

D1.3 BENEDMO Annual report year 1

Description of the activities of BENEDMO between July 2024 and June 2025

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1. Hub Activities

In this annual report, we reflect on the past year of BENEDMO (July 2024 to June 2025). In this first chapter, we will first discuss the objectives set by BENEDMO, then describe the activities undertaken over the past year to achieve these objectives, and finally analyse the impact these activities have produced.

Objectives

Disinformation remains an intricate challenge, manifesting in various forms, from anti-migration narratives to health-related misinformation, election falsehoods, and information warfare. The rise of generative AI exacerbates this issue, providing increasingly realistic modes of deception. The EDMO ecosystem (est. 2020) offers a coordinated international and regional approach to combat disinformation online. [BENEDMO](#), the Dutch and Flemish hub, is dedicated to limiting the impact of disinformation through research, technology development, fact-checking, and media literacy efforts. The objectives of the project are:

Foster the growth and capacities of the BENEDMO network to enhance skills, knowledge, and collaboration.

The project nurtures and expands the dynamic BENEDMO network, bringing together journalists, researchers, and media literacy experts. Engagement with governmental bodies, civic organizations, and big tech is enhanced through interactive knowledge exchange meetings to increase the project's impact while maintaining independence.

Produce and disseminate fact-checks and disinformation investigations to ensure access to reliable information.

A key element in combating disinformation is the availability of accurate information. To this end, BENEDMO continuously produces fact-checks and conducts in-depth investigations into disinformation narratives.

Study and measure the impact of emerging disinformation techniques to inform responsive strategies.

Following the recent adoption of the Digital Services Act¹ and Code of Conduct on Disinformation², BENEDMO plays a vital role in assessing platform implementation

¹ The DSA regulates online intermediaries and platforms such as marketplaces, social networks, content-sharing platforms, app stores, and online travel and accommodation platforms. Its main goal is to prevent illegal and harmful activities online and the spread of disinformation.

https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/europe-fit-digital-age/digital-services-act_en

²<https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/code-conduct-disinformation>



efforts and policy impact. The aim is to safeguard the public from harmful content and strengthen trust in the digital realm.

Deliver media literacy campaigns and events to strengthen societal resilience against disinformation.

Ten media literacy campaigns target education, the general public and vulnerable groups, covering critical topics such as disinformation, the role of journalism, and AI's influence on media. Key research investigates the impact of AI technologies on disinformation, exploring the opportunities and risks they present.

Ensure widespread awareness of the societal impacts of disinformation and promote proactive engagement.

With these objectives, BENEDMO aims to reach and benefit three main audiences: (i) experts in disinformation, fact-checking, journalism, and media literacy; (ii) policymakers and civil society groups; and (iii) European citizens. A communication and dissemination strategy ensures the actors are targeted through tailored communication channels and formats.



Activities year 1

Network

As new technologies, platforms, and disinformation actors emerge, staying up to date is essential, and therefore BENEDMO fosters and strengthens a **network** of almost 300 disinformation professionals, from academia, journalism, fact-checking, media literacy education, tech and other relevant domains. Within this network, BENEDMO has conducted a [needs assessment](#) to identify knowledge gaps within the professional network, guiding professional development for members to keep their skills current.



Fig. 1 Round table discussions during a knowledge exchange session about medical disinformation.

A comprehensive activity calendar connects and supports key stakeholders in anti-disinformation efforts. Knowledge exchange is facilitated through workshops, lectures, and a conference. Successful events so far for example have been a knowledge exchange about [medical disinformation](#), connecting the disinformation network to policy advisors and civil society actors, and a webinar showcasing the most relevant and easy to use [media literacy interventions](#), based on an inventory done during the first three years of the BENEDMO hub. Other noteworthy elements of the activity calendar are the masterclasses and courses tailored to students in higher education addressing fact-checking and verification skills. BENEDMO has so far reached almost 200 students. Workshops on data analysis, on programming skills and a knowledge exchange about online intimidation against fact-checkers and journalists, have been scheduled for the near future.



Fact-checking

BENEDMO partners are continuously producing **fact-checks** - in the first year of the project over 500 fact-checks were published by our fact-checking partners (VRT, Nieuwscheckers and Factcheck.Vlaanderen and associated partners Pointer and Knack). All fact-checks are compiled in both the searchable EDMO database (Truly Media) and the publicly available [BENEDMO fact-checkdatabase](#). [Selected fact-checks](#) have been published monthly on the BENEDMO website and shared with EDMO EU to inform the Best Of EDMO fact-checking Map. An annual trend analysis of fact-checks will focus on periodicity, themes, and in-depth examination of topical issues. The first one will be published in August 2025.

