

Forum against Fakes

Citizens' report on how to deal with disinformation



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Texts

The citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes" for Chapter 4

Bertelsmann Stiftung: Anna Renkamp, Dr. Stefan Roch, Anne Meisiek, Dr. Angela Jain

Project leads

Anna Renkamp

Dr. Angela Jain

Dr. Dominik Hierlemann

Editorial review (Original Version)

Helga Berger

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Forum against Fakes

Citizens' report on how to deal
with disinformation

The project was initiated and implemented by the Bertelsmann Stiftung in cooperation with:



Bundesministerium
des Innern
und für Heimat



Michael Otto
Foundation for
Sustainability

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assembly), Make.org (online consultation),
TAU GmbH, Hier Mittenmang GmbH (communications),
University of Stuttgart (evaluation),
Rosenthal Research (recruitment of participants)

Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy



This is the citizens' assembly

Hussain Alkhanchi
 Elisa Ammarell-Brüning
 Pretty Balramji
 Ulrike Bargon
 Ulrich Bartel
 Christopher Baßler
 Benjamin Bäuml
 Holger Bellinghausen
 Larissa B.
 Nancy Böttcher
 Andreas Brehmer
 Kinga Bruns
 Petra Burnett
 Nico Chasan
 Jürgen Dallner
 Elena Denzler
 Tim Deubel
 Dirk Dick
 Lutz Diers
 Michael Diesenhof
 Josefine Dölker
 Christian Erichsen
 Anne Evelyn
 Arne Feldmann
 Sven Fleischhauer
 Ivonne Frank
 Werner Gelhar
 Jakob Gemmel

Isabel Gerlicher
 Monika Goldschmidt
 Celine Gräf
 Sabimari Harloff Lorenty
 Thomas Heinze
 Fabian Heß
 Nina Höfmann
 Rica Ania Höpfner
 Karl-Heinz Jörß
 Wolfram Kalb-Rottmann
 Gunnar Kämmer
 Errol Karkosch
 Sarah Kelbling
 Klaus Knörle
 Michael Köhler
 Elena Köhler
 Elisabeth Krause-Struss
 Tobias Krüger
 Tom-Benedikt Kullick
 Birgit Landhäußer
 Mario Lauterbach
 Rüdiger Lehmann
 Regina Lehmbecker
 Luisa Licker
 Steffi Linß
 Petra Lohmann
 Kristin Lühring
 Maria Maierholzner

Francine Makak
 Ronja Manthey
 Norbert Marx
 Susanne Mazzero
 Jennifer Meden
 Anne-Katrin Meier
 Peter Meyer
 Rebekka Mörschardt
 Andreas Müller
 Ansgar Müller
 Bernd Müller
 Hans Peter Müller
 Jochen Müller Kersten
 Müller
 Klaus Dieter Müller
 Paul Müller
 Ronja Nagel
 Monika Nedic
 Jens Neumann
 Xolisa Ngonyo
 Charanjit Nitzsche
 Freya Obermüller
 Perihan Özkesemen
 Dominik Pandel
 Uwe Pape
 Melanie Peilstöcker
 Felix Quehl
 Nia Naomi Rauscher

Beate Rauscher
 Leon Reeger
 Uta Reincke
 Sabrina Riemer
 Sinah Rommerskirchen
 Björn Ruge
 Eva Sangaré
 Oliver Schmidt
 Jennifer Schmidt
 Sina Schneider-Wittmann
 Laura Schramm
 Johannes Schwarze
 Giulia Shahin
 Andreas Steiner
 Patrick Süß
 Alexander Tarnowski
 Malwina Terlecka
 Henning Timmer
 Angela Viebach
 Jessica Voß
 Fabienne Wähner
 Hermann Walter
 Judith Wellhausen
 Georg Wichmann
 Kristina Wilkesmann
 Kathrin Witteler
 Laura Ziegler

An additional 27 individuals took part in one or more meetings of the citizens' assembly but did not wish to be named.



The nation as a whole was also polled

Over 1.5 million votes were cast in three online consultations.

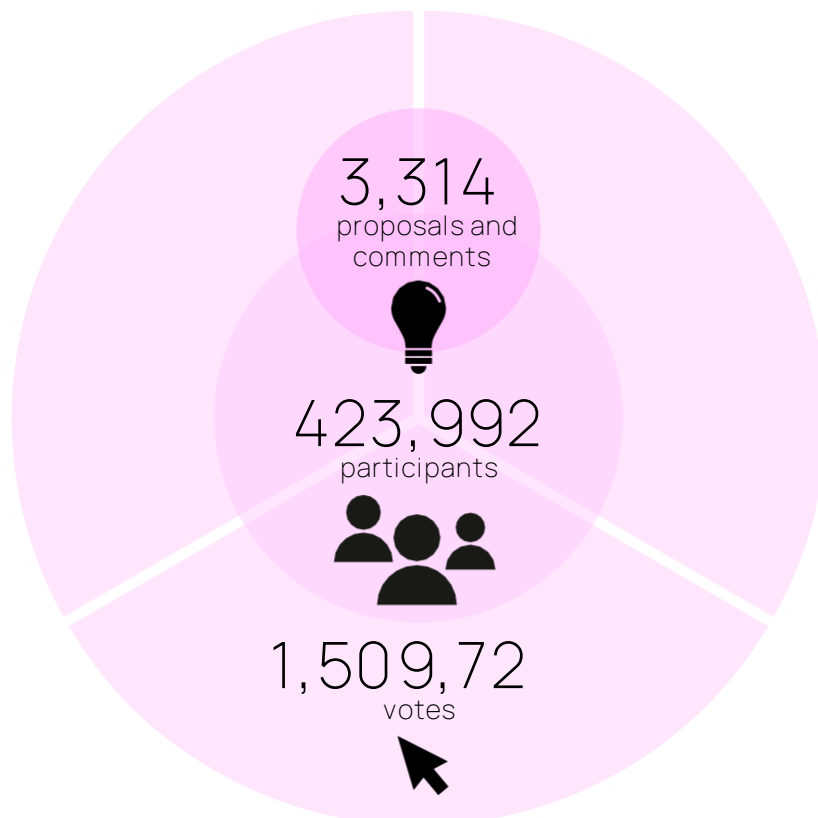




Table of contents

Foreword	8
1 Facts and findings at a glance	10
2 A summary of highlights	12
3 The topic of disinformation, the project and the participants	16
4 The recommendations for action by the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes"	20
5 Process and outcomes – combining online consultations with a citizens' assembly	38
5.1 Overview	38
5.2 Outcomes of the individual steps in the process	42
6 The final online vote – how the online participants rated the measures decided on by the citizens' assembly	48
7 Diversity of the citizens' assembly – the composition of the group and its formation	52
8 A project with prospects – conclusion and looking to the future	54
9 Voices from the project – what the participants themselves have to say	56

Foreword

“Democracy needs citizen involvement, exchanges of views and transparent decisions. These are the best remedies against political apathy and disenchantment with democracy.”

Wolfgang Schäuble, former President of the Bundestag

Democracies around the world are under pressure. Social tensions and polarisation, attacks on media freedom and the legal system, decreasing trust in the ability of established institutions to solve problems – all of these are disturbing developments, and it would be easy to find other examples to add to this list. Germany is no exception to the trend, since more and more people in the country are falling prey to uncertainty.

Disinformation – the spread and influence of which has proliferated as a result of digitalisation and social media – plays a huge role in this process. Trust and social cohesion are challenged and undermined by misinformation which is spread deliberately and whose source can often be traced back to anti-democratic players. In many cases, the goal is to unsettle or even destroy our democracy.

More and more German citizens are aware of the dangers of disinformation: 81% of those we surveyed for our study “Disconcerted Public” believe that disinformation jeopardises democracy and social cohesion. Yet there is a continuing need to make further improvements to the strategies at our disposal for dealing with this growing challenge.

The Bertelsmann Stiftung has worked together with its partners to initiate the project “Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy”, with a view to involving citizens directly and developing joint responses to this challenge. How

do we protect freedom of expression, and how do we protect ourselves against the manipulation of information in an era of fast-paced digitalisation? What do social media and the development of artificial intelligence mean for digital communications? How do we prevent unlawful attempts to influence our democratic decision-making process and, more specifically, our elections? These are crucial yet highly sensitive questions that call for a society-wide debate. And this was why we initiated the project “Forum against Fakes”.

Democracies must demonstrate time and time again that they are the best system for building a good future and guaranteeing a life of peace, freedom and prosperity for their people. Societal inclusion – the feeling that your concerns are being heard and acted on – plays into this. New extra-electoral forms of citizen participation, such as the “Forum against Fakes”, are more important than ever: thematic, focused, deliberative and also digital.

The good news is that changes are afoot in our country. The German Bundestag is convening citizens’ assemblies, the individual federal states are using new platforms for participation in the legislative process, and community workshops and digital participatory platforms have long become part of day-to-day democracy in many municipalities.

The pace of global and social change is such that standing still means moving backwards. We have therefore ventured into new territory by developing a unique platform for participation. Our “Forum against Fakes” combines a citizens’ assembly, made up of over 120 randomly selected participants from across Germany, with the parallel implementation of a broad online consultation. The members of the citizens’ assembly spent nine full days together working on potential solutions, with part of this work carried out face-to-face in Berlin, and the rest carried out remotely from home. Since the start of 2024, over 423,000 people have participated in the online consultations.

The outcomes are now available in the form of this citizens' report: 15 recommendations and 28 detailed measures that were agreed upon by the citizens' assembly. They focus not only on awareness-raising and media literacy, but also on social media platforms and the need to make them more accountable. Something else is also apparent: the participants put a great deal of time and energy into grappling with the tension between freedom of expression and the fight against disinformation.

We would like to thank all of the participants for their commitment to the project, for their willingness to debate, listen to each other and interact with each other respectfully, and for their ideas and detailed proposals. Many knowledgeable individuals gave freely of their expertise by participating in the deliberations of the citizens' assembly in a spirit of openness. We would also like to thank everyone across Germany who provided input into the process by participating digitally. Democracy depends on involved citizens. The project "Forum against Fakes" allowed us to get to know many of these citizens, and we were impressed by their tremendous dedication, their creativity and the wide range of ideas they came up with. We have them to thank for the recommendations set out in this report.

The "Forum against Fakes" is a joint effort by many parties. We would like to thank the Federal Ministry



Dr. Daniela Schwarzer
Member of the Board of the
Bertelsmann Stiftung

of the Interior and Community (BMI), Stiftung Mercator and the Michael Otto Foundation for Sustainability for their outstanding cooperation. By running a campaign on digital billboards at railway stations and shopping centres throughout Germany, the news portal t-online played a significant role in ensuring that so many people, from all of the country's regions and from very different social groups, participated digitally. The association Deutschland sicher im Netz e.V., the #UseTheNews initiative and the members of the project advisory board leveraged their networks and ideas to enrich the process.

The presentation of the citizens' report to Nancy Faeser, Federal Minister for the Interior, means that the outcomes and their implementation can now be put to a broader discussion. Among other things, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community will use the citizens' report as a basis for drafting the Federal Government's strategy on how to deal with disinformation. Yet the intended audience called to action by this report is far wider than just policy-makers: it includes the media, tech giants and civil society, or in other words all of us. A well-informed society, a pluralistic media landscape, high-quality journalism as well as an education policy that promotes news and media literacy will allow us to succeed in dealing with disinformation effectively. Disinformation is not going to disappear any time soon. But we can learn how to deal with it, and we will protect and strengthen our democracy in the process.



Dr. Dominik Hierlemann
Senior Adviser on Democracy and Social Cohesion
within the Bertelsmann Stiftung

1. Facts and findings at a glance

The 15 recommendations of the citizens' assembly

Education and awareness-raising

- An annual nationwide week-long campaign to alert the public to the dangers of disinformation
- Media literacy training for adults
- Media literacy as a curriculum subject
- Foundation in law for the place of media literacy in the education system
- Fake News Quiz with true or false questions
- Disinformation rankings for statements by political figures

Media industry and journalism

- Seal of approval for high-quality journalism
- Greater citizen emancipation through transparency about media and traceability of sources
- Materials on the subject of disinformation for media companies

Social networks

- Development and dissemination of easy-to-understand guidelines on how to deal with disinformation
- Obligation for social media platforms to counter disinformation effectively
- Encouragement to "think before you post" to avoid spreading disinformation

Artificial intelligence

- Development of technologies that can flag up disinformation

Influence of foreign states

- Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency
- Possibility of prosecuting and/or penalising those who spread disinformation

NB: A number of the recommendations sit between multiple topics. The recommendations were primarily grouped in such a way as to reflect the thematic groups used as a basis by the citizens' assembly for its discussions.

The participants and their involvement

In three online consultations, 423,992 participants¹ voted 1,509,720 times and contributed 3,314 comments and proposals.

