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fighting-fake-news.eu



FERMI

**FAKE NEWS
RISK MITIGATOR**

COUNTERING DISINFORMATION AND FAKE NEWS

PEOPLE LOOK FOR ANY TYPE OF INFORMATION ONLINE, THEY READ NEWS, REVIEWS ON A PRODUCT, OR EVEN HEALTH ADVICE.

Unfortunately, social networks, news media, and digital platforms are targeted by malicious actors who harness technology to spread false information. These actors often exploit “bots” (i.e., fake social network accounts operated by a computer) to conduct attacks on a large scale. Sadly, the target of disinformation and fake news are always real people. Individuals belonging to minorities and marginalised groups are the main victims although large scale attacks can harm, for instance, public health. **FERMI** will adopt a multidisciplinary approach to understand and proactively detect how this threat is developed and propagated, who is particularly at risk, what real life crimes it is likely to spur and who are the ones to commit them. **FERMI** will also develop frameworks and material to counter this threat at every level.

GOALS

- 1 Analyse the direct risks posed by **disinformation and fake news** to the offline world and minimise the impact
- 2 Design training and education material for European Police Authorities, other professionals and stakeholders, and EU citizens
- 3 Support the EU LEAs and (social) media organizations in the combat against **disinformation and fake news** and the ramifications thereof
- 4 Realize technological breakthroughs towards a society more resilient to **disinformation and fake news**
- 5 Realise accurate risk modelling and assessment, optimized decision support for LEAs to mitigate that risks
- 6 Improve understanding of the cultural and societal aspects of **disinformation and fake news** based on thorough behavioural analyses

THREE CASES OF REAL-LIFE CRIME FUELED BY FAKE NEWS

FAR RIGHT EXTREMISTS AND MIGRATION IN EU

Disinformation and fake news regarding the size and nature of migration toward the EU have created growing xenophobic sentiments leading to violent radicalization from right-wing extremists.

Non-state actors are spreading disinformation to undermine trust in local governments and reinforce extremist narratives and recruitment strategies, increase the motivation of selfradicalized terrorists in order to perpetrate real attacks, and use psychological manipulation to undermine an individual's belief in specific social values. This often results in discrimination and violence.

HEALTH CRISIS AND CONSPIRACY THEORIES

The COVID-19 infodemic has led —and it is still leading—to a spike in **disinformation and fake news** through hoaxes, pseudoscience and conspiracy theories, breeding distrust in public institutions and putting lives at risk.

Police Authorities and other stakeholders need to be equipped with additional intelligence in order to allocate, in a timely manner, well calibrated resources to these events that have the higher probability to involve or trigger violence and criminal activities.

FAR LEFT EXTREMISTS AND ANARCHISM IN EU

Left-wing extremism, particularly anti-capitalist and anarchist violence leads to welfare losses arising from the loss of life and physical destruction, opportunity costs in terms of investments, externalities in terms of other crimes.

The experience of the police from the analogue world, paired with the digital **FERMI** solutions and an economic observation and analysis layer (economic factors), follow a holistic approach that creates added value from law enforcement to prevention.