BENEDMO organised three collaborative disinformation investigations involving network analysis, data gathering, and debunking disinformation claims, aiming to create impactful news stories with societal relevance. In these investigations fact-checkers, mediapartners, and data analysts collaborate across borders following a newly established methodology, including a matrix describing partners' capacities and interests, communication channels for effective communication and a step by step approach from ideation to execution of the investigations. Towards the end of the project, operational lessons will be compiled in a practical handbook to facilitate collaborations on disinformation investigations.

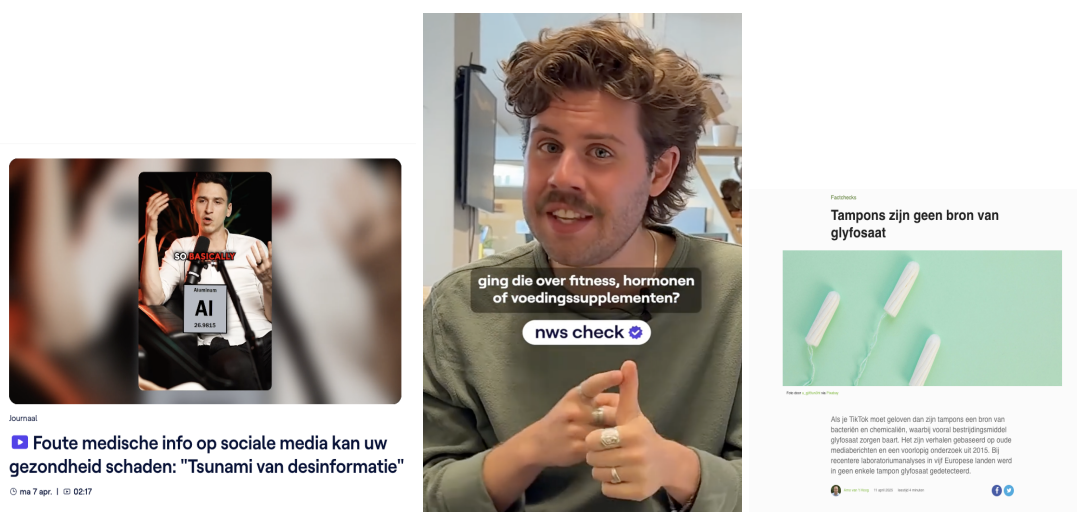


Fig. 2 Publishing results in different formats to reach youngsters in innovative ways: a TikTok video and a journal item by VRT and an online available fact-check (Nieuwscheckers)

The three collaborations covered [the topics of NATO](#), [Medical disinformation](#) and the [COP Climate Conference](#) in November 2024, contributing to a better informed public debate on climate-related disinformation. The NATO fact-checking marathon resulted in 56 published fact-checks, presented in various formats and disseminated across multiple platforms. In the context of the medical disinformation campaign, Flemish and Dutch BENEDMO partners joined forces to counter the spread of misleading health claims on social media,



particularly targeting young audiences, and published a series of fact-checks addressing this issue, aiming to raise awareness and curb the impact of medical disinformation.

Academic research

To study the impact of emerging disinformation techniques, BENEDMO carried out **academic research** on how hyper-realistic AI-generated images misused as visual disinformation affect individuals, and how well different platform labels help reduce their misleading impact. Researchers at the University of Amsterdam (UvA) carried out an experiment to understand how effective different types of labels - such as AI-labels, fact-check labels, and community notes - are in lowering the credibility of AI-generated visual disinformation. The results have been shared both in academic and in policy contexts and are expected to be published in an international scientific journal.