Over 120 citizens met for nine days in total, both face-to-face and remotely. They came up with 15 recommendations for action, and 28 specific measures.

Online consultation

First online consultation phase from 24 January 2024 to 1 April 2024

Collect themes and proposals in relation to the following question: "Fakes and the manipulation of information: what should we do to protect ourselves and our democracy?"

- 197,835 participants
- 876,291 votes
- 1,611 proposals

Second online consultation phase from 22 April 2024 to 12 May 2024

Provide feedback on five provisional recommendations by the citizens' assembly

- 9,623 participants
- 10,381 votes
- 1,703 comments

Third online consultation phase from 5 June 2024 to 2 July 2024

Vote on 28 specific measures proposed by the citizens' assembly in its recommendations

- 216,534 participants
- 623,048 votes

Citizens' assembly

Over 120 citizens from all over Germany,

- from all of the federal states,
- with a diverse range of genders, ages, levels of education, neighbourhoods and migration backgrounds

Face-to-face meeting from 15 to 17 March 2024 in Berlin, online meetings on 13 April, 20 April and 4 May 2024

Six days face-to-face and online

The citizens' assembly identifies the thematic priorities and develops ideas, proposals and provisional recommendations.

Meeting from 24 to 26 May 2024 in Berlin

Three days face-to-face

The citizens' assembly produces and adopts 15 recommendations in five different thematic areas. These recommendations are broken down into 28 specific measures for the third online consultation.

Dialogue event to mark the presentation of the citizens' report on 12 September 2024 in Berlin

The citizens' report you are reading was drafted on the basis of the outcomes that emerged from the three online consultation phases and the citizens' assembly. In September, it will be presented by citizens to Nancy Faeser, Federal Minister for the Interior, and discussed with representatives from the spheres of politics, administration, media, business and civil society.



Further information

can be found on our website:
<https://forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/ergebnisse-der-buergerbeteiligung>



¹Since IP addresses were not tracked for data protection reasons, the actual number of participants may have been lower.

2. A summary of highlights

"Fakes and the manipulation of information – what should we do to protect ourselves and our democracy?" This was the question used to launch the first online consultation phase of the project "Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy" on 24 January 2024. The online consultation served as the starting point for a Germany-wide citizen involvement project, led by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, on how to deal with disinformation.

We are all confronted with disinformation, and we are seeing it more and more often. Manipulated information often gives the impression that it is real and verifiable news. This facilitates the targeted spread of misinformation. According to a study by the Bertelsmann Stiftung, 81% of people in Germany regard disinformation as a real danger to democracy and social cohesion (see the study "[Disconcerted Public](#)"²). Many people are falling prey to uncertainty and losing their trust in governmental institutions, the media and democratic opinion-forming processes. The aim of the project "Forum against Fakes" is to counteract this trend and boost democracy.

The project is targeted at the population as a whole. Everyone is welcome to contribute. The basic idea is that, by working together, we can make inroads against disinformation. That is why we need a great many people to contribute their opinions, ideas and knowledge, and that is why the debate must encompass all sections of society. At the same time, however, more is needed to identify specific solutions – in-depth discussions, which can only be carried out in smaller groups, for example via a platform such as a citizens' assembly.

An innovative approach: combining a broad online consultation with a citizens' assembly

In a world first for citizen involvement, three broad-based online consultations were carried out over the period from January to July 2024 and combined with a citizens' assembly made up of individuals selected at random. Everyone was able to go online and contribute proposals, comments and opinions on how to deal with disinformation. A total of 423,992 participants voted 1,509,720 times in the three online consultations and submitted 3,314 comments and proposals.

The outcomes of the online consultations fed into the work of the citizens' assembly. This assembly, which was a diverse group made up of over 120 citizens, met for a total of nine days, sometimes face-to-face and sometimes remotely. The members of the citizens' assembly spent time working together in both large and small groups.

The citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes"

The citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy" was made up of over 120 citizens who together reflected the diversity of Germany's population. The following criteria were used as a basis when selecting its members: regional origin (all federal states), size of municipality (either cities and towns or rural areas), gender, age, level of education and migration background. No special expertise was required to take part in the citizens' assembly, with the exception of an ability to speak German (at least B2 level). The minimum age for participants was 18.

² <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/de/publikationen/publikation/did/verunsicherte-oeffentlichkeit>

They contributed their everyday knowledge and experiences, exchanged opinions with experts and collected feedback from both the online participants and representatives from the spheres of politics and administration and interest groups. The outcome of their work takes the form of 15 recommendations for action together with 28 specific measures for those working in politics, the media and business and for civil society as a whole.

The outcomes delivered by the citizens: opinions and recommendations on how to deal with disinformation

It is very apparent from the outcomes of citizen involvement in the “Forum against Fakes” that disinformation is perceived as a real danger to the democratic order. The online participants and the citizens’ assembly took this risk very seriously and were very much in favour of measures aimed at stemming the flow of disinformation.

The proposals made by the online participants are a clear indication of the priorities for dealing with disinformation: they attached particular importance to awareness-raising and education, for example through media literacy training, the provision of information, education campaigns and communications tailored to the relevant target group. They also recognised the importance of bringing about change in the media industry, in the field of journalism and on social media networks. There was a broad consensus that it is absolutely essential for the parties involved, such as those working in the spheres of politics and the media and the platform operators, to “shoulder their responsibility”. Yet dealing with disinformation also relies, to a large extent, on each and every one of us being personally accountable. Some of the participants also spoke out in favour of restrictive measures, for example political and regulatory action against disinformation, whereas others regarded such approaches as overstepping the line.

Working in five thematic groups, the citizens’

assembly delved deep into the themes of education and awareness-raising, the media industry and journalism, social networks, artificial intelligence and the influence of foreign states, and came up with 15 recommendations for action that were broken down into 28 measures.

The recommendations for action and the measures are targeted at those working in politics, the media and business, and at civil society as a whole. The citizens’ assembly agrees that education and media literacy are the most important tools for dealing with disinformation – not only as a compulsory subject in school, but also as a learning opportunity offered to all sections of society.

The citizens’ assembly has called for more to be done to flag disinformation and AI-generated content and to curb the spread of disinformation. Examples of what this might look like include an independent point of contact for citizens and journalists, which could provide advice as well as verifying and correcting disinformation. Digital platforms should also be held accountable: their design should encourage people to cite the sources of the images they post and the facts they state. Their algorithms should prevent the spread of content which is flagged up as containing disinformation. Platforms should be obliged to invest 1% of their annual turnover worldwide each year into measures aimed at countering disinformation. Those producing high-quality journalism should be encouraged to do more by publishing their own investigative work into the impacts of disinformation and through a voluntary seal of approval with transparent requirements.

Finally, there are plenty of things that users themselves can do, for example thinking before posting and sharing content on social media that could potentially do harm to democracy.

The tension between freedom of expression and the fight against disinformation was the focus of intense debate. Participants were concerned about encroachments upon the right to freedom of expression enshrined in Germany’s Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*). The challenge, then, is to find solutions that allow disinformation to be countered effectively whilst not infringing upon freedom of expression.

The online consultations revealed that a number of participants equated disinformation with freedom of speech. A clear definition of disinformation – information that has been deliberately manipulated with the intention of influencing people and damaging society – is vitally important in this connection. What emerges very strongly is the importance of providing information and engaging in an informed debate on the topic in order to limit the influence of harmful disinformation.

In the subsequent online vote, most of the final measures adopted by the citizens' assembly were rated positively by the online participants. Measures that enabled people to gain a better understanding of where information came from were extremely popular. For example, the flagging of AI-generated content gained an approval rating of 73%. Measures aimed at increasing the accountability of the government and social media companies tended to get higher approval ratings than measures targeted directly at the behaviour of individuals.

One insight: combining online consultations with a citizens' assembly pays off

The figures and the findings make it clear: the "Forum against Fakes" has been effective in generating a public debate in Germany on how to deal with disinformation. Both groups – the online participants and the citizens' assembly – benefited from the links and the interplay between the formats. The inputs and feedback from the online participants enriched the work of the citizens' assembly and meant that the recommendations for action were of a higher quality. In turn, the ideas and recommendations of the citizens' assembly motivated and inspired the online participants to vote and to contribute their opinions and ideas.

Further information on the outcomes can be found in Chapter 4:
The recommendations for action by the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes".

Looking to the future: citizens' report and follow-up

The outcomes of the three phases of the online consultation and the citizens' assembly are documented in the citizens' report. The presentation of the citizens' report to Nancy Faeser, Federal Minister for the Interior, will take place on 12 September 2024 and will mark the start of the follow-up process. Among other things, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community will use the recommendations to develop a new government strategy on how to deal with disinformation.

The aim of the follow-up process is to promote the optimum implementation of the recommendations for action through various activities. Providing information about the project and the outcomes of the "Forum against Fakes" is an important first step in this connection. Different methods will be used to provide information to the different audiences targeted in the citizens' report, which include those working in politics, the administration, media and business (tech companies) as well as civil society. Plans are already in place for events with the corresponding departments of the Federal Government and with representatives from media, business and civil society, as well as a feedback event in 2025 with the citizens who made up the citizens' assembly.



A detailed report on outcomes, FAQs about the project "Forum against Fakes", a media library with many more in-depth materials and updates on the follow-up can be found on our project website: forum-gegen-fakes.de





3. The topic of disinformation, the project and the participants

“Disinformation and fakes are something that we encounter continuously in daily life, sometimes without realising it at all.”

Participants in the “Forum against Fakes”

Innovations such as artificial intelligence (AI) and the increasing influence of social media have led to dramatic changes in the field of public communications over recent years. Some of the effects have been positive, but the mass distribution of disinformation and the “faking” of images or videos are also on the rise. Disinformation is targeted misinformation that is spread in order to manipulate people, to influence public debates, to divide society and to weaken cohesion and democracy.³ It can be circulated almost immediately, and shared uncritically by means of a single click.



Further information on the topic of disinformation can be found in our media library: forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/mediathek



This can result in societal insecurity and a loss of confidence in public institutions and democracy. The project “Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy” seeks to respond to this development. The aim of the project is to stimulate a Germany-wide debate on how to deal with disinformation, using an as-yet-unseen participation format. Citizens are to be involved with a view to identifying a better way to deal with disinformation and drawing up specific recommendations for action by politicians and other target audiences. The direct participation of citizens is accordingly at the core of the project.

Misinformation versus disinformation

Misinformation

-> **No** intention to deceive

For example:

- > **Clickbait**
sensational headlines
- > **Satire/parody**
exaggerated or humorous portrayals
- > **Canard**
accidental reporting of false information

Disinformation

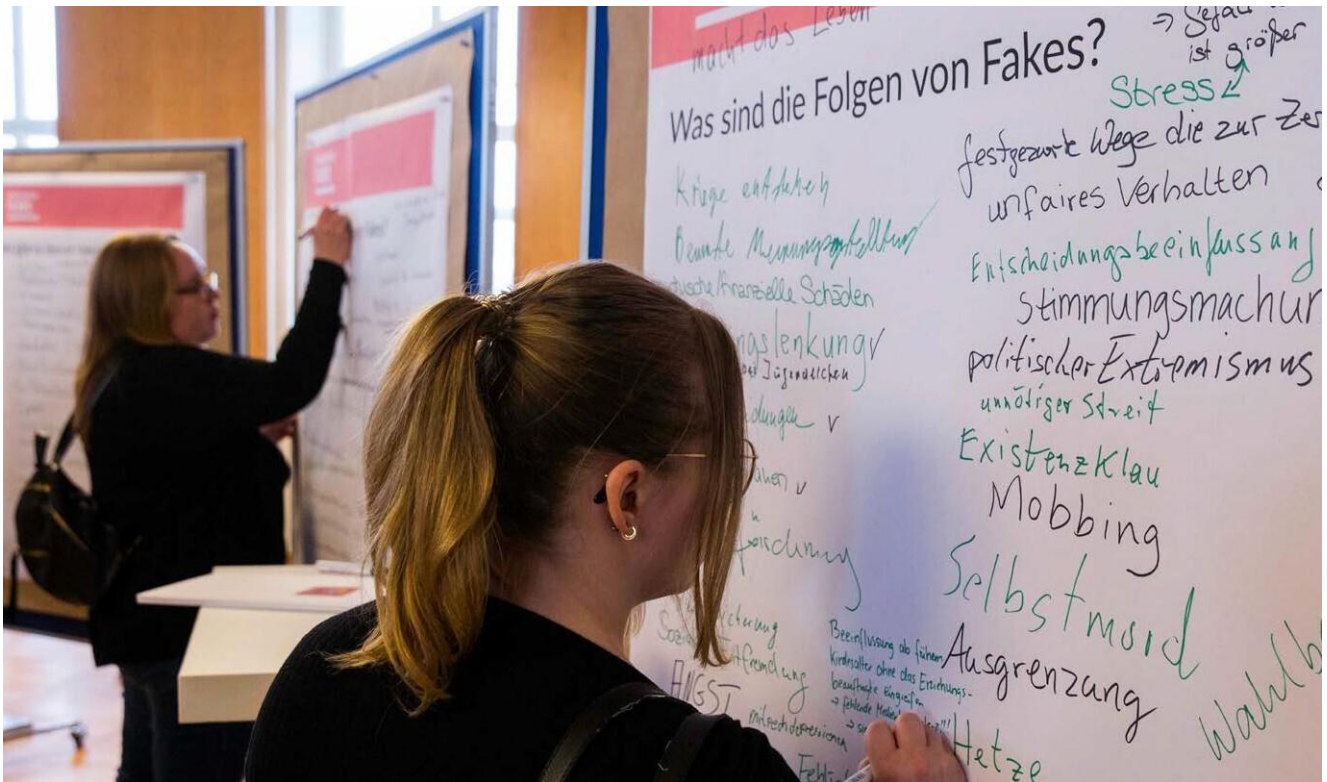
-> **Deliberate** intention to deceive

For example:

- > **Manipulated**
deep fakes, falsified photos, cloned websites
- > **Taken out of context**
abbreviated quotes, erroneous statistics
- > **Freely invented**
lies, rumours, tendentious allegations

Source: www.bundesregierung.de/breg-de/schwerpunkte/umgang-mit-desinformation/was-ist-desinformation-1875148

³ The citizens' assembly discussed this definition and agreed on it as the basis for its work.



“Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy” is a project of the Bertelsmann Stiftung. It has worked on the project with the cooperation of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, Stiftung Mercator and the Michael Otto Foundation for Sustainability. The main role of the Ministry is to receive the citizens’ recommendations for action, while Stiftung Mercator and the Michael Otto Foundation for Sustainability have provided financial backing for the project. The project has also been supported by the news portal t-online, the #UseTheNews initiative, the association Deutschland sicher im Netz e.V. and the project advisory board.

The project advisory board provides quality assurance for the implementation of the citizen participation project. The board advises the Bertelsmann Stiftung on all aspects of implementation. It is made up of members of the Bertelsmann Stiftung, which is managing the project, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, the foundations referred to above and the organisations supporting the project. In terms of external inputs, the board’s work is complemented by the know-how of university researchers and experts from civil society organisations with current practical experience. The members of the advisory board contribute their expertise on citizen participation, on the topic of disinformation and on communications, and provide recommendations on the selection of disinformation experts who can provide inputs into the work of the citizens’ assembly. The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community was not involved in selecting the experts.

The University of Stuttgart was responsible for academic oversight and evaluation of the project “Forum against Fakes”.

In order to ensure the effective involvement of

i Further information on the members of the project advisory board can be found on our website: forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/projektbeteiligte



large numbers of people while also achieving good outcomes, two types of participation were combined with each other.

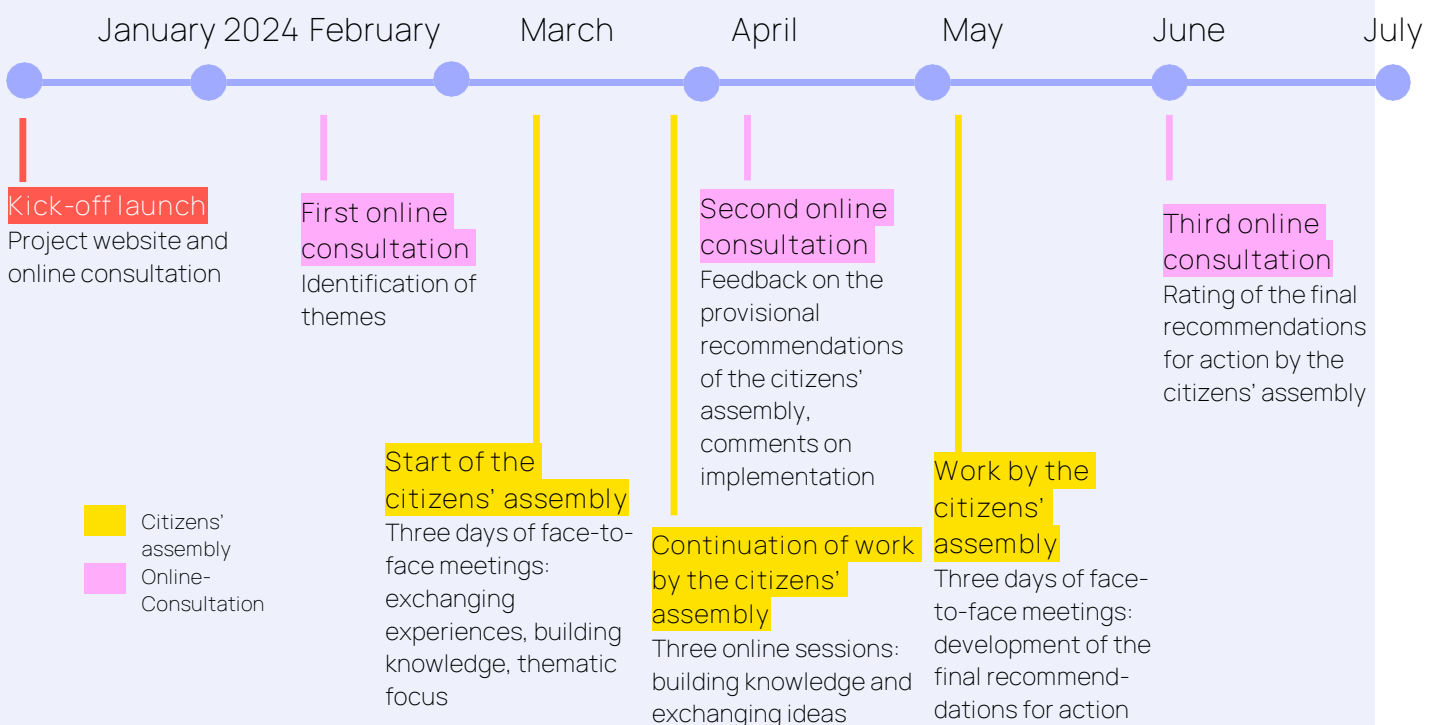
Firstly, the population as a whole was surveyed: three broad-based online consultations were carried out between January and July 2024 in order to allow people across Germany to play their part. Proposals and opinions on how to deal with disinformation could be contributed and voted on. Secondly, a citizens' assembly made up of a diverse group of over 120 individuals spent nine days between March and May discussing the outcomes of the online consultation and gaining input from experts in order to take a deeper dive into the most important aspects. The participatory approach was of fundamental significance to the project, since it not only underlines the fact that dealing with disinformation is a challenge to be addressed by the whole of society, but also aims to make our democracy more inclusive for everyone.

The central outcome is 15 policy recommendations and 28 specific measures that relate to these recommendations. They are set out in this citizens' report, together with the outcomes of the online consultation and a description of the procedure followed.

The recommendations are targeted not only at those working in politics and the administration, but also at the media, the world of business and civil society. On 12 September 2024, they will be presented to the Federal Minister for the Interior as part of a dialogue event to be held at the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community. Among other things, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community will use the outcomes to develop a strategy on how to deal with disinformation. All social protagonists are called upon to be accountable and to use the recommendations as a basis for developing measures that counter disinformation effectively.

PHASE 1

Citizen involvement





PHASE 2

Citizens' report

August

Drafting of the citizens' report

Compilation of the outcomes of the citizens' assembly and the online consultations

PHASE 3

Follow-up and impact

September 2024

2025

Dialogue event

Publication and presentation of the citizens' report to the Federal Minister for the Interior, debate with representatives from the spheres of politics, business and society

Monitoring of the recommendations

Promotion and publication of the outcomes, monitoring of the processes put in place for addressing the recommendations

Update event

Progress made in implementing the recommendations: update from the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community to the citizens' assembly on the activities of the Federal Government and other players

4. The recommendations for action by the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes"

Below are the recommendations for action in the versions adopted by the citizens' assembly on 26 May 2024. These recommendations were drawn up by the citizens on the basis of the exchange of opinions that took place within the citizens' assembly itself, ideas and comments from the online community and inputs from experts, as well as feedback from practitioners in the spheres of civil society, politics and business. The approval ratings relate to the final vote by the members of the citizens' assembly who adopted the 15 recommendations at their final meeting.

Education and awareness-raising

An annual nationwide week-long campaign to alert the public to the dangers of disinformation

99 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

The aim of the week-long campaign is to enable the population as a whole to recognise disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

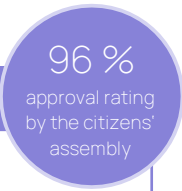
We recommend an annual nationwide week-long campaign under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community and the consumer protection organisation in order to educate the population as a whole on the topic of disinformation. The aim is to organise high-visibility and fun activities in each federal state, such as "Fact or Fake" information stands, a "Fake Quiz" with a wheel of fortune and small prizes, concerts with a programme of "Stolen Songs", sports events for younger people, entertaining activities in pedestrian zones and so on. All of these events will encourage people to enter into dialogue and engage with the subject of disinformation.

The week-long campaign will have three sources of funding: government funding, private sponsors that can use their support as a form of advertising, and private donations.

In order to alert people to the week-long campaign, an awareness-raising campaign will be carried out beforehand with measures such as the distribution of flyers, TV and radio features, articles in the press or displays on information screens in public spaces and on public transport. The week-long campaign will be accompanied by press campaigns at national, federal state and municipality level.

Rationale

A nationwide week-long campaign will maximise attention on the topic and is intended to encourage people to think critically. It is much needed in order to empower us all to distinguish facts from fakes and to protect our democracy.



Media literacy training for adults

Goal

The aim of this recommendation is to provide media literacy training to as many adults as possible in order to forestall disinformation and allow people to go about their daily lives with a greater sense of security.

Measure(s) and target audience

The measures have been broken down below into compulsory and voluntary learning opportunities.

Compulsory:

- A module on “media literacy” should be introduced on a compulsory basis for all trades and professions at vocational colleges.
- All students in their first semester at university should have to attend a course of lectures on “media literacy” and sit an exam at the end of the course.
- The topic of “media literacy” should be taught at school parents’ evenings in small chunks, so that parents can enhance their own knowledge and pass on what they have learned in a fun way to their children, regardless of how young they are.

Voluntary:

- Adult education centres and institutes of further education should offer (certified) courses on “media literacy”, for example in the form of a basic and an advanced course.
 - The basic course could equate to one teaching unit and be free of charge to participants. It would be funded by the government and cover general knowledge about media literacy in an individual’s personal life.
 - The advanced course could equate to several teaching units and extend over several days. Participants would be expected to pay a fee to attend and would receive a certificate after a final exam. The aim would be to receive in-depth training on media literacy that would make a real difference to participants in their respective professional lives.
- “Media literacy” courses should be distributed via online platforms (e.g. the certified courses offered by Google (Google Career Certificates)).
- Workshops could additionally be offered as training measures for businesses, institutions and welfare facilities (for example retirement homes, community centres).

The Federal Government, federal states or foundations should back marketing measures for the aforementioned voluntary opportunities, to be hosted on various platforms (e.g. TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, print media, TV and radio).

A QR code/link should also be displayed that takes users straight to the website, where courses can be booked either directly for the user or on behalf of a company.

Sponsors and contacts:

The Federal Agency for Civic Education might be a source of assistance in this connection. The educational foundations as well as the media and technology foundations could also be asked to promote digital skills. The Chambers of Industry and Commerce should be assigned responsibility for the measures for trades and professions. Financial backing, as well as technical support where appropriate, could be obtained from various welfare institutions, the Federal Government and NGOs.

Rationale

Adults are a particularly difficult audience to target because most of them have left the education system and may have become rigid in their opinions.

In order to ensure that the message nevertheless gets through to precisely this section of the population, compulsory measures may help to increase the level of willingness to engage in dialogue, while at the same time teaching important skills.

The compulsory measures are primarily targeted at those studying at vocational colleges and universities, and there is a risk that the group of older adults who are no longer part of the general education system will be overlooked.

The voluntary measures, backed up by a marketing campaign, will make it possible to target this group as well.

An informed population is the very basis of democracy. Decisions that are taken by the public in the absence of sufficient information could potentially be harmful.

Goal

Teachers, professors and lecturers involved in teacher training courses must recognise disinformation, be made more aware of it and be able to provide training on how to deal with it.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend taking existing media literacy frameworks and curricula and making them compulsory in practice. This entails the following:

- Media literacy must be included as a compulsory module (rather than a voluntary option) in all semesters of a teacher training course, adapted to the relevant age group, level of proficiency and sociocultural context (similarly to educational theory).
- Media literacy must be taught to all school pupils from Year 3 upwards, in all types of school.

