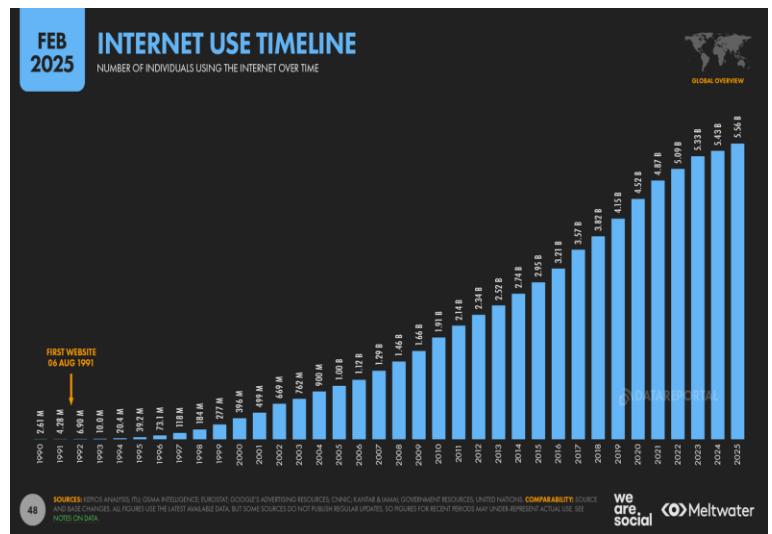


FORUM:	General Assembly
ISSUE:	Measures to Address the Spread of Misinformation in the Digital World
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POSITION:	Deputy Chair of General Assembly

Introduction

Nowadays, the world is significantly turning digital. Some countries like China and South Korea clearly have lessened amount of people in usage of cash. For instance, the Chinese government encourages the citizens to use WeChat Pay, which is an online payment system that is promoted by the Chinese official messenger, WeChat. Not only in economics, but also globally, the system overall is interchanging it into digital. Specifically, information is primarily spread through online news, social media platforms, and online communities. Millions of people can reach to information within minutes whether they want it or not. People can easily encounter and share false or misleading information without realizing that it is inaccurate.



Graph 1. Yearly Timeline of Internet Use since 1990

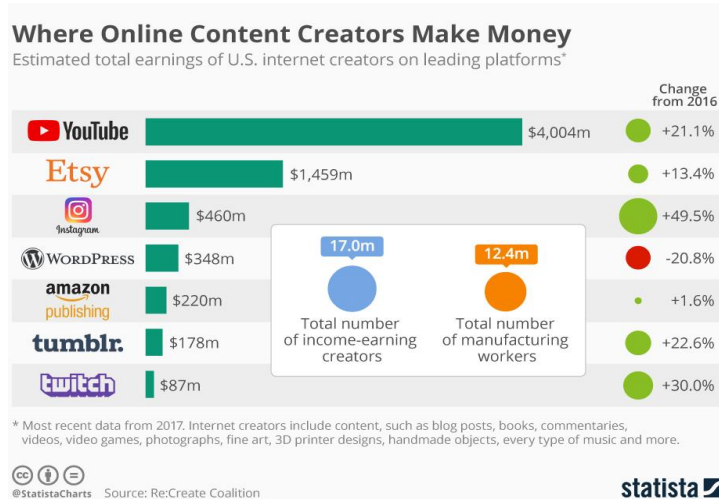
This unprecedented accessibility and speed, however, also make the digital world vulnerable to the rapid spread of misinformation. Increased spread of deepfake images and videos, amplified viral posts, algorithm rigging, and generated AI-driven synthetic contents are the most significant and well-known approach of misinformation, but people are yet aware of it. As misinformation continues to evolve alongside digital technologies, it poses growing threats to public trust, democratic institutions, public health and more so on. In this vein, it is essential for the General Assembly to create feasible yet effective solutions that need coordinated efforts among governments, international organizations, and civil society to ensure that the digital world remains reliable and safe.

