increasing accessibility and participation across varied demographics, underscoring the necessity for adaptability in program design. The lessons learned and needs identified will be considered and integrated into future CheckMate activities, most importantly in the development of the project's eLearning course.

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