We recommend that regular training on the topic be offered to teaching staff, pupils and parents:

- Routine further training should be provided on the topic of disinformation to teaching staff/ECTs, for example as a course offered by experts during inset days.
- "Media literacy" should be introduced as a new and separate school subject from Year 3 upwards and removed from any subjects where it is already being covered on the basis of existing educational recommendations (for example general studies and history).
- In methodological terms, it is important to convey not only facts, but also a sense of personal responsibility for adopting a critical approach to information and disinformation.

Target audience:

- Ministries of education and cultural affairs of the federal states (routine review)
- Teachers' associations
- Federal Agency for Civic Education and its counterparts at federal state level
- External institutes of further education

Rationale

Educated people are more critical of disinformation and less receptive to slogans and propaganda.

Skills cannot be taught by those who lack those very skills. The aim is to familiarise as many children and young people (whether or not they face learning difficulties) with the subject of disinformation and to foster a sense of accountability in their relationship with media.

Foundation in law for the place of media literacy in the education system

93 %

approval rating
 by the citizens'
 assembly

Goal

Raise the public's level of education in the area of media consumption and empower people to recognise disinformation, create corresponding learning opportunities and make them accessible to society as a whole.

Measure(s) and target audience

- We recommend that the Federal Government and the federal states should develop standardised legislative provisions and submit them to the legislative procedure.
- We furthermore recommend that the Federal Government should offer a financial package to the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* in the Federal Republic of Germany with the aim of standardising media literacy training.

Inspiration should be drawn *inter alia* from the recommendations made by the citizens' assembly regarding media literacy and the public and media literacy in the education system.

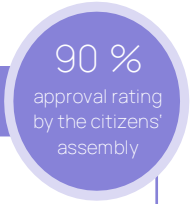
The target audience includes the Federal Government, the federal states and the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs.

Rationale

We regard it as vitally important to preserve freedom of expression while, at the same time, empowering the public to recognise disinformation when consuming media. A uniform basis should therefore be created for the teaching of this subject.

It is recommended that the Federal Government offer a financial package to the federal states in order to incentivise implementation.

Fake News Quiz with true or false questions



Goal

The aim is to heighten the general public's awareness of disinformation.

The quiz is intended to encourage people to verify the accuracy of what they see and hear, pay more attention and ask more questions. It is hoped that this will boost people's critical thinking skills and protect them more effectively against disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend the development of a Fake News Quiz that is straightforward and fun to take, in order to raise public awareness of disinformation.

A non-government organisation (for example a non-profit organisation or a foundation) should run a campaign, starting in early 2025, which presents statements and images from recent news stories in the form of a quiz. The quiz will ask people to decide whether what they see is disinformation (false) or real information (true).

The campaign will be hosted digitally (via social media, on TV and in public transport) and in print (for example in newspapers and magazines and on posters).

An example of a digital format could be a quiz that is displayed on information screens in buses, trains, trams and so on.

The first thing that would appear on the screen is the heading "Fake News Quiz". The individual quiz questions would then appear as either statements or images, followed by the question "True or False?" After a pause of five seconds to allow for thinking time, the answer would be displayed together with an explanation.

A corresponding example in print media could be a quiz in the puzzles section of a newspaper. A statement or an image, once again together with the question "True or False?", would be printed below the heading "Fake News Quiz". The answer and a brief explanation would be printed upside down on the same page.

The design of the quiz should, without fail, be tailored to the relevant target group. Depending on the type of media used, the statements or images should be changed every week in order to avoid people getting bored of them.

Rationale

A quiz is a good way to raise people's awareness of disinformation, since it encourages people to think critically in an interactive and fun way. It is also ideal given that people's attention spans are declining.

Disinformation rankings for statements by political figures

87 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

The aim is to heighten public awareness of the veracity of statements by politicians and to provide an intrinsic motivation for political figures to avoid spreading disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend introducing a disinformation ranking for statements by political figures during an election campaign.

The ranking should be produced by a charitable independent media organisation/collective (for example Correctiv) using data that are collected on a continuous basis. It will be published in good time before the relevant elections (two weeks beforehand) across all media outlets. Its aim is to evaluate public statements by politicians. In this context, "public" includes, in particular, statements before parliaments, in print publications, on social media and during TV and radio appearances.

The ranking should be funded by foundations, companies, organisations (for example the "Transparent Civil Society Initiative") and private donations.

Rationale

The trend for political figures to spread disinformation deliberately gains particular traction during the run-up to elections. It is all too often the case that people accept this uncritically, which means that political beliefs are influenced and democracy is therefore weakened. The measures referred to above are intended to counteract this, and to facilitate and strengthen a democratic process that is not influenced by disinformation.

Media industry and journalism

Seal of approval for high-quality journalism

96 %
approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

We want to increase trust in the media by means of a voluntary seal of approval for high-quality journalism. We also hope to achieve high-quality and quality-assured journalism and a groundswell against disinformation. The criteria for the seal of approval are to be easily comprehensible and available for inspection in the interests of transparency.

Measure(s) and target audience

An independent body will establish the criteria and award the seal of approval, which will be issued for a period of one year. The criteria will be updated as and when necessary. Annual checks will be carried out to ascertain whether the media companies are adhering to these criteria. It will be possible to revoke the seal of approval in the event of gross violations. Citizens will have the option of reporting violations to the point of contact (see the recommendation "Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency").

Examples of criteria for the seal of approval could include internal fact-checking, severity and number of complaints to the German Press Council or known instances where disinformation has been spread, handling of sources, critical revision of disinformation and more.

The seal of approval will serve as documentation of a media company's commitment to quality, which may also give it a competitive edge among readers and potential advertisers. Competition to produce high-quality journalism will increase between the media companies. The disadvantages incurred by the media companies (in terms of both time and money) should be outweighed by the benefits.

Target audience:

- Publishers and media companies
- The independent body that develops the criteria and awards the seal of approval

Rationale

The seal of approval will increase trust among readers and demonstrate reliability and transparency. Disinformation represents a danger. The seal of approval will provide everyone with as straightforward and proactive a way as possible of opting for high-quality journalism. It will ensure that the media companies have an additional incentive to adhere to the quality criteria. In the media sector, the seal of approval will offer vital guidance on preventing the damage that can be caused by disinformation. This will foster a new awareness of the importance of high-quality journalism.

Greater citizen emancipation through transparency about media and traceability of sources

90 %
approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

Citizens should be helped to form an opinion by means of transparent information about the spread of facts and their sources and assistance with the recognition of disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

Additional information (metadata) should be provided for all published content. This would mainly involve providing details of sources as well as publishers. The source data and publisher's certification should be accessible via a digital fingerprint, so that interested users can check them for themselves. It should be possible to upload the digital fingerprint and the sources (in a standardised section) when the document is published. There should be a minimum requirement for standardisation of the digital fingerprint and the sources section across the EU. The areas of application and standardisation rules are to be enshrined in law. The Federal Republic of Germany/Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community should propose a corresponding legislative initiative. Although the information will be provided on a voluntary basis, we hope that quality standards will rise as a result of competition.

The source data and certification are explained below.

- In general terms, whenever information is posted, a standardised digital section should be available, where metadata (source citations, source tree) can be filled in voluntarily and made available for inspection by users at any time. The publisher will be clearly identifiable. The sources section should be visible in all cases, even if it has not been filled out.
- It should additionally be possible to include a forgery-proof fingerprint (qualified electronic signature eIDAS2.0) in published content so that the author can be unambiguously verified. Certain information should be stored in the digital fingerprint, for example the publisher's certificate, the sources, and additional information, e.g. the information required by the AI Act. All digital fingerprints should be stored in such a way as to minimise the likelihood of deletion.
- The fingerprint should be integrated into each form of media (a QR code for print media, a datastream for DAB radio, teletext for television, etc.).
- With specific reference to journalists/the press, we recommend expanding the Press Code to include an obligation to fill in the corresponding sources section.
- Protection of sources: the publisher will have the option of protecting his or her source. He or she will then be responsible for the accuracy of the piece ("root of the source tree").

Media certification

- A certification option could be introduced for the individual/organisation/distributor responsible for the information, for example on the basis of independent checks (ISO, see Reporters without Borders, the recommendation by the Journalism Group).

- The certification must not be controlled by the government in any way.

Flagging up of AI-generated content

- Content generated independently by AI, including video and audio but also images and texts, should always be regarded as meeting the criteria to be flagged up (see the EU's AI Act).
- Under the AI Act, a higher duty of transparency automatically applies in the case of critical applications. Users can be referred to the necessary information in the digital fingerprint.
- The source tree will enable the flagging up of generative AI use.

Rationale

Citizens must be empowered to decide which media they regard as trustworthy in order to take the sting out of disinformation. We want to support citizens in this connection by providing them with as much information as possible. The government should not be involved in this process, in order to avoid influencing citizens in their formation of (political) opinions.

It is easier to certify a media outlet than individual facts. Naming the publisher responsible for the information will give a better insight into its integrity/plausibility.



Materials on the subject of disinformation for media companies

90 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

The aim is to position the topic of disinformation more prominently in the media. This should heighten public awareness of the topic and alert society as a whole to the harm that can be caused by disinformation. Ensuring that the topic of disinformation has a prominent place in the media should also minimise its negative impacts.

Measure(s) and target audience

An administrative department for disinformation should be set up within the Press Office of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community and should use the Federal Ministry's distribution list to send out information on a regular basis to all media professionals on the topic of disinformation, as well as continuously suggesting ideas for stories. The media companies will receive the latest background information in a ready-prepared format. The information will also be published on the website of the administrative department. This department could potentially also sit within the point of contact for citizens (see the recommendation "Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency").

The materials that are sent out could include the following:

- Definition: what is disinformation?
- What kind of disinformation campaigns are currently doing the rounds?
- What are their potential consequences?

Target audience:

- Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community
- All media professionals

Rationale

We regard disinformation as a real danger to our democracy. Public awareness of this danger should be heightened, and we regard the media companies as good channels of information in this connection. This measure is intended to boost social cohesion.

Social networks

Development and dissemination of easy-to-understand guidelines on how to deal with disinformation

89 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

Clear and straightforward guidelines should be developed and published in order to serve as an initial primer on how to deal with disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend developing guidelines that are intended to serve as a primer for citizens on how to recognise disinformation (education) and how to deal with it (recommended behaviours). They should, moreover, provide some initial guidance on how to deal with those in your own social circles who have been affected by manipulation.

A variety of perspectives and institutions should be involved in the drafting of the guidelines. A draft should be produced by experts, and then evaluated and revised by citizens as well as by civil society.

The process should be commissioned by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and

Community. The guidelines should:

- be as straightforward and clear as possible, and accessible to everyone;
- not be too long (no more than one page), and be designed to look appealing where applicable;
- be available to everyone free of charge;
- be written in a positive and motivating tone;
- be worded in terms that are general enough to apply to all types of media where possible;
- encourage people to engage more with the topic, and promote a competent approach to news media;
- highlight options for acting quickly; and
- be developed further and updated on a continuous basis.

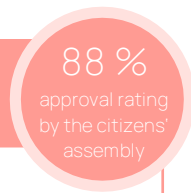
The guidelines should be linked to other measures by the citizens' assembly.

We call for platform operators to be obliged to display the guidelines in a prominent position whenever their site is used, and for this obligation to be enshrined in law. The relevant provisions of law should also incorporate all other forms of media.

Rationale

It is crucially important to find a straightforward way of heightening citizens' awareness of the topic of disinformation. The long-term aim is to encourage personal responsibility when consuming media, thereby preventing a social divide and protecting democracy.

Obligation for social media platforms to counter disinformation effectively



Goal

Stemming the spread of disinformation via social media platforms

Measure(s) and target audience

Legal framework (EU)

- The Digital Services Act (DSA) should be supplemented by an act that obliges the platforms to arrange for annual audits to be carried out (by way of analogy to the bank audits that are carried out by the ECB) or for reports to be drawn up by independent third parties. The audits should be implemented immediately as soon as the act enters into force. The audit teams should be interdisciplinary in terms of their composition. The aim of the audits is to determine whether disinformation is being countered effectively by platforms. The audits will be evaluated by the EU's Digital Commissioner and the competent body in the respective country (the Federal Network Agency and the Federal Office for Information Security in Germany). The platforms should be harshly penalised in the event of non-compliance.
- The outcomes and goals to be achieved by the platforms in terms of fighting disinformation must be stepped up in order to provide a consistent guarantee of the EU's implementation of the legislation and penalties (specific contact point: Digital Commissioner?).
- Large platforms (VLOPs) will be obliged by law to set aside a particular budget for countering disinformation – either a proportion of taxes and contributions or 1% of their global annual turnover. Half of this budget must be used to ensure that each user is shown an educational clip once a month about disinformation, which acts like a non-skippable advert (the user can click to skip only once the clip has been watched for a certain length of time.) The remaining half of the budget will be given to an independent agency for funding campaigns against disinformation (see the recommendation "Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency").