Background



While false information has circulated throughout human history, its scale, speed, and reach have dramatically changed since the widespread of adoption of phones and social media in the beginning of the 21st century. Nowadays, anyone can share any kind of information, not only just uploading but also reposting and sharing through digital platforms regardless of time and location. These actions are not restricted by borders that enormous amount of misinformation can be globally spread, without clear fact-checking. Sometimes, a misinformation is disseminated faster than an actual fact.

One of the biggest reasons of this phenomenon is the low barrier of the content creation. People these days can easily make a content and post online only if they have an account. No matter how professional user is in the field, even person who learned it through one or two unauthorized videos can pretend like an expert, causing big confusion. This low barrier can sometimes lead misinformation into disinformation. Whenever people are exposed to negative issues, people tend to exploit it. Politicians, organizations, governments, and sometimes particular people are harmed by intended misinformation.



Graph 2. Analysis of Income Source of Online Creators

Those posts and digital activities can sometimes earn monetary motivations, which tells why people are desperate to create contents and to make viral, irrespective of its accuracy. The more provocative and sensational posts are, the easier to catch the attention of the audience, making the views boost up. Simply put, this proliferation is driven by clickbait, which brings financial incentives to creators. For example, platforms usually offer various financial models, such as YouTube AD revenues, Facebook

monetization, the TikTok creator fund, and X's revenue sharing. These methods share a common tactic, that it utilizes view counts in order to accumulate core users, which will lead into furthermore financial benefits such as joining the subscription-based membership.

Problems Raised

National Security

Fallacious misinformation can threaten a country's stability and national security. Low accuracy of these types of important information regarding on country, such as military strategies or defense capabilities, can be used as a tool for foreign interference and information warfare. Malicious actors can spread fabricated content to make public confused, to weaken the trust in government, or influence political

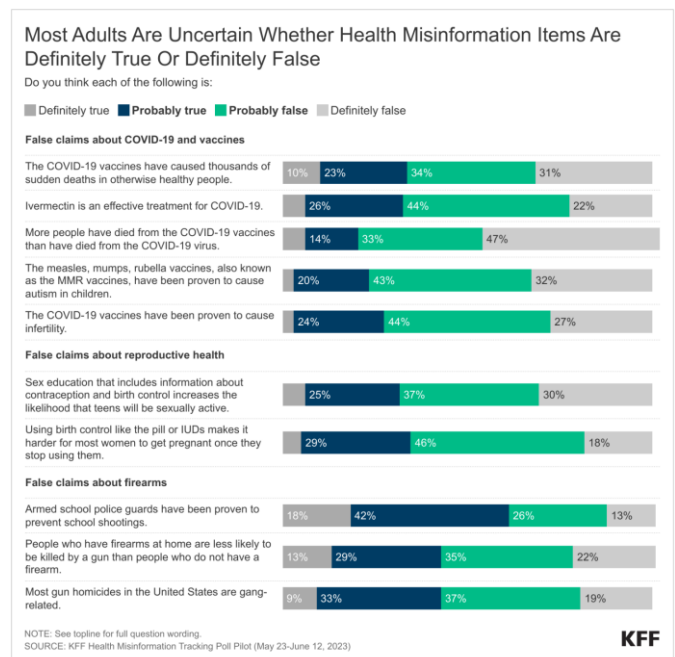
decisions. Whenever a country has internal division, it can be employed to consume energy that should be used to address external, international issues.

