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Second mandate for the European Digital Media Observatory on disinformation in Europe

A European Commission call for tender has confirmed a European University Institute-headed consortium as lead of the European Digital Media Observatory (EDMO). In the next 30 months, EDMO will intensify its efforts against the rising challenges of online disinformation, including the war in Ukraine.

Over a quarter of European citizens perceive [repeated weekly exposure](#) to false news. Digital information spaces offer breeding ground for the circulation of disinformation. This rising threat requires a strong common strategy to limit its impact on European democracies and values while ensuring the protection of fundamental rights.

Since its launch in June 2020, EDMO has built the technical means and infrastructure to facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange between researchers, fact-checkers and policymakers. The network has become a reference point for facts, evidence and tools in the European community tackling disinformation.

Within EU member states, EDMO works with national and regional hubs: to implement activities tackling disinformation at the grassroots level. The 14 hubs cover all 27 EU Member States and Norway. January 2023 will mark the start of activities of [six new EDMO Hubs](#), which will tailor the network's mission to the local specificities and vulnerabilities of the various European digital spaces.

EDMO gathers a wide network of European experts providing material such as collaborative investigations, fact-checking briefs, research papers and policy reports, insights and early-warnings on the most recent developments of disinformation. The network contributes to a deeper understanding of disinformation by engaging with policymakers and civil society.

Prof **Miguel Poiares Maduro**, Chair of the EDMO Executive Board, said: *“The EDMO network puts its multi-stakeholder and multi-disciplinary community at the service of the public sphere to strengthen resilience in the face of disinformation. We are delighted to count on an expanded network of hubs within EU member states. To tackle the growing threat of online disinformation we need to strengthen both the knowledge base and grassroots activities.”*

EDMO reacts quickly to rising challenges threatening European democracies. Within a few weeks after the start of hostilities, EDMO set up a [Task Force on Disinformation and the War in Ukraine](#). The task force provides actionable insights for policy- and decision-makers, which are relevant for stakeholders and the public too.

Another example of EDMO's timely impact thus far is a [report on researcher access to platform data](#). [The report](#) was presented to the Cabinet of the European Commission's Vice President Věra Jourová during the [EDMO 2022 Annual Conference](#).

Among the many new activities in the next phase of EDMO, the network will detect, analyse and counter disinformation campaigns in the 27 member states ahead of the European elections in 2024.

More about EDMO II

In the coming two and a half years, EDMO will tackle disinformation through:

- a) joint fact-checking activities across European countries;
- b) research activities and open-source investigations on disinformation at the EU level;
- c) collaboration with the network of EDMO Hubs and partners reacting to disinformation threats related to crisis situations;
- d) cooperation with the signatories of the 2022 Code of Practice on Disinformation to support the fulfilment of the relevant Code's commitments;
- e) communication campaigns on its activities and achievements, including those of the EDMO Hubs, to keep European audiences informed.

The consortium coordinated by the [European University Institute's School of Transnational Governance](#) in Florence (Italy) welcomes new members:

- the University of Amsterdam with its Amsterdam School of Communication Research ([ASCoR](#)), which will strengthen EDMO with its long-standing tradition in media and communication research
- the Belgian Media & Learning Association ([MLA](#)), which will join EDMO II to broaden efficient media literacy activities
- the Brussels [Europe MediaLab \(Fondation EURACTIV\)](#), which will contribute especially to strategy and co-operation with third-part organisations.

Sally Reynolds, Member of the new EDMO Executive Board and MLA Chief Operations Officer, commented: *"We are really delighted to be involved in EDMO going forward which acknowledges the ever-increasing role of media literacy in the fight against disinformation. No matter how much is done to stop the spread of disinformation, we will always be at the mercy of its purveyors until we can build resilience amongst all European citizens through effective media literacy campaigns, educational programmes and learning opportunities. The EDMO network of hubs across Europe provides us with the means to operationalise such campaigns at local and national level while learning and sharing best practice across boundaries. Truly an ideal situation going forward."*

Two subcontractors will join the project: the Slovak [Center for Democracy and Resilience](#) at GLOBSEC (open-source investigations) and the think tank [Integrity Institute](#) (policy advice).

Other consortium partners are the [Center for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom](#) (CMPF) based at the EUI, which is focusing on policy analysis; the Danish research centre [Datalab at Aarhus University](#), which is specialised in digital social research; the Greek [Athens Technology](#)

[Center](#), which provides technological support and tools to tackle disinformation; and the Italian [Pagella Politica](#), one of the country's major fact-checking organisations.

EDMO is governed by an Executive Board and an Advisory Board composed of experts from research, media and fact-checking organisations. EDMO's governance structure is independent of governmental or private interests. The second phase of the project runs until the first semester of 2025, with funding of € 4 million.

Media contact:

Roeland Scholtalbers, roeland.scholtalbers@eui.eu, 0039 3516441013