Algorithms

- Minimum legal requirements must be brought in that oblige the platforms to program their algorithms in such a way as to ensure that potential disinformation is not spread and is not served up to users. Platforms must furthermore prevent the emergence of "filter bubbles" ("diversity clause").
- The platforms should be obliged by law to make their algorithm structures publicly accessible. It should be possible for all citizens to view them and comment on them. This will be without prejudice to copyright.

Transparency requirements

- The platforms should be obliged to flag up posts that (might) contain disinformation (see terms of use and the recommendation "Development of technologies that can flag up disinformation").

Users

- The definition of disinformation in the DSA should be expanded.
- Platforms must adapt their terms of use on a mandatory basis: these terms should include the definition of disinformation set out in the DSA and oblige all users to refrain from spreading disinformation. If this obligation is infringed, users should be penalised, for example by blocking users who share disinformation.
- Posting on platforms under a pseudonym should continue to be possible, but users should be obliged to provide their real names when registering on the platforms (although this might not be feasible). This will not affect Germany's Federal Data Protection Act.

Rationale

Social media platforms make a critical contribution to the spread of disinformation and are responsible for stemming it. This will provide better protection for citizens and democracy.



Encouragement to “think before you post” to avoid spreading disinformation

77 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

The aim is to encourage users to be actively aware of what they are doing when they post, and to minimise the creation and spread of disinformation.

Measure(s) and target audience

There should be an appropriate reflection period (lasting between two and five minutes) before content of any kind can be posted on social media platforms. During this reflection period, an AI algorithm checks the content for potential disinformation, for example using keywords which indicate that it might relate to sensitive topics (such as electoral interference and migration). The list of problematic keywords is to be updated on an ongoing basis by the platform's employees.

If the content is safe, it will be published after the reflection period. If there is a suspicion that it might be disinformation, a warning should appear to alert the user that the content is not safe. If the author decides to post the content regardless, it will remain pending until it has undergone a final check by the platform's employees. If the post is categorised as disinformation, it will not be published. As well as providing regular training to the employees in question, their objectivity should be ensured by introducing quality standards for checks, similar to those that have already been successfully implemented by YouTube, for example.

All social media platforms must be obliged by law to introduce a reflection period based on the above steps. The company in question will be responsible for deciding on the specific details of how the steps are introduced and implemented (by updating the terms of use, for example).

The entire recommendation should be adopted at both national and EU level.

Rationale

It is important for users to spend some time thinking about what they are posting before they post it. This will make it possible to encourage more intentional behaviour on the part of users.

The warning and constructive feedback from employees will encourage users to think again about what they have written.

Social media is a global phenomenon, and a supranational approach is therefore vital. Platforms will not regulate themselves voluntarily, and so there is a need for legislative provisions.

Generally speaking, the social media sector is still too under-regulated, which makes it impossible to limit adverse impacts such as the spread of disinformation.

This is not intended to curtail freedom of expression, but instead to serve as a tool that will allow us to avoid harmful disinformation and protect democracy in the process.

Artificial intelligence

Development of technologies that can flag up disinformation

95 %

approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

Disinformation should be flagged up so that citizens can recognise it faster and more effectively.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend stepping up efforts to develop AI technologies that can flag up disinformation. Existing initiatives should be promoted and the emergence of new projects funded for this purpose. These projects should be coordinated centrally.

This project should be provided with financial backing by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, but should nevertheless be independent and impartial, with a view to ensuring that freedom of expression is not curtailed.

The flagging up of disinformation should be compulsory. A link should also be provided to transparent and easily comprehensible reasons (website, see the recommendation "Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency").

The flagging system should be accessible and user-friendly (for example in the form of a traffic light system, percentages or similar).

Platforms should be incentivised to use AI to flag up disinformation. The AI should be developed and applied transparently (using open-source code and training data which can be viewed and amended upon request).

The application of the Federal Data Protection Act should not be curtailed by the detection and flagging up of disinformation.

The target audience for this recommendation is as follows: the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community, initiatives and projects, platform operators and the audit body (see the recommendation "Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency").

Rationale

Supporting technologies should be made available so that all citizens have the opportunity to spot disinformation quickly despite the rising flood of information.

The use of open-source code should increase trust in the disinformation detection tool.

Influence of foreign states

Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency

92 %approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

There should be a quick, efficient and unbureaucratic way of protecting society against the targeted spread of misinformation. There is therefore a need for a non-partisan, central agency which reports, checks and corrects disinformation and which carries out educational measures.

Measure(s) and target audience

We recommend the creation of a central counter-disinformation agency. This should be a non-partisan authority that works together with a neutral commission made up of experts from various areas. The agency could sit within the Joint Management Office of the Media Authorities. It must not be used for monitoring purposes.

The agency should perform the following activities:

- Point of contact for citizens and journalists, where they can report disinformation and obtain advice on the topic. The agency should be contactable both via a website and by telephone. The consumer protection organisations could be involved directly as physical points of contact for the public and provide the relevant services on the ground.
- Establishment of a website for verifying disinformation reports. Account should be taken of comparable services that already exist in this area. Corrections should be published promptly on all channels, in particular wherever the information first appeared.
- Production of reports, analyses and statistics on the current progress of research and instances of disinformation (including the influence of disinformation spread by foreign states – "FIMI"), as a source of information for politicians, citizens and researchers. The reports should focus, in particular, on a German context. A report on disinformation should be published at least once per year.
- Prevention activities and a proactive approach to countering the spread of disinformation (for example the development and implementation of education campaigns, learning opportunities, information events in community centres, updates on various social media channels).
- Coordination of various working groups and government authorities.

The agency must have sufficient funding to perform its tasks.

Rationale

Disinformation is holding ever greater sway over many areas of our lives and poses an increasing danger to democracy. Previous attempts to tackle disinformation have failed because they were not accessible or visible enough. A central agency would pool the related competencies of the existing institutions and serve as a visible point of contact for the general public.

Possibility of prosecuting and/or penalising those who spread disinformation

91 %
approval rating
by the citizens'
assembly

Goal

Preventing the creation and spread of disinformation by means of prosecution measures and/or penalties.

Measure(s) and target audience

The Federal Government should examine whether criminal prosecution or other penalties might be possible, using the definition of disinformation as a basis.

Disinformation is defined as targeted misinformation that is spread in order to manipulate people. The goals pursued include influencing public debate, dividing society and weakening cohesion and democracy. The scope of protection granted to freedom of expression under Article 5 of the Basic Law should be given particularly careful thought in this connection. The examination should encompass international, European and national concerns.

The target audience for the recommendation is the Federal Government.

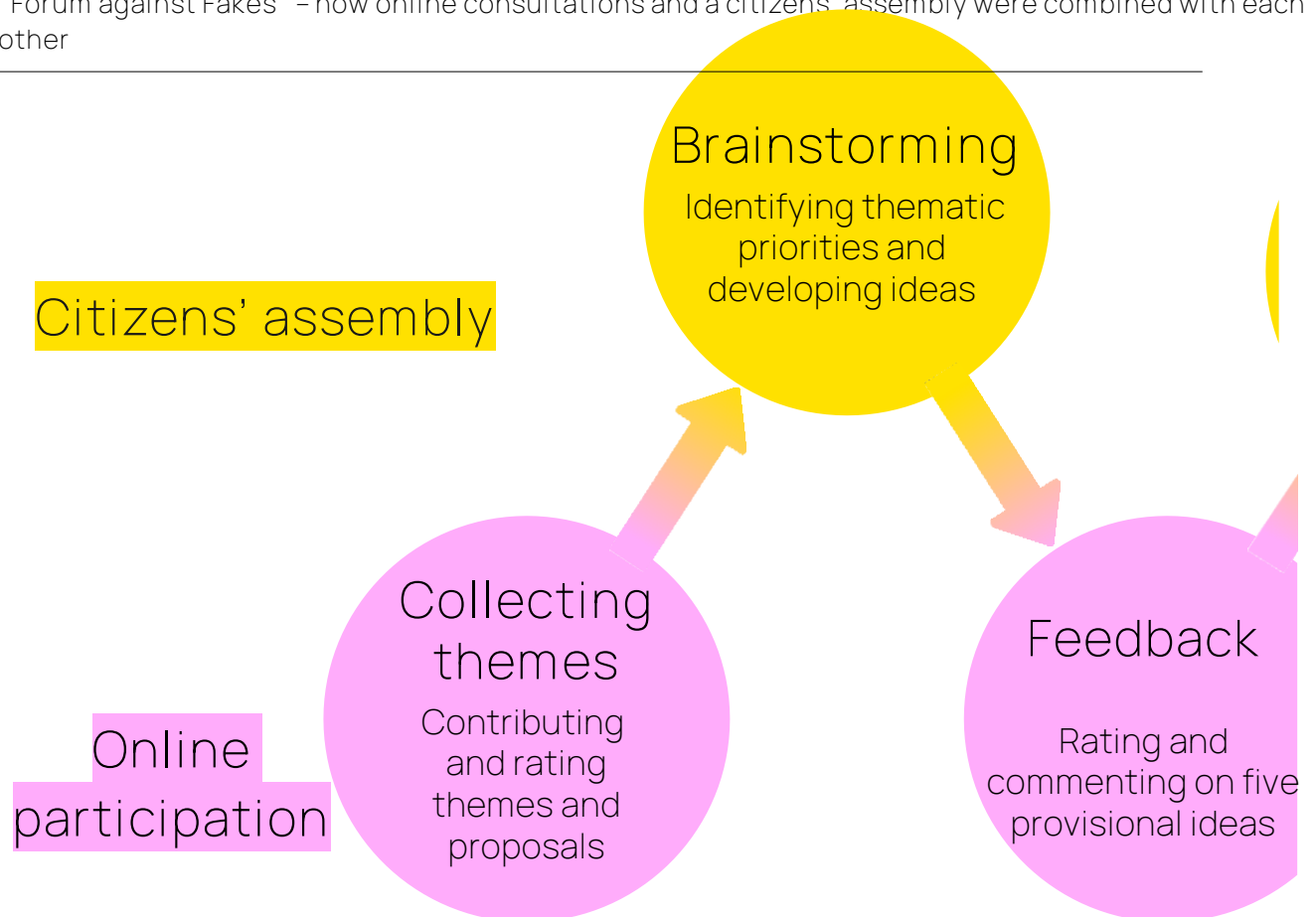
Rationale

We believe that preserving freedom of expression is a vitally important task. Nevertheless, we also want to deter people from creating and spreading disinformation and instil a sense of wrongdoing in the perpetrators. The aim is to prevent harm at a societal, personal and economic level.



5. Process and outcomes – combining online consultations with a citizens’ assembly

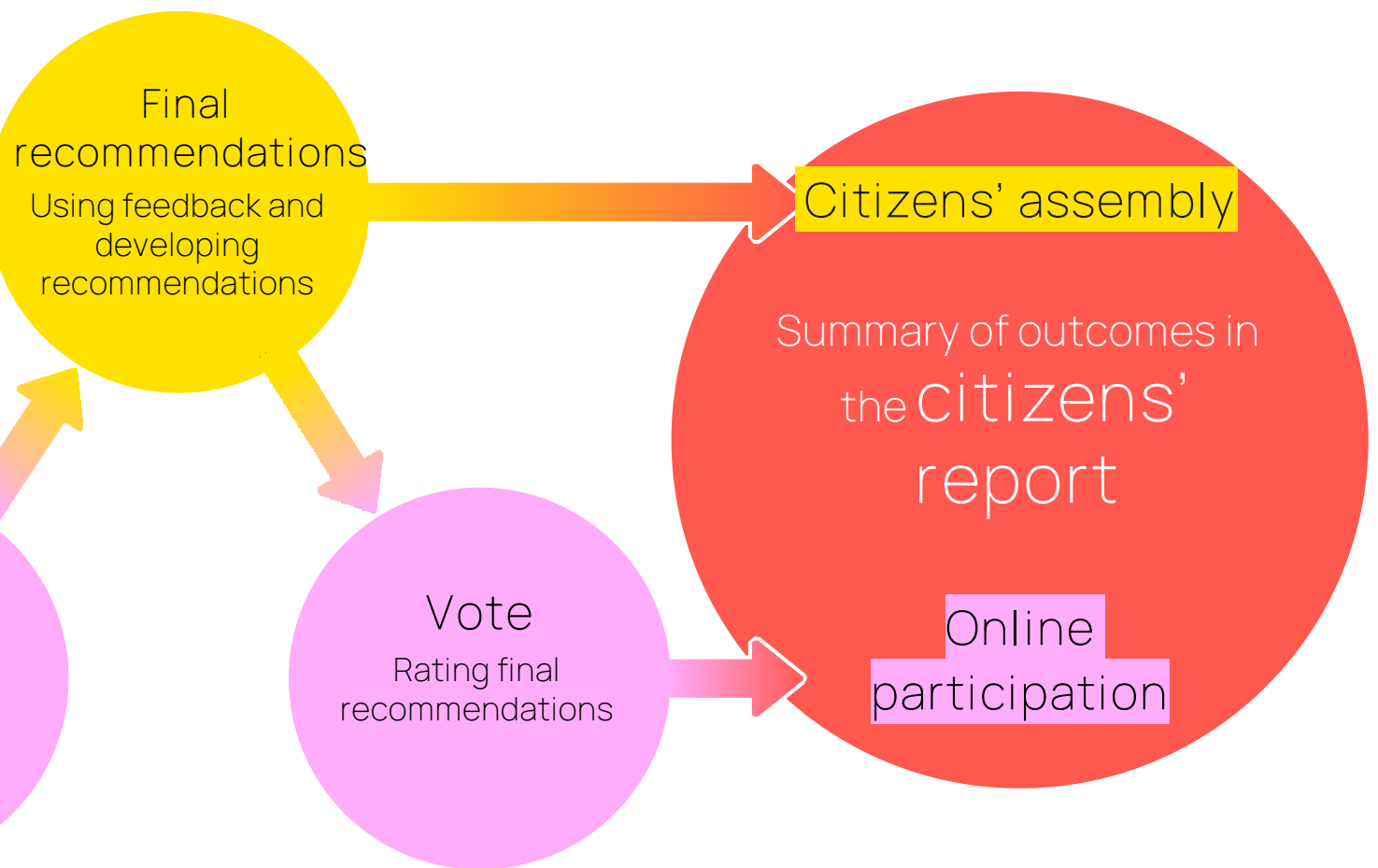
“Forum against Fakes” – how online consultations and a citizens’ assembly were combined with each other