Also, unverified accounts with source-unknown information does not only cause perplexity to publics but to the authorities, too. Anonymous accounts make it difficult for entities and platforms to identify individuals or organizations responsible for coordinated misinformation campaigns. For example, during national emergencies, fake information can interfere with government responses and cause unnecessary panic. It can be exploited by other countries, which is making situation even more towards the crisis. A case from the Russian-Ukraine war vividly exemplifies this issue. In March 2022, malign actors utilized AI to generate deepfake videos – such as a video of President Zelenskyy calling on Ukrainian troops to surrender – to manipulate public opinion and demoralize the population. There is no clear identified information about entity behind, but it is likely to be proxy hackers sponsored by Russian government. As soon as video went viral online, this force hacked the system of Ukraine’s main news channel, Ukraine 24. It requires elaborate skills to hack national communication network, resulting that it is at least professional Network Information Service and military intelligence agency-level group of people.

It demonstrated that how misinformation can create panic and confusion during a war, especially when it appeared from a trusted authority. The Ukrainian government warned that such fabricated messages were intended to cause disorient among citizens. They also announced that any actions encouraging troops to retreat will get punished. The deepfake attempted to undermine public trust and therefore, it illustrated that how an anonymous and unverified information can be a serious international security.

Public Health Risks

Because people rely on health information to make decisions for their well-being, misinformation can lead to harmful results and directly endanger lives. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, wearing mask or sanitizing hand became a norm. People started to take care of epidemics even more, and an overwhelming information was flooded on various digital platforms. However, these health-related news’ reliability is never ensured. For example, on one disease, some people argue based on Chinese or Korean traditional medicine, while some are based on European medicine. These contrasting viewpoints often leave the public confused and unable to discern which sources are truly credible and evidence based.



Graph 3. Most Americans are unsure about health information

Disorientation is not only by different perspectives, but also by anonymous, unverified sources. Due to digital platforms' low barrier of entry, information from unidentified people can be masqueraded as absolute truth. It might cause additional harm when people accept the misinformation and put it into practice. It can be another pandemic, resulting in unimaginable tragic consequences.

Erosion of Public Trust

Increased exposure to misinformation causes distrust. Citizens usually ask for transparent process of government activities, insist on clear reasoning, and exercise their freewill to act. Whenever misinformation starts to spread, it alters people's perception in dangerous ways. Misinformation on digital platform might affect the election. For example, it is possible for a particular side to spread viral rumors of the other side that is unknown if it's true or not, just like propaganda. A research paper by Moe Esmaeili showed that there are numerous propaganda pages that people do not realize it, and it resulted in 3,500 Facebook propaganda advertisement, 167,000 New York Times stories, and hundreds of Google Trends. These advertisements that seem trivial might develop the sense of bias without noticing, and as people repeatedly encounter these claims, they possibly might have negative perceptions of a particular candidate or political group, which can influence their voting decisions and potentially affect election outcomes.



Photo 1. People protesting for voting rights

As a result, this erosion of trust makes people to view fairness of election with skepticism. People will lose confidence in electoral procedures, and ask questions about government institutions, media organizations, and official information. Some people might create more and more provocative, malicious contents. If these vicious phenomena repeat, it will weaken democratic governance. Then, intensified

political polarization will make increasingly different for governments to gain public cooperation during times of crisis.

International Actions

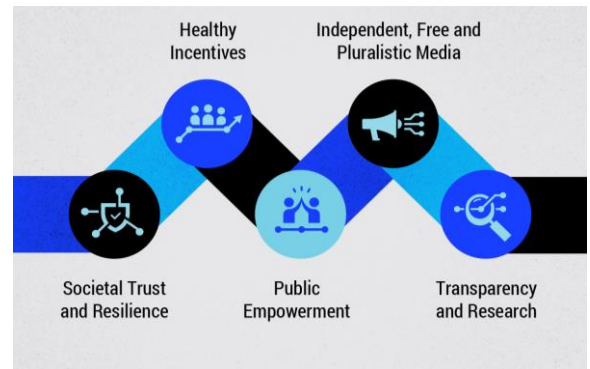
The UN Global Principles for Information Integrity

The UN marked on this spread of misinformation in the digital world and mentioned that it is not just about information, but more so about world peace and national security. Therefore, the UN decided to provide a global framework, The UN Global Principles for Information Integrity in 2024. This principle



