

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Participant:	101081624 - Beyond the Horizon ISSG (BtH)
PIC number:	904570106
Project name and acronym:	Immunising citizens against dis/misinformation - IMMUNE 2 INFODEMIC

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:	14		
Event name:	Immunising First Time Voters against Mis/Disinformation before Elections		
Type:	Workshop		
In situ/online:	In-situ		
Location:	Leuven, Belgium		
Date(s):	15-17 May 2024		
Website(s) (if any):	<a href="https://behorizon.org/eventsandactivities/immunising-first-time-voters-against-mis-disinformation-before-elections/">https://behorizon.org/eventsandactivities/immunising-first-time-voters-against-mis-disinformation-before-elections/</a>		
Participants			
Female:	123		
Male:	134		
Non-binary:	-		
From country 1 [Belgium]:	257		
Total number of participants:	257	From total number of countries:	1
Description			
<p>In Leuven, an immunization activity for first-time voters was organised in 15-17 May 2024. Over the course of these days, more than 250 young people and teachers were informed about the risks of encountering misinformation and disinformation in the lead-up to the EU elections 2024.</p> <p>The workshop aimed to inform the first-time voters of European and Belgian elections in Leuven, Belgium. The I2I vaccination methodology has been used to immunize these young voters against mis/disinformation 3 weeks before the elections. According to the research, dis/misinformation level about the elections peak during the last month. The time of the event has been planned during this peak time for informing first time voters to increase their level of awareness about the mis/disinformation on media, social media and other platforms.</p> <p>The event was organized in coordination with Stad Leuven municipality. A cooperation has been made with the Youth and Education Department of the municipality and the workshops were co-organised with MijnLeuven,</p>			

which is city's youth organization for reaching out to young residents through organizing different activities. I2I workshops were planned for visiting groups from schools in Leuven for 3 days (15-17 May 2024). Immunisation workshops were given to 10 different student groups, each including around 20-30 students with their teachers. The workshops were planned for 1 hour sequentially for visiting student groups from 6 different schools in Leuven.

Participants explored the key differences between disinformation, fake news, and misinformation. They learned that disinformation involves deliberately false or misleading information aimed at manipulation, while fake news often mixes partial truths with falsehoods to deceive. Misinformation, though shared without harmful intent, can also spread inaccuracies that shape public perceptions.

The session emphasized the consequences of disinformation, such as increased societal polarization, reduced trust in democratic institutions, and its potential to mislead voting decisions. Practical tools were shared to help participants identify misleading content, including analyzing emotional language, verifying sources, fact-checking information, and checking publication dates to avoid outdated context. Tools like the "Stop, Think, Check" method and media literacy were introduced to encourage critical thinking and responsible sharing of information.

Some real recent mis/disinformation examples were shared with the groups, and they were also asked to share if they came across similar cases. They were encouraged to use I2I tools and printed tools were disseminated to interested students.

This activity aimed to empower first-time voters in Leuven to navigate the complexities of online information and prepare them to make informed decisions during the elections. The initiative highlighted the importance of building a resilient and well-informed voter community for European elections 2024.

School teachers and the municipality gave very positive feedback about the content and the timeliness of the event. Teachers received I2I tools to use at their classes as education material.