5.1 Overview

In order to involve as many people as possible and achieve the best possible outcome, two different types of participation were combined during the project “Forum against Fakes – Together for a Strong Democracy”. Firstly, all citizens across Germany were able to play an active role in three broad-based online consultations held between

January and July 2024. Secondly, a diverse group of over 120 citizens made up a citizens’ assembly which discussed the key aspects and developed recommendations in a process extending over several stages. The participation processes were closely interlinked with each other: the outcomes of one participation phase fed directly into the next, where they could be commented on, rated and subsequently developed further.



i **Further materials** from the individual meetings of the citizens' assembly and detailed reports on the individual online consultations can be found on our website: forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/ergebnisse-der-buergerbeteiligung



How did the citizens' assembly work?

Over 120 citizens worked together within the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes". During the first stage, people from across Germany were contacted after having been selected randomly. During the second stage, this random approach was combined with additional selection criteria in order to ensure that Germany's diverse population was reflected as optimally as possible. These criteria include the distribution of people by age, gender, federal state, size of municipality, level of education and migration background.

During a total of five meetings (both remote and face-to-face) across nine days, the citizens' assembly debated the topic of disinformation together and also split into small groups where they could discuss specific problems in more detail. The aim was to allow participants to engage in the debates on equal terms. With this in mind, the meetings of the citizens' assembly were guided by experienced external moderators.

At various points during the process, a number of experts provided contextual information on different aspects of the topic and offered support on substantive matters. The citizens' assembly listened to talks and engaged in debates, asked questions and became familiar with the viewpoints of a range of different experts, which meant that all of the participants were equally informed when drawing up the recommendations.

How did the three online consultations work?

The online consultations were carried out via the Make.org platform. Various communication measures were implemented in order to let citizens know that the consultations were taking place, including adverts on social media channels, newsletters or mailing lists by the organisations involved in the project, and PR work. The direct links that appeared in articles on the news portal t-online played a crucial role.

During the various phases of the consultations, citizens were able either to submit their own proposals to be voted on, or comment on (provisional) recommendations and vote on them. They were able to post comments in order to clarify their opinions and/or make proposals for improvements.

At the end of the online consultation phases, researchers from the fields of data science and the social sciences analysed the proposals that had been collected and grouped them together in order to identify the ideas that best reflected the debate. Each of these ideas drew on dozens, if not hundreds, of proposals.

All of the comments that were posted were checked by a moderation team to ensure that they complied with the existing legislation and the moderation charter that was in force. Discriminatory, insulting and irrelevant comments were ignored. In addition, several protective measures were put in place to prevent the online consultations being affected by hackers or trolls.

Organisation of the citizens' assembly

15-17 March 2024 (face-to-face)

→ Kick-off and identification of themes

The main focus during the first meeting of the citizens' assembly was on getting to know one another and exchanging experiences on the topic of disinformation. The participants gained insights into the various thematic areas and assigned themselves to a thematic group.

13 April 2024 (online)

→ Delving deeper into the subject matter

Five thematic groups investigated the sub-themes. These groups were split into even smaller groups in order to hold in-depth debates on the relevant subject matter.

20 April 2024 (online)

→ Delving yet deeper into the subject matter

The outcomes of the meeting included initial ideas and drafts of provisional recommendations; these fed into the second online consultation, during which the online participants could post comments on them.

4 May 2024 (online)

→ Feedback and exchange of opinions

The citizens' assembly sought feedback from interest groups and policy-makers as well as practitioners, and exchanged views on the provisional recommendations.

24-26 May 2024 (face-to-face)

→ Development of the final recommendations

The citizens' assembly voted on and adopted the draft recommendations.

Organisation of the online consultations

24 January 2024-1 April 2024

→ First online consultation

During the first online consultation, citizens were able to play an active role by contributing their own proposals on the topic "Fakes and the manipulation of information: what should we do to protect ourselves and our democracy?", as well as rating other proposals. These proposals were summarised into thematic groups and ideas, and then fed directly as an input into the work of the citizens' assembly.

22 April 2024-12 May 2024

→ Second online consultation

During the second phase, online participants posted feedback on five provisional recommendations that had been drawn up by the citizens' assembly. It was possible to rate and comment on the recommendations online. In turn, the feedback from online participants was used by the citizens' assembly as a source of information when developing its final recommendations.

5 June 2024-2 July 2024

→ Third online consultation

During the third online consultation of the "Forum against Fakes", over 28 individual measures were available to be voted on. These measures originated from the 15 recommendations which the citizens' assembly had adopted on 26 May 2024. Each recommendation contained one or more measures, which were broken down and arranged thematically for the online consultation.

5.2 Outcomes of the individual steps in the process

First online consultation:



During the first online consultation from 24 January to 1 April 2024, citizens were able to play an active role by contributing their own proposals on the topic of "Fakes and manipulation of information: what should we do to protect ourselves and our democracy?" and rate the proposals submitted by others.

The ideas and proposals were bundled into thematic groups, serving as inputs which fed directly into the work of the citizens' assembly.

The first online consultation in figures



There was widespread public interest in the first online consultation. Almost 200,000 people played an active role and voted over 870,000 times. Over 1,600 proposals were submitted, which was a clear indication that the general public regard fakes and manipulated information as a real danger to democracy. The outcomes also reflect a broad consensus, namely that

Six thematic areas: bundling of the citizens' proposals

Education and awareness-raising



Media industry



Social media



Accountability



Artificial intelligence



Influence of foreign states



specific actions are needed to counter disinformation. Yet opinions differ on exactly which actions these should be.

Once the consultation was over, the proposals submitted by citizens were analysed and grouped. On this basis, the 30 ideas that most accurately reflected the discussion were chosen. In addition, all of the proposals were used as a starting point for the identification of six thematic areas, five of which served as a basis for the substantive work of the citizens' assembly. "Accountability" was identified as an overarching thematic area, and these proposals were later subsumed into other areas. The thematic areas are set out below, together with the proportion of contributions they accounted for and selected ideas and sample proposals:

26% of proposals:
→ Education and awareness-raising

Idea: Media literacy as part of the school curriculum

Sample proposal: "A critical approach to all media should be taught from primary school upwards, and there should be the option for people of any age to learn more about the subject." – Claudia

24% of proposals:
→ Media industry

Idea: A clear distinction between news and opinion in media coverage

Sample proposal: "When you're reading or watching the news, it should be easier to distinguish between objective facts and the journalist's own opinions or judgements." – Dieter

24% of proposals:
→ Social media

Idea: Flagging of fake news

Sample proposal: "There should be an option to report fake news on every social media page and whenever an advert is displayed." – Gabi

19% of proposals:
→ Accountability

Idea: Systematic taking down of fake news

Sample proposal: "All of the social media platforms should be obliged to take a much more systematic approach to removing fake profiles and/or fake news and blocking accounts!" – Sandy

7% of proposals:
→ Artificial intelligence

Idea: Obligation to flag AI-generated content

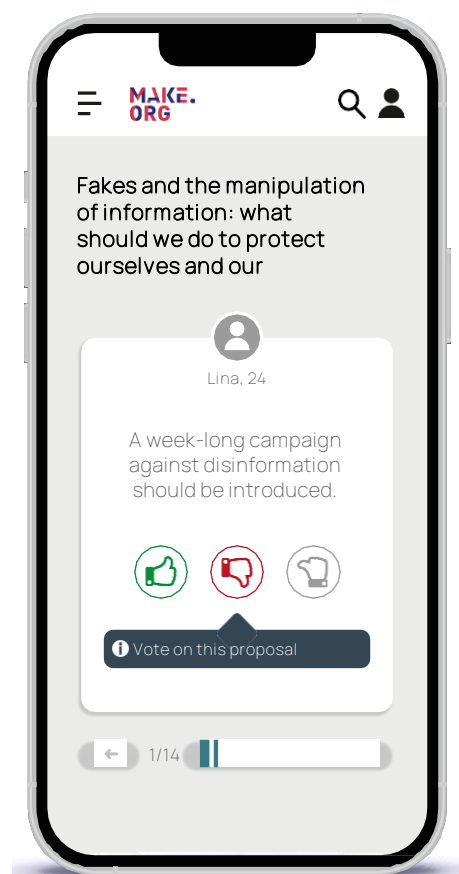
Sample proposal: "It should be made obligatory to flag up all photos that have been generated using AI." – Hela

1% of proposals:
→ Influence of foreign states

Sample proposal: "People should be given more of an insight into how foreign disinformation works." – Andreas

Sample proposal: "Bots and foreign influence should be clearly flagged up, particularly if Russia is involved." – Aliexa

User view of the online consultation



A detailed report on the outcomes of the first online consultation can be found here on our website:
www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/forum-gegen-fakes-erste-online-beteiligung



Citizens' assembly:

Brainstorming

Identifying thematic priorities and developing ideas

The citizens' assembly met in person for the first time from 15 May to 17 March 2024 at the Crown Prince's Palace in Berlin. Since this meeting marked the start of the citizens' assembly's work, the main focus was on getting to know one another and exchanging experiences on the topic of disinformation. The participants came from all of the federal states and from neighbourhoods that ranged from small villages to large cities, and they reflected the diversity of German society in terms of gender, age, level of education and migration background.

After having exchanged their own experiences and gained initial insights into the subject matter, the participants discussed with each other potential ways of dealing with fakes and targeted misinformation. Inputs were provided by experts from organisations such as the Hans Bredow Institute, Freie Universität Berlin, ISD Germany and Wikimedia Deutschland e.V. as well as by stakeholders from entities such as YouTube DACH/CEE, the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution or Deutschland sicher im Netz e.V.

The participants decided on the substantive priorities for the remaining meetings, which served as the outcome of the first event. The six thematic areas from the online consultation were slimmed

down to five thematic groups, with the over-arching topic of "Accountability" being discussed by all groups as a cross-cutting theme.

During three remote meetings in April and May 2024, the citizens' assembly worked in these five thematic groups, which were as follows: education and awareness-raising, media industry and journalism, social networks, artificial intelligence and influence of foreign states. In the process, the participants developed their own recommendations on how to deal with disinformation and exchanged opinions on the matter with practitioners and representatives of various organisations. Each thematic group developed a provisional recommendation for the next online consultation.

Second online consultation:

Feedback

Rating and commenting on five provisional ideas

In the second online consultation, which took place from 22 April to 12 May 2024, participants gave feedback on five provisional recommendations that had been drawn up by the citizens' assembly. One recommendation from each of the five thematic areas could be rated online, and comments could also be submitted with related ideas.

The second online consultation in figures



9,623
 participants



1,703
 comments



10,381
 votes



Further information


about the experts who provided inputs into the work of the citizens' assembly can be found on the relevant page of our website containing details of the outcomes: forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/ergebnisse-der-buergerbeteiligung



The online participants were able to vote on each of the five recommendations. They were able to post comments in order to clarify their opinions and/or make proposals for improvements. The intention was for these comments to assist with further work on the recommendations drawn up by the citizens' assembly. At the end of the online consultation, the comments were evaluated in order to determine which of the recommendations had gained high or low approval ratings.