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calls for governments, technology companies, and civil society to be engaged, to mitigate the issue commonly. Specifically, principle states strengthening the accountability of the digital platforms, requesting for the transparency of algorithm and content censoring, emphasizing the need to respond to AI-generated content and deepfake problems. It pursues resolution to restrict misinformation in a way that does not violate freedom of expression. The UN is not simply aiming to censor misinformation. Instead, the UN focuses on creating a reliable information ecosystem. Through this, it hopes to improve cooperation between countries and long-term information.



Graph 4. Visualizer of the Principles

EU Digital Services Act

The European Union introduced strict legal rules to prevent widespread of misinformation. Based on the research done by the European Union that analyzed about media literacy and online empowerment issues raised by algorithm-driven media services, platforms use algorithms to control what people see. To fix this, the EU started enforcing the Digital Services Act (DSA) in 2024 to make the digital ecosystem safer and more valid. Under the DSA, major tech companies must agree to the risks of fake news and carry out lots of things like explain how their recommendation systems work, make it easier for users to report bad content – such as overly sexual, violent, threatening, hatred, promoting illegal and harmful content – share data with researchers, and clearly flag political ads. By taking this important process, the EU is treating big technology companies as responsible managers of public news rather than just basic websites, setting a new gatekeeper for the rest of the world to follow.

Key Players

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO has been leading the world through media and information literacy. It helped member states to develop policies to combat misinformation while keeping the freedom of speech at the same time. Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, the guideline of AI that UNESCO published in 2021, has benefited many countries in the world. It was the world's first AI ethics international standard that ensures transparency, responsibilities, and human rights.

UNESCO views the rise in spread of misinformation as a critical issue. Throughout the policies that UNESCO established, its core value is to take responsibility and to make individuals able to identify



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misinformation. UNESCO believes that empowering individuals with critical thinking skills is one of the most effective long-term solutions to combat this issue. Therefore, UNESCO continues to set up policies and encourages Member States to invest in media literacy education and international cooperation.

Group of 7 (G7)

Group of Seven, G7, is the group of world's advanced democracies and digital economies: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The G7 influences global technologies and AI governance. For example, Open AI which has brought a global paradigm shift was founded in the United States, which is a core member of the G7. These countries coordinate international responses to digital threats.



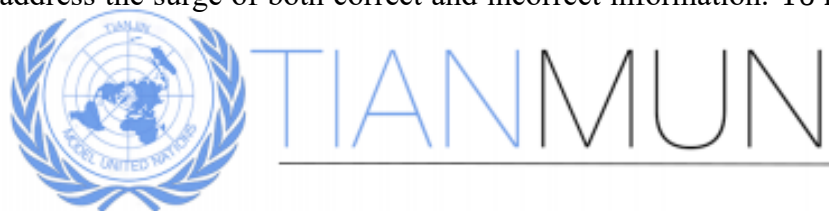
Photo 3. The 2026 Summit in France

From the G7's perspective, the rise of misinformation is not merely a digital nuisance but a critical threat that undermines democratic governance, as it breaks the social cohesion among citizens, making national security vulnerable to foreign governance. To address this, the G7 maintains that while AI innovation must continue to thrive, it must be accompanied by dependable safeguards. Recognizing that these cross-border digital threats can't be fought in isolation, international cooperation is needed. Their collective stance has materialized into major geopolitical actions, and the most notable work is the launch of the Hiroshima AI Process established in 2023. It is an international framework established by the G7 to promote the safe and responsible development of advanced AI and address emerging risks such as disinformation.

World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO is one of the most responsible organizations of health misinformation in the world. It manages world's public health communication during global health emergencies like COVID-19 or SARS. WHO has been responded over 2,200 alerts in 2023 and enhanced the capacity of 20 laboratories. (WHOSyria) The biggest strength of the WHO is that it coordinates with governments and digital platforms to provide accurate health information. The primary mission of the WHO is to maintain people healthy while providing clear, valid information.