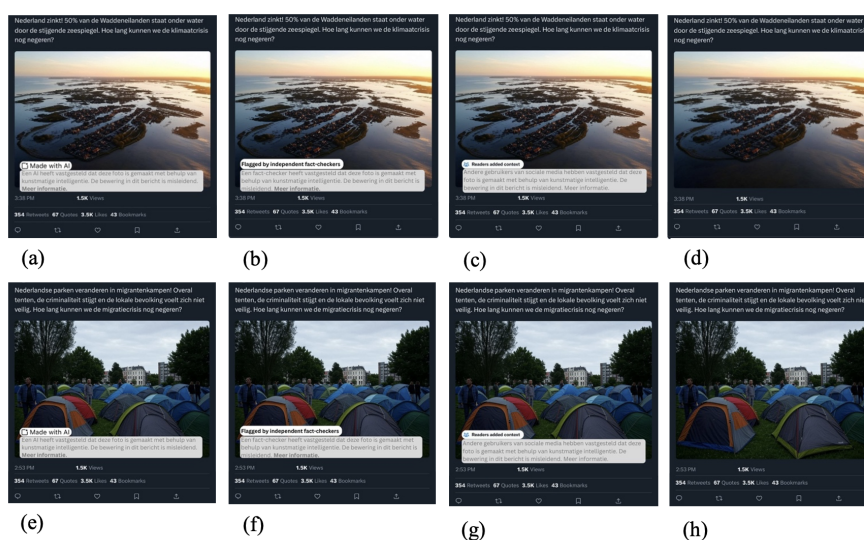


Fig 3. Example stimuli for the experiments on AI generated images

BENEDMO also examined how AI-driven disinformation impacts experts in The Netherlands and Flanders. Researchers from KU Leuven (KUL) and the University of Amsterdam (UvA) conducted a joint survey to understand how experts perceive and respond to threats posed by generative AI and other emerging techniques. This data forms the basis of two academic papers. *The Toll of Beholding Facts: Investigating the well-being of disinformation experts in NL and Flanders* and *On the Same Page?: Expert perceptions of AI-driven disinformation* (submission planned for Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review), both submitted to academic journals for publication. Additionally BENEDMO has supported several adjacent academic efforts, many of which build upon results of the first three years of the BENEDMO hub leading to several journal publications about visual disinformation and fact-checking. These will be integrated in two white papers that are scheduled to be written in the upcoming 1,5 years of the project.

In relation to the objective of **monitoring the policies** of online content platforms and implementation of the Code of Practices of Disinformation, BENEDMO has played a role in monitoring how Very Large Online Platforms and Search Engines (VLOPSEs) comply with the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation. UvA has assessed the current challenges in tracking structural indicators across VLOPSEs and proposed a roadmap for improving future monitoring efforts, which was described in the policy brief [Holding Platforms Accountable](#). [The brief](#) evaluates the transparency reports submitted by VLOPSEs and recommends actionable improvements to strengthen compliance with the Code of Practice. As part of EDMO's Policy Working Group, UvA and the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision (NISV) contributed to monitoring service-level indicators - platform measures designed to empower users, researchers, and fact-checkers. The resulting country brief revealed significant gaps in platform support across all stakeholder groups. These insights fed directly into the broader EDMO evaluation report, Implementing the EU Code of Practice on Disinformation: An Evaluation of VLOPSE Compliance and Effectiveness, which will now be updated annually and serves a key contribution to developing platform policies.



Fig 4. The policy brief ‘holding platforms accountable’ as published on BENEDMO.eu

Media literacy

BENEDMO has organised several **media literacy** programs for secondary schools in Flanders, specifically with a focus on news literacy. Through in-depth teacher training sessions on topics such as journalism, disinformation, dialogue, and polarisation, over 250 teachers were equipped to guide critical discussions in their classrooms. In addition, 1,300+ pupils aged 12 to 18 participated in student challenges that fostered active engagement with news content.





Fig 5. Journalist from the VRT youth channel giving a keynote at the Mediawijs News in the Classroom Day

Workshops for primary, secondary, and higher education in the Netherlands reached 300 participants. Guidance has also been offered to civil society professionals, reaching over 500 professionals. Educational materials in [EDUbox Fake News](#) and [EDUbox AI](#) (developed by VRT) have been updated and published in the first half year of the project. A recontextualisation for the Dutch educational context is currently taking place.



Fig 6. The launch of the renewed EDUBox on AI by VRT

Special attention has gone to the needs of adults and vulnerable groups regarding disinformation and AI, exploring these in several '[labs](#)' bringing important stakeholders



This project has received funding from the European Union under Agreement number:101158277-BENEDMO-DIGITAL-2023-DEPLOY-04

together. These Labs identified specific barriers to disinformation resilience, particularly among NT2 (Dutch as a second language) learners, who often face challenges due to limited language, digital, and critical thinking skills. Two country-specific reports (one for [Flanders](#), one for [The Netherlands](#)) were produced and disseminated with concrete recommendations for practitioners and policymakers. In the next phase low-literate adults are directly involved in co-creating materials and interventions within community settings. Towards the project's end, BENEDMO will organise a Media Literacy Summit to explore the current state of digital, media, and news literacy.

Overview of project results and impacts year 1

The BENEDMO project, building on its initial phase and renewed support from the European Commission, has made significant steps in countering disinformation within the Dutch-speaking region. The first year of this renewed phase has been highly productive, yielding concrete outputs and demonstrating visible impact across its key objectives. Furthermore, BENEDMO has consolidated its position as a central hub at both national and European levels, demonstrating strong collaborative and interdisciplinary spirit, and effectively translating research, media literacy efforts and fact-checking investigations into policy impact.

Overarching reflections and key impacts

The first year of BENEDMO 2.0 has showcased substantial overall impact. Below are some of the key areas of impact.