With over 1,700 comments from almost 10,000 citizens, the second online consultation attracted extensive public attention, even though participants had to spend significantly longer on this consultation than on the first. The majority of the comments were constructive; some backed up the measures proposed by the

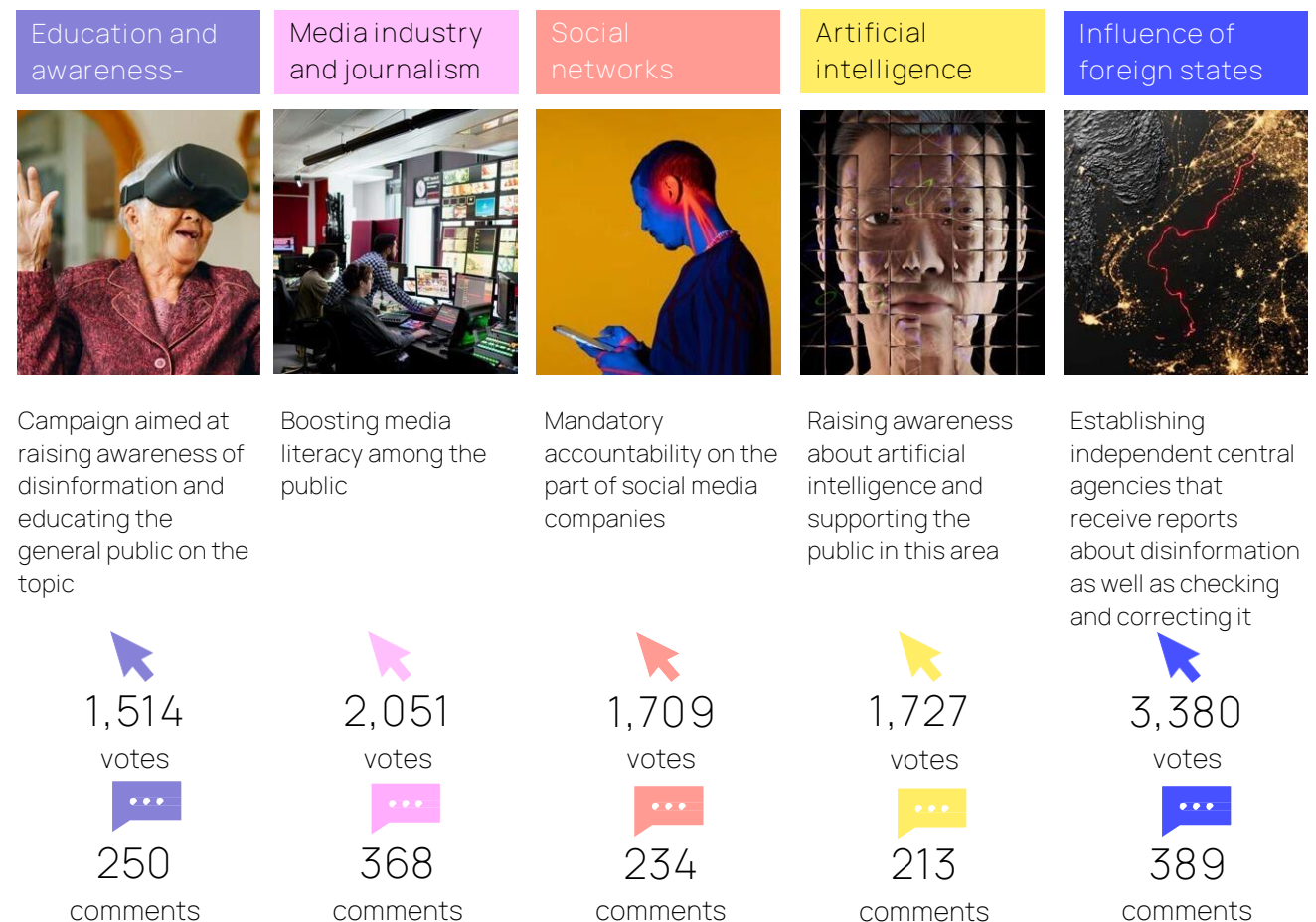
i A detailed report on the **outcomes** of the second online consultation can be found on our website: www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/forum-gegen-fakes-zweite-online-beteiligung



citizens' assembly, and some supplemented them with additional ideas.

Almost 10% of the comments contained general criticism of Germany's existing political and media system. In particular, some of the comments took a critical approach to the very definition of the term "disinformation", since a number of participants were concerned about censorship and attacks on freedom of expression in this connection.

Overview of the second online consultation



Below are some illustrative examples of comments and broader ideas that were posted in response to the first recommendations by the citizens' assembly:

→ Campaign aimed at raising awareness of disinformation and educating the general public on the topic

Idea: Information and communications tailored to the relevant target group

Sample comment: "It would be a good idea to have versions of the educational materials in simple German and sign language, because not everyone has the same level of education, and not everyone has a mobile phone. Emphasis should therefore also be placed on accessibility." – Maik

→ Boosting media literacy among the public

Idea: Media literacy training in educational institutions

Sample comment: "There should be funding available to recruit reporters as guest teachers in secondary schools, and perhaps also make these lessons compulsory for all Year 8 or Year 9 pupils. That is to say, before they turn 16 and are able to go and vote (in EU elections)." – Belle

→ Mandatory accountability on the part of social media companies

Idea: Legal obligation to clarify disinformation

Sample comment: "There must be a stronger legal obligation for the web giants to post factual information/clarifications to neutralise the polarised and one-sided untruths that appear on their platforms. Given the huge profits they make, a failure to comply with this obligation and repeated breaches of the law should entail large fines and, ultimately, the risk of being shut down." – Michael

→ Raising awareness about artificial intelligence and supporting the public in this area

Idea: Making the spread of AI-generated

disinformation a punishable offence

Sample comment: "There should be mandatory rules on the use of AI and an authority that can impose penalties when these rules are broken, for example when deep fakes of individuals are created." – Evelyn

→ Establishing independent central agencies that receive reports about disinformation as well as checking and correcting it

Idea: A central point of contact offering certain services

Sample comment: "I'd find it helpful if there was a website with a good full-text search feature. Somewhere that you could search for fake news quickly and in a properly structured fashion. It might also be a good idea to display the top 10 latest fake news stories in a prominent position." – Joerg

Citizens' assembly:



The citizens' assembly held its second face-to-face event from 24 to 26 May 2024 at the Crown Prince's Palace in Berlin. Citizens drew up, voted on and adopted the draft policy recommendations during this meeting.

Each citizen had the opportunity to delve deeper into individual themes according to his or her personal preferences. This meant that citizens were no longer assigned to thematic groups. In total, 15 recommendations (see Chapter 4) on the topic of how to deal with disinformation were drawn up, together with 28 measures.

The citizens' assembly, which was made up of a diverse group of participants, discussed the pre-prepared outcomes of the online consultation with each other, and worked through the most important points.

Experts were on hand to advise and support the participants during all of the phases. The method thus allowed all of the participants to exchange views respectfully and constructively with one another.

“It’s remarkable how much specialist knowledge the citizens have gained since the first meeting.”

Dr. Anja Zimmer, media expert and lawyer, acting expert during the debates held by citizens as part of the “Forum against Fakes”

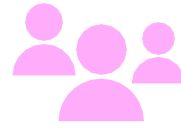
Overall, one thing became clear: the conflict between freedom of expression and countering of disinformation is not an easy one to resolve. The most important tools at our disposal are education and media literacy, not only on a compulsory basis in school, but also as a learning opportunity offered to all sections of society.

Third online consultation:



Votes on the final outcomes of the citizens’ assembly could be cast online from 5 June to 2 July 2024. This was the third and final online consultation that took place as part of the “Forum against Fakes”, with 28 individual measures available to be voted on. These measures originated from the 15 detailed recommendations which the citizens’ assembly had adopted on 26 May 2024. Since some of these recommendations encompassed several measures, they were broken down and arranged thematically for the online consultation.

The third online consultation in figures



216,534
participants

623,048
votes

There was a great deal of public interest in the topic and in the recommendations made by the citizens’ assembly. In total, over 215,000 people took part in the third online consultation, voting over 620,000 times.

Generally speaking, the online consultation revealed that the general public welcomed the measures proposed by the citizens’ assembly while remaining critical of certain aspects. Most of the 28 proposals were rated positively. Approval ratings of over 50% were seen for 20 out of the 28 measures, and none of the measures were rejected by a majority of respondents. Measures aimed at increasing the transparency of information and media content, such as the flagging of AI-generated content, were extremely popular. Proposals relating directly to public user behaviour tended to gain lower approval ratings, for example the proposal aimed at introducing a “think before you post” delay for social media users to force them to consider whether they really want to publish posts flagged as potentially containing disinformation. A great many of the proposals (nine in total) related to boosting media literacy among the general public. There was widespread approval for the proposal involving the adoption of legal provisions by the Federal Government and the federal states to ensure that the fight against disinformation is firmly anchored in the education system.



A detailed report on the outcomes of the third online consultation can be found on our website: www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/forum-gegen-fakes-dritte-online-beteiligung



The outcomes of the votes are set out in detail in the next chapter.




6 The final online vote

How the online participants rated the measures decided on by the citizens' assembly




Here are the final results of the votes cast by online participants during the third and final online consultation carried out as part of the "Forum against Fakes". The online participants were able to vote on 28 individual measures, which originated from the 15 recommendations drawn up by the citizens' assembly. Since some of these recommendations encompassed several measures, they were broken down for the online consultation.

Education and awareness-raising




An annual nationwide week-long campaign to alert the public to the dangers of disinformation

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
An annual nationwide week-long campaign should be organised to alert the public to the dangers of disinformation	46 %	30 %	25 %




Media literacy training for adults

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
A compulsory module on media literacy should be introduced at vocational colleges and universities, and the topic should be covered during parents' evenings at schools	55 %	23 %	22 %
Voluntary media literacy courses should be offered to adults via online platforms, charitable organisations and institutes of further education	49 %	29 %	22 %




Media literacy as a curriculum subject

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Compulsory modules on media literacy should be included in teacher training courses, regardless of the type of school or age group involved	58 %	22 %	20 %
Media literacy should be introduced as a separate school subject from Year 3 onwards, and teachers should be provided with ongoing further training on the topic of disinformation	51 %	25 %	24 %




Foundation in law for the place of media literacy in the education system

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Legal provisions should be adopted by the Federal Government and the federal states to ensure that the fight against disinformation is firmly anchored in the education system	61 %	17 %	22 %
The federal states should receive government funding to develop a standardised media literacy training syllabus	53 %	22 %	26 %

Fake News Quiz with true or false questions




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Public awareness of disinformation should be heightened by making available a Fake News Quiz that is straightforward and fun to take	46 %	30 %	24 %

Disinformation rankings for statements by political figures




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
A disinformation ranking should be introduced for statements by politicians during an election campaign	59 %	23 %	19 %

Media industry and journalism




Seal of approval for high-quality journalism

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Trust in high-quality media should be boosted by means of a voluntary seal of approval for journalism, based on transparent requirements	56 %	21 %	24 %

Greater citizen emancipation through transparency about media and traceability of sources




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
AI-generated content should always be flagged up as such	73 %	18 %	10 %
A special certificate should be available for media content that is backed up with source citations	60 %	24 %	16 %
Content published by media outlets should include a standardised section for source citations, to be filled out on a voluntary basis	59 %	26 %	16 %

Materials on the subject of disinformation for media companies




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Up-to-date and ready-prepared materials on disinformation should be provided to media companies in order to ensure that the topic is given a more prominent place	50 %	21 %	30 %

Social networks




Development and dissemination of easy-to-understand guidelines on how to deal with disinformation

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Easy-to-understand guidelines should be developed and disseminated to the public in order to serve as an initial primer on how to deal with disinformation	62 %	16 %	22 %

Obligation for social media platforms to counter disinformation effectively




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Platforms' terms of use should include an obligation to refrain from spreading disinformation and a warning that infringements will be penalised	64 %	15 %	21 %
Social media platforms should be obliged to flag up posts that might contain disinformation	59 %	19 %	22 %
The algorithms on social media platforms should be published, and programmed in such a way as to avoid spreading disinformation	57 %	21 %	23 %
Platforms should be obliged to invest 1% of their annual turnover worldwide each year into measures aimed at countering disinformation	53 %	22 %	25 %
The EU Act should oblige platforms to arrange for an annual independent disinformation audit to be carried out	52 %	23 %	25 %

Encouragement to "think before you post" to avoid spreading disinformation

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Platforms should be obliged to introduce a waiting time before posts are published, during which AI detectors check for disinformation	48 %	19 %	33 %
A "think before you post" feature should be introduced to encourage users to consider whether they really want to publish posts containing alleged disinformation	42 %	24 %	34 %




Artificial intelligence

Development of technologies that can flag up disinformation




Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Accessible, unbiased and user-friendly AI technologies should be developed for the identification and flagging of disinformation	55 %	22 %	23 %

Influence of foreign states

Creation of a central counter-disinformation agency

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
A research report containing an analysis of disinformation should be published at least once a year via a central agency	54 %	24 %	22 %
A central agency should be created to provide citizens and journalists with advice and to implement the checking and reporting of disinformation	52 %	23 %	25 %
Prevention efforts and proactive campaigns against disinformation should be promoted via a central agency	50 %	23 %	28 %
The work carried out by government authorities and other initiatives in the fight against disinformation should be coordinated by a central agency	45 %	25 %	30 %

Possibility of prosecuting and/or penalising those who spread disinformation

Measures	Online vote		
	 in favour	 neutral	 against
Checks should be carried out to determine whether those responsible for the spreading of disinformation could be prosecuted while preserving freedom of expression	63 %	13 %	24 %

NB: Since the percentages are rounded, they may not add up to 100.