Recognizing that false health data spreads faster than biological pathogens, the WHO strongly advocates for a multi-sectoral approach, such as governments, scientific communities, media outlets, and technology companies, must work together to combat false health information. This core idea has driven monumental structural actions. Notably, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the WHO officially coined the term 'infodemic' to address the surge of both correct and incorrect information. To mitigate this risk, the



organization established dedicated infodemic management programs and built strategic partnerships with major social media companies to prioritize and promote verified information to the global public.

Possible Solutions

Security Enhancement



Photo 4. Visualizer of Digital World

To address this problem, security of country can be essentially maintained by establishing a verified digital identity system. To increase accountability among online users, it requires users who create public content or participate in large-scale online discussions to verify their identity through secure authentication methods. Member States can establish this security authentication by cooperating with technology companies. Legal and security standards for identity verification can be

established, while platforms can also detect multiple accounts

connected to coordinated misinformation campaigns. This cooperation displays connection, that whenever a country has a problem and an issue, other countries can support with accumulated data. Therefore, secured online communities and platforms will offer more healthy contents based on approved information.

Also, Member States can allow platforms and authorities to trace accounts involved in coordinated misinformation campaigns while protecting users' personal information. For instance, public anonymity and private verification can be applied. The information of users is anonymous to the public, yet accountable to the platform and authority. These platforms and authorities benefit controlling useless proliferation while developing a balance between online accountability and freedom of expression. By avoiding unnecessary exposure of private identities, users can feel safe to share personal information for verifications. Through these precise measures, states can effectively neutralize the threat of toxic disinformation campaigns without eroding the fundamental human right to freedom of expression online. Moreover, platforms can encourage publics by providing verification badges. When people with verification badges inform about certain field, it is a clear truth that its accountability is highly increased. Authenticated users and organizations can have this badge to show and prove their professionalism.

Public Empowerment & Media Literacy

Ever since digital devices became mainstream, people have concerned over digital manipulation. In order to mitigate problems of spread of misinformation, the most important process is to make citizens able to discern truth and falsehood. Individuals should have clear standards and boundaries when exposed to information. Most essentially, to make it happen, education should be prioritized.

Member States can introduce community-based media literacy programs. These programs can be applied to students at school or as a mandatory training to citizens under 18 and entirely managed by governments. Also, education can be done to adults like elders who are unaware of misinformation. By supporting vulnerable populations, it will reduce lack of discernment throughout community, building healthy and positive the public.



Photo 5. Visualizer of Media Literacy

Glossary

Misinformation

False or inaccurate information shared without malicious intent

Disinformation

False information that is deliberately created and spread to deceive, manipulate, or gain profit

Group of Seven (G7)

An international intergovernmental economic organization consisting of seven the world's advanced economies: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Infodemic

A proliferation of diverse, often unsubstantiated information relating to a crisis, controversy, or event, which disseminates rapidly and uncontrollably through news, online, and social media, and is regarded as intensifying public speculation or anxiety

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

An international organization of 38 countries, founded in 1961 to stimulate economic progress and world trade

Pandemic



Denoting a disease that is prevalent throughout an entire country or the world

Propaganda

Information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view

United Nations (UN)

An international organization established in 1945 after World War II, composed of 193 member states committed to maintaining international peace and security

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

A specialized agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security through international cooperation in education, arts, sciences, and culture

World Health Organization (WHO)

A specialized agency of the United Nations responsible for international public health

Digital World

The virtual environment created by connected digital networks and platforms, where users interact, share information, and conduct activities

Network Information Service (NIS)

A Unix/Linux network protocol developed by Sun Microsystems that enables central management and distribution of system configuration data—such as user credentials, passwords, and hostnames—across multiple connected computers.



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