- *Increased policy Influence and recognition:* BENEDMO has established itself as a key centre of expertise, providing regular policy advice on fact-checking, platform policies, and facilitating connections within the disinformation landscape. This influence is highlighted by a keynote at the [UNESCO World Press Freedom Day side event](#) organised by the Flemish government in Brussels, its recognition as a central player in the [Dutch national strategy](#) against disinformation (receiving co-funding from the Dutch government), and requests for advice from Digital Services Act (DSA) Coordinators and Officers on implementation.
- *Exceeded communication and dissemination targets:* The hub has exceeded its communication goals, a testament to a well-designed outreach strategy and its growing reputation. BENEDMO partners are regularly invited as speakers at national and international conferences, the project website is a trusted resource, and its work is frequently cited in third party publications.



- *Strengthened collaboration:* The project's continuation has fostered deeper, more integrated collaboration among partners, leveraging diverse strengths. This is evident in successful academic collaborations, coordinated fact-checking campaigns, and continuous exchange on topical issues. BENEDMO has actively stimulated innovation in content formats and amplified joint efforts, bridging media competition and the gap between technology and journalism.
- *Integrated cross-work package initiatives:* A significant achievement is the alignment of network activities, media literacy, and fact-checking efforts into a coordinated response to medical disinformation, generating lasting impact in both Flanders and The Netherlands. Similarly, collaboration across work packages has been key in monitoring the Code of Practice on Disinformation.
- *Overall Project Success:* BENEDMO has not only met all deliverables, milestones, and targets for its first year, but has also cemented its position as a key player in the fight against disinformation across the Dutch and Flemish contexts and the broader EU landscape.

Objective 1: Foster the growth and capacities of the BENEDMO Network

BENEDMO has actively grown its network and enhanced the skills and knowledge of its members, strengthening the ecosystem against disinformation.

Key achievements

- *Network expansion:* The network grew to 297 members, nearing its target, with efforts to diversify by including AI researchers, civil society, and media literacy educators.
- *Active engagement:* A Participant Council of 53 members was established, providing feedback on project activities. 146 professionals participated in knowledge exchange sessions, including a highly-rated session on medical disinformation.
- *Needs Assessment:* A survey of 83 disinformation experts identified needs in areas like generative AI detection, programming, and social media monitoring, informing future training development. These insights help BENEDMO tailor its activities more effectively to what professionals truly need in their daily efforts to address disinformation. An academic paper on the risks of countering disinformation is in review.
- *Education outreach:* 192 students in journalism and communications benefited from guest lectures and courses, gaining practical fact-checking experience.



- *EDMO Collaboration:* BENEDMO actively participated in 97% of EDMO events, and contributed [quarterly factsheets](#) to the wider EDMO ecosystem.



Fig. 7 Panel talk during the knowledge exchange on medical disinformation organised by NISV

Impacts

- **Enhanced expertise:** Network members are gaining crucial skills in emerging areas like AI and digital forensics, monitoring disinformation on social media, using verification and archiving tools, fostering a more robust and skilled community.
- **Informed strategies:** Policymakers and civil society benefit from validated insights and resources, with direct co-funding from the Dutch government highlighting BENEDMO's growing influence on national strategies.

Stronger collaboration: The expanded and engaged network facilitates integrated approaches to combat disinformation, laying the groundwork for more effective joint initiatives.

Objective 2: Produce and effectively disseminate fact-checks and disinformation investigations

BENEDMO has effectively produced and widely disseminated fact-checks, pioneering collaborative investigation models to counter harmful narratives.

Key achievements

- **High volume of fact-checks:** BENEDMO organisations produced a total of 504 fact-checks, all shared with EDMO.
- **Three Joint Investigations:**



- Medical Disinformation: [This campaign](#) involved a survey of 126 Flemish general practitioners on social media health advice and Textgain's monitoring of online trends. Journalistic content across various formats (online articles, TV, TikTok/Instagram videos) achieved [significant reach](#) (172,000+ readers for VRT NWS; 120,000+ TikTok views; 275,000 Instagram views), sparking a broad public debate in both countries.
- [Climate Summit COP29](#): A focused campaign around the urgent issue of climate change resulting in several fact-checks and a collaboration on reels for platform DeCheckers. The partners in this collaboration were VRT, Factcheck Vlaanderen, Nieuwscheckers, Knack en deCheckers.
- [NATO Summit](#): An online fact-check marathon involved coordinated outputs (e.g., Pointer with 17 fact-checks, VRT with 5), cross-border repurposing of content, and yielded new perspectives on national narratives (e.g., NATO spending norm claims). This campaign also included prebunk formats.
- Within the rising public debate on social media and under 16's, Mediawijs coordinated the field of researchers and civil society to publish an influential [position paper](#) on this topic (which was taken up by both children's rights actors in their position papers and the Flemish minister of media. The state needs to tackle disinformation online, AI and algorithmic literacy and age-appropriate use of social media. The debate has led the Flemish government to start formulating a Flemish horizontal [action plan](#) on Media Literacy in which Mediawijs and VRT will play a central role.

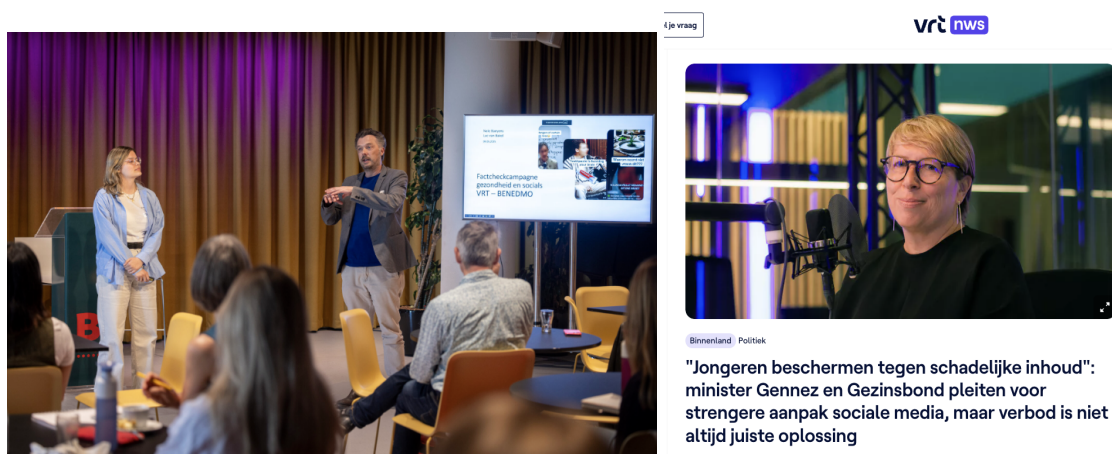


Fig.8 Generating impact: public debate in Flanders around protecting young people from harmful content and knowledge sharing event in The Hague

Impacts:

- Innovative countermeasures: The adoption of pre-bunking and the refined online fact-check marathon methodology represent significant innovations for proactive and rapid responses to disinformation.



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- Enhanced public awareness: The substantial reach of joint investigations, particularly on medical disinformation, directly increased public awareness, targeting different audiences through several channels and formats, and provided evidence-based information, fostering more informed public discourse.
- Improved journalistic practices: Fact-checkers and media organisations have gained valuable experience in agile, collaborative, and multi-format content production, strengthening their capacity to counter disinformation.

Objective 3: Study and measure the impact of emerging disinformation techniques

BENEDMO researches new disinformation techniques, particularly AI-generated content, and actively monitors online platform policies for compliance.

Key Achievements

- AI Disinformation research: UvA conducted an experiment on the impact of AI-generated images (e.g., climate change, immigration disinformation) and the effectiveness of platform labels. Findings are informing discussions with the Dutch Authority for Consumers and Markets (ACM) regarding DSA enforcement and have been presented at major academic conferences.
- Expert perceptions of AI: KUL and UvA jointly surveyed disinformation experts on their perceptions and responses to generative AI threats, forming the basis for two upcoming academic papers.
- Monitoring platform policies (Code of Practice on Disinformation): First CoP Report ([Holding platforms accountable](#)): UvA assessed challenges in tracking structural indicators, publishing a policy brief that critiques VLOPS' transparency reports and recommends improvements, noting a lack of meaningful data.
- Second CoP Report: UvA and NISV contributed to the broader EDMO evaluation report, identifying significant gaps in platform support for users, researchers, and fact-checkers.
- Policy dialogue: BENEDMO is engaging with National regulatory authorities and Digital services coordinators (like the Dutch ACM) to provide academic insights for policy making.
- Additional research: NISV is mapping fact-checking activities in the Dutch media landscape (report due September, financed by Dutch Ministry on Internal Affairs), contributes to a pilot project developing methodology for analysing disinformation in TikTok Live streams, and studies tracing the historical development of misogynistic imagery in memes and cartoons.



Impacts

- Informed policy-making: BENEDMO provides crucial, evidence-based insights directly influencing policies on AI-generated content and platform accountability under the DSA.
- Key research: The pioneering work on AI-generated visual disinformation and livestream analysis strengthens the academic understanding and practical tools for combating emerging threats.
- Improved platform accountability: By highlighting shortcomings in platform transparency and support, BENEDMO is pushing for more robust and effective compliance with disinformation codes.

Objective 4: Deliver Media Literacy campaigns and events

BENEDMO has significantly enhanced resilience against disinformation, particularly among vulnerable groups and within formal education settings, through targeted media literacy initiatives.



Fig 9. selection of the repository of relevant media literacy resources

Key Achievements

- Pan-European alignment: BENEDMO adapted EDMO's "[Be Online Smart](#)" campaign on algorithmic awareness for national audiences, distributing materials through libraries and media literacy organisations.



- Vulnerable adults campaign: BENEDMO held three Media Literacy Labs involving over 40 professionals working with low-literate adults. These labs identified specific vulnerabilities (e.g. language, digital skills among NT2 learners) and resulted [in two country-specific reports](#) with recommendations. A follow-up phase is actively co-creating materials with low-literate adults.
- Education Outreach: In Flanders, the "News in the Classroom" campaigns trained over 250 teachers and engaged 1,300+ pupils in news literacy and fact-checking challenges. In the Netherlands, NISV delivered disinformation workshops to 300+ students and supported over 500 professionals in various sectors (libraries, social care), building a network of informed intermediaries.
- Enhanced media literacy tools: VRT, Mediawijs, and NISV updated the [EDUbox Fake News](#) and the EDUbox AI to reflect new trends, with widespread dissemination and recontextualisation for the Dutch context and outreach via SchoolTV.
- Cross-border collaboration: A joint work conference and public webinar fostered exchange of educational materials and promoted their cross-border use among Dutch and Flemish teachers and professionals.



Fig 10. Cross-border collaboration between NISV, Mediawijs, VRT, and Netwerk Mediawijsheid





Fig 11. Media Literacy Lab



Fig 12. News in the Classroom workshop





Fig 13. News in the Classroom workshop



Fig 14. News in the Classroom challenge with pupils in the Flemish Parliament



Impacts

- Increased resilience: Direct impact on the resilience of vulnerable adults and young people by addressing specific needs and providing tailored, accessible interventions.
- Empowered educators: Educators and intermediary professionals are better equipped with up-to-date knowledge and resources, strengthening their capacity to guide citizens in navigating disinformation.
- Accessible resources: Widely distributed and updated media literacy tools ensure consistent and effective education across diverse audiences, such as the EDU-Boxes on AI and Fake News (education), the Isdatechtzo publications on medical disinformation (general public), and the [repository](#) with useful tools (professionals).

Objective 5: Follow a versatile outreach strategy

BENEDMO has implemented a comprehensive and effective outreach strategy, ensuring widespread awareness of its work and engagement with its resources.

Key achievements

- Strong website performance: The BENEDMO website (www.benedmo.eu) serves as the central hub, exceeding its annual KPI with over 8,000 visits, offering news, outputs, and events.
- Strategic social media presence: LinkedIn reached its target of 300 followers, and the project strategically transitioned from X (formerly Twitter) to Bluesky to adapt to platform changes.
- Decentralised dissemination: A strength is the agreement that 90% of BENEDMO's work is communicated by partners through their own established channels, ensuring targeted reach to specific communities (fact-checkers, media literacy experts, researchers).
- High external engagement: BENEDMO published 10 articles/blogs on third-party platforms and delivered 16 presentations at national and international events, reinforcing its visibility and credibility.
- Integrated communication: Communication activities are supported by a structured editorial workflow and are fully integrated into the broader EDMO ecosystem, enabling cross-border dissemination.





Fig.15 part of the quarterly factsheet summarising BENEDMO outcomes

Impacts

- Widespread awareness: The multi-channel approach and leveraging of partner networks have ensured broad visibility of BENEDMO's and EDMO's efforts and the impact of disinformation among expert and public audiences.
- Increased engagement: Effective communication has driven engagement with BENEDMO's resources, fostering a more informed and active community in the fight against disinformation.
- Strong reputation: Consistent messaging, strategic dissemination, clear factsheets, and high-quality outputs have solidified BENEDMO's reputation as a trusted and influential voice in the European media literacy and fact-checking landscape.



2. Participation in EDMO

Introduction

EDMO is a network of 14 national or multinational Hubs active across 28 countries in the EU and EEA, of which BENEDMO is one. EDMO Hubs bring a unique potential to understand and act upon specific regional specificities in the areas they cover. At the same time overarching coordination enables a pan-European approach to disinformation. EDMO EU, coordinated by European University Institute, works to facilitate and enable collaboration among this multidisciplinary community of stakeholders.

BENEDMO partners have been committed to collaboration with the EDMO network, which manifests in several ways.

Communication and dissemination

BENEDMO's communication clearly reflects its connection to the EDMO network. Its communications strategy is designed not only to build and expand the hub's visibility and outreach but also to contribute to strengthening the EDMO network as a whole.

- BENEDMO adheres to EDMO branding standards, aligns its communication strategy with the EDMO EU strategy, and supports EDMO dissemination efforts such as the Be Online Smart Campaign, the Media Literacy Guidelines, EDMO in numbers briefs, and the Best Of fact-check Map.
- The RSS feed of BENEDMO.eu has been connected to the EDMO website to ensure automated publication of BENEDMO news on the EDMO website.
- BENEDMO has been present at all EDMO Communication meetings.

EDMO Hub meetings

BENEDMO partners have actively participated in all EDMO hub meetings. NISV and VRT have delivered presentations to provide an overview of BENEDMO's activities. BENEDMO has consistently demonstrated its commitment to raising concerns, fostering collaboration between hubs, and identifying solutions to help build a sustainable network and secure future funding.

Quarterly overview of activities

BENEDMO has met the request to provide a quarterly overview of its activities to EDMO and has participated in a biannual meeting with the EDMO EU steering group. This exchange has served as a platform to highlight key activities and explore collaboration opportunities with other hubs within the network and EDMO EU. As a result, several potential collaborations were identified, including: exploration of synergies in regards to research on visual



disinformation with MEDMO, an exchange on the health disinformation training sessions by EDMO EU in relation to the BENEDMO fact-checking campaign on the same topic, an open invitation extended to other hubs to collaborate on cross-border fact-checking activities.

Research and policy analysis

BENEDMO contributed to the EDMO Survey Analysis on the Impact of VLOPSEs Reporting and Actions. Following discussions about the disappointing quantity and quality of data collected by the hubs, BENEDMO took proactive steps by organising a workshop within the hub to provide additional data and contextual information. This approach was shared with EDMO EU, and a country brief summarising the data was subsequently drafted and shared with the EDMO EU team.

In close dialogue with EDMO EU, BENEDMO has explored ways to contribute to the analysis of structural indicators, complementing the approach suggested by EDMO. This resulted in [a blog post](#) outlining the identified opportunities. The hub is developing a study to further test the outlined opportunities.

Additionally, BENEDMO conducted a survey to assess expert perceptions on the role of AI-driven disinformation. The survey was widely distributed across the EDMO network to ensure that the results accurately reflected the network's diverse perspectives.

Fact checking

BENEDMO has been engaged in several activities to foster wide dissemination of fact checks, such as:

- Contribution to EDMO best of fact checking [map](#) by providing input on a monthly basis
- RSS feed linked to Truly Media for searchability of the BENEDMO fact checks and as input for the EDMO country briefs

Additionally BENEDMO is preparing a fact checking collaboration with other EDMO hubs

- BENEDMO has been developing a methodology to support international collaboration on fact-checking initiatives. This includes fact-checking marathons focused on elections and thematic collaborations on topics such as health disinformation and the NATO summit. BENEDMO is actively seeking partnerships with other hubs to expand this approach.



Below is an interactive map, updated on a monthly basis, showcasing the best fact-checking content produced by EDMO and the Hubs. Check out the twenty four edition here below!

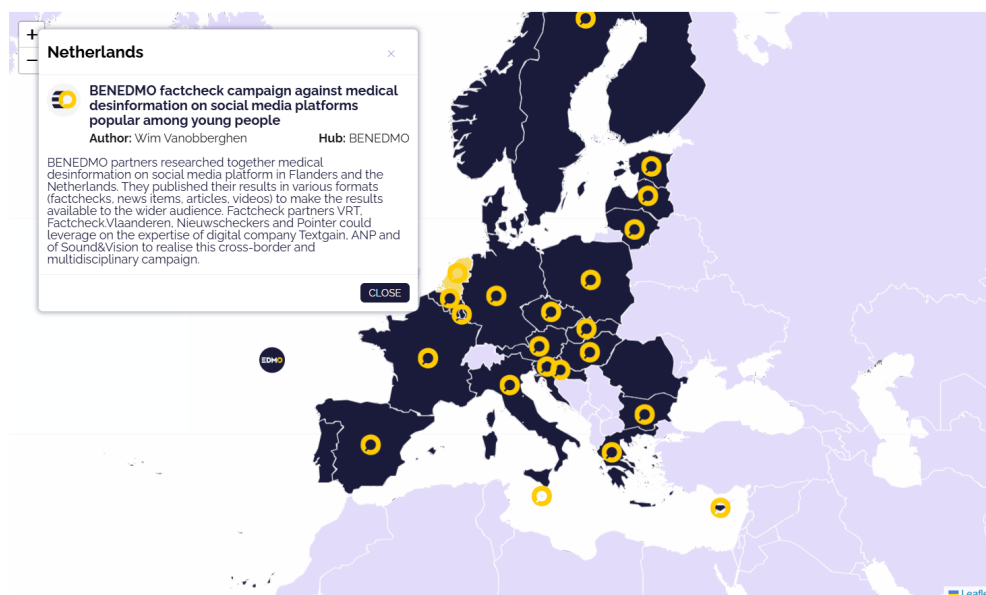


Fig. 17 BENEDMO featured in the EDMO Best of Fact Checking map of April 2025, highlighting the fact check campaign about medical disinformation.

Media Literacy working group

BENEDMO actively participates in the EDMO media literacy community. As a member of the Board of the Media and Learning Association, that coordinates the media literacy community work within EDMO Europe, a representative of Mediawijs leads its new Advisory committee on media literacy and a representative of NISV is a member, both helping to reform the structure and work of the European community of media literacy practitioners. Furthermore, we have supported joint efforts like the following actions.

- Active participation in bimonthly meetings
- Providing input for the EDMO media literacy highlights
- Actively endorsed Media literacy guidelines
- Submitted best practice to illustrate the guidelines
- Dissemination of the Be Online Smart Campaign in Dutch and Flemish contexts





Fig. 18 BENEDMO featured in the highlights overview with an overview of the disinformation and health activities.

ENKEL OMDAT IETS **VIRAAL** GAAT, BETEKEN NIET DAT HET **WAAR** IS...

Onderscheid feit van fictie
voordat je deelt.

Fig. 19 Example of a Dutch linkedin post for the EDMO Be Online Smart Campaign

EDMO Training opportunities

EDMO offers various opportunities for hubs to stay informed about relevant topics, tools, and methodologies. To ensure effective use of resources, BENEDMO partners assess the relevance of each training session before committing participation. BENEDMO has actively engaged in several of these opportunities, including:

- The EDMO Training Workshop on the Meta Content Library and its API (Data Access for Researchers)
- Module 1 of the EDMO Training Series on Health Disinformation
- Module 2 of the EDMO Training Series on Health Disinformation

These sessions have contributed to strengthening BENEDMO's expertise.



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Advocacy

In addition to its activities within the EDMO network, BENEDMO recognises the importance of advocacy for anti-disinformation initiatives, both within the broader EU context and at the national level. To address this, BENEDMO partners have undertaken a range of efforts to support and advance this objective to work towards a sustainable EDMO network.

- Joined the consultation on access to online platform data by the EC
- Signed a joint letter advocating for future funding of the EDMO network
- Issued a public statement in response to META's decision impacting disinformation monitoring
- Keynote (by KU Leuven) and panel-presentation (by VRT) at a UNESCO World Press Freedom Day side event organised by the Flemish government, highlighting the impact and relevance of BENEDMO and the EDMO network
- Contributed input to the Dutch national strategy against disinformation and is instrumental in both initiating and contributing to the Flemish Action Plan Media Literacy
- Provided input for the Dutch parliamentary debate on the role of platforms in the spread of disinformation
- Facilitated the presence of several Dutch ministries at the BENEDMO Medical Disinformation event (May 2025)
- Maintained contact with DSA officers and coordinators at the European Commission
- Offered guidance to government and European Commission officials within the disinformation network
- Shared BENEDMO factsheets with government officials to showcase impact and inform policy discussions





Fig 20 Michaël Opgenhaffen (KU Leuven) delivering the keynote at the UNESCO World Press Freedom Day side event organised by the Flemish government in Brussels.

3. Funding and independence

BENEDMO's mission is to serve the public interest through accurate, impartial, and evidence-based analysis. The findings, research, and all strategic decisions are driven solely by established methodologies, adhering to academic and fact-checking standards. We operate autonomously, entirely independent of influence, direction, or control from any state officials, political agendas, or government bodies.

BENEDMO actively facilitates knowledge exchange between our network and other relevant stakeholders, including governmental bodies, major tech companies, and civil society organizations for transparency and to increase impact of the efforts. This allows BENEDMO to engage with influential actors and share insights in areas profoundly affected by disinformation, such as the healthcare sector, all while upholding the unwavering independence of our hub and network.

BENEDMO receives 50% co-funding through the European Commission's Digital Europe Programme (DEP). This support is vital for our mission to counter disinformation. This



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funding mechanism is a project-based grant, awarded through a highly competitive and rigorous application process.

The DEP aims to strengthen Europe's digital infrastructure and services, including initiatives that foster digital resilience and counter threats like disinformation. Projects like BENEDMO are selected based on their alignment with program objectives, demonstrated excellence, and a detailed proposal outlining planned activities and expected impacts.