7 Diversity of the citizens' assembly

The composition of the group and its formation



139 participants

The citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes" was made up of over 120 citizens who together reflected the diversity of Germany's population. The following criteria were used as a basis when selecting the members of the citizens' assembly: regional origin, size of local neighbourhood, gender, age, level of education and migration background. This meant that the citizens represented all of the federal states and lived in neighbourhoods ranging from small villages up to large cities, reflecting the diversity of German society in terms of their gender, age, level of education and migration background. No special expertise was required to take part in the citizens' assembly, with the exception of an ability to speak German (at least B2 level). The minimum age was 18.

In order to guarantee that the participants in the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes" reflected this diversity, individuals were contacted at

random, and then criteria relating to the diversity of citizens in Germany were applied.

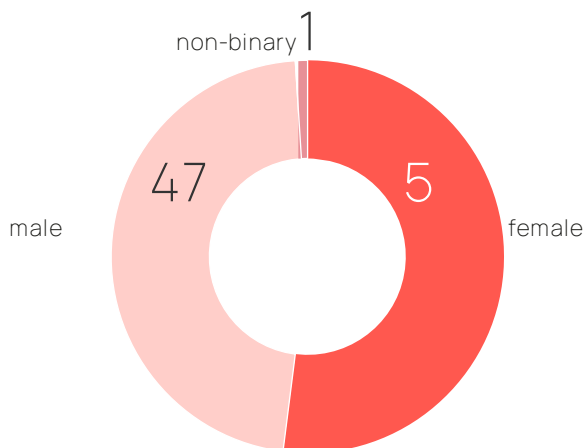
During the first stage, a great many people were contacted randomly.

They were selected on the basis of randomly generated telephone numbers (random digit dialling – RDD) and a market research database.

During the second stage, individuals who had expressed an interest in taking part were analysed on the basis of the relevant criteria (federal state, size of municipality, gender, age, level of education and migration background) and assigned to the predetermined quotas. At the end of the selection procedure, a set group of citizens had been chosen: the citizens' assembly "Forum against Fakes".

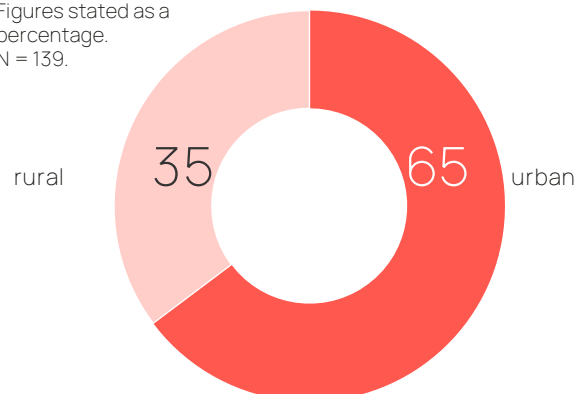
Gender

Composition of the citizens' assembly by gender. Figures stated as a percentage. N = 139.



Place of residence

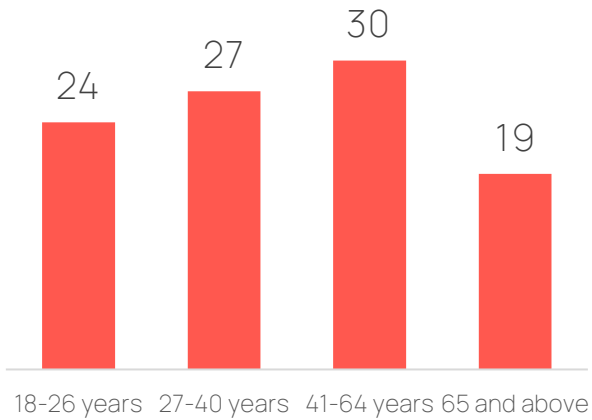
Composition of the citizens' assembly by place of residence (rural/urban). Figures stated as a percentage. N = 139.



urban: towns or cities with more than 20,000 residents; rural: fewer than 20,000 residents.

Age

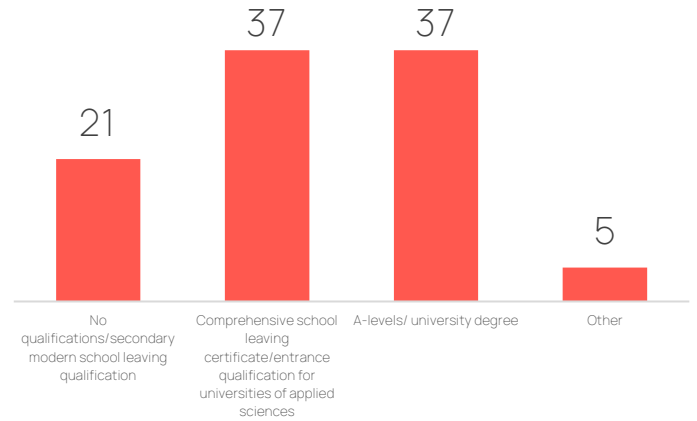
Figures stated as a percentage.
N = 139.



Source: "Forum against Fakes".

Education

Figures stated as a percentage.
N = 139.



Source: "Forum against Fakes".

Federal state of origin

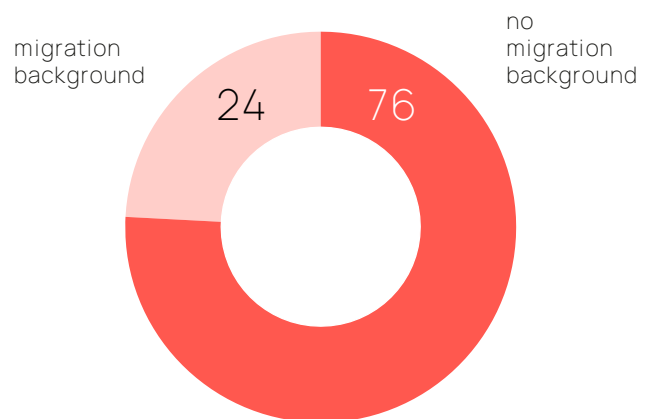
Proportion of citizens from a particular federal state.
Figures stated as a percentage. N = 139.



Source: "Forum against Fakes".

Migration background

Composition of the citizens' assembly by migration background.
Figures stated as a percentage. N = 139.



Source: "Forum against Fakes".



Further details regarding the procedure followed to combine the principle of chance with the diversity criteria can be found here on our website:
forum-gegen-fakes.de/de/fragen-und-antworten



8 A project with prospects – conclusion and looking to the future

Disinformation is a problem faced by the whole of society and must therefore be tackled jointly. This was demonstrated by the high level of public engagement with the nationwide citizen participation project “Forum against Fakes”, the enormous commitment shown by the citizens’ assembly and, ultimately, the outcomes achieved. Multiple participatory stages meant that the project gave citizens a genuine opportunity to form an opinion. The citizens’ assembly developed 15 recommendations for action and 28 specific measures. These were extremely well received by the online participants, with the majority gaining positive approval ratings. Citizens perceive a need for action: they want reform from policy-makers and specific actions by the media, the tech companies and social media platforms, as well as by civil society.

Now it is up to these target audiences to engage seriously with the recommendations and develop potential solutions for their implementation.

Combining broad-based online consultations with a citizens’ assembly paid off. Both the online participants and the citizens’ assembly benefited from this new form of citizen participation. It was possible to involve citizens on a broad and inclusive basis. A public debate was initiated on how to deal with disinformation, and it was possible to make many people more aware of the topic. The online consultation meant that the citizens’ assembly produced work of a higher quality, since this work was enriched by the opinions, ideas and feedback submitted by the online participants. These key stimuli were taken into account by the citizens’ assembly while it was developing the final recommendations and measures. In turn, these recommendations motivated and inspired the public to engage with the topic and cast votes in

the online consultations. The fact that the final measures adopted by the citizens’ assembly gained such high approval ratings from the online participants serves as evidence of the popularity of its recommendations among the general public.

The Bertelsmann Stiftung intends to build on the work of the “Forum against Fakes” in order to develop the combination of online consultations and a citizens’ assembly further into a stand-alone participation model which can be applied to a wide variety of problems, at all political levels.

A transparent follow-up process, political volition and public visibility are crucially important in terms of heightening the impact of the recommendations for action. Decisions about political measures are taken by policy-makers rather than citizens. The recommendations also require action on the part of the media, the world of business and civil society. Citizens must be entitled to expect that their recommendations will be given serious consideration, including practical solutions for implementing them and detailed reasons why the implementation of a particular recommendation might be impossible.

The fact that the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community will use the recommendations, *inter alia*, to develop a new Federal Government strategy on how to deal with disinformation is a vital first step.

Representatives of the education sector, technology companies, platform providers, the media, civil society and the sphere of politics have been involved in the project from its early stages. The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community plans to organise additional events with their involvement with a view to deciding on the action to be taken to follow up on the recommendations. A monitoring instrument is being developed to

document and make transparent the follow-up process and any progress made. The Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community is also planning a feedback event with citizens in 2025. This follow-up process is important because it will ensure that the response to the recommendations stays at the front of people's minds, that the key players assume responsibility and that crucial foundations can be laid for reforms.

The "Forum against Fakes" serves as evidence of how public discourse and debate with citizens on key social issues in our country can be a success, and how the voices of these citizens can feed into policy-making. What matters now is that policy-makers and other stakeholders recognise the need for action, engage seriously with the citizens' recommendations and use them as a basis for their own reforms and measures.

Our hope for the future is that this new format for citizen participation, combining and interlinking online consultations with a citizens' assembly, is copied by courageous imitators, so that citizens – in Germany and beyond – can become more involved in politically relevant topics and issues.

Anna Renkamp and Dr. Angela Jain

with the "Forum against Fakes" team from the Bertelsmann Stiftung



9 Voices from the project

What the participants themselves have to say

“I’ve found this project a truly enriching experience, and I’m very grateful for what I’ve been able to experience so far.”

A participant from the citizens’ assembly

“Once again, I had lots of fun and found it all really interesting! A heartfelt thank you to EVERYONE!”

A participant from the citizens’ assembly

“Making our democracy stronger – it doesn’t get any more important than that!”

A participant from the citizens’ assembly

“I’m hopeful that the seeds we have planted will fall on fertile ground, that people recognise how important this actually is, and that the money and resources can be found from somewhere to implement our recommendations, or at least some of them.”

A participant from the citizens’ assembly



More voices from the project
“Forum against Fakes” can be found here:
<https://youtu.be/dXKPVHXvDxE>
and here:
<https://youtu.be/-MUBQeM8Wyc>





Satisfaction with the events

Figures stated as a percentage. N = 139.

Overall, I am quite satisfied/very satisfied with the outcomes of today's event



Overall, I am quite satisfied/very satisfied with the organisation of today's event



Source: "Forum against Fakes".

"Changes are finally afoot in our country, and in aid of our greatest achievement – our democracy."

Feedback on the online consultation

"A superb idea! If we combine awareness-raising measures with educational campaigns and long-term measures to build media literacy, then progress is guaranteed! Another crucial building block would be for the platforms themselves to be obliged to 'prebunk' disinformation and to design their sites to promote media literacy."

Comments on social media



The full evaluation report will soon be available on our website:
forum-gegen-fakes.de



"When I was working in technical support, our motto was always: 'You can only find and fix the problem if you know how the thing works in the first place.' I believe that this is also the right approach to take in relation to AI."

Comments on social media



Contacts

Anna Renkamp
Senior Project Manager for Democracy
and Social Cohesion
Email: anna.renkamp@bertelsmann-stiftung.de
Tel.: +49 5241 81-81145



forum-gegen-fakes.de

Dr. Angela Jain
Senior Project Manager for Democracy
and Social Cohesion
Email: angela.jain@bertelsmann-stiftung.de
Tel.: +49 30 275788-169



bertelsmann-stiftung.de

Bertelsmann Stiftung
Carl-Bertelsmann-Straße 256
33311 Gütersloh
Tel.: +49 5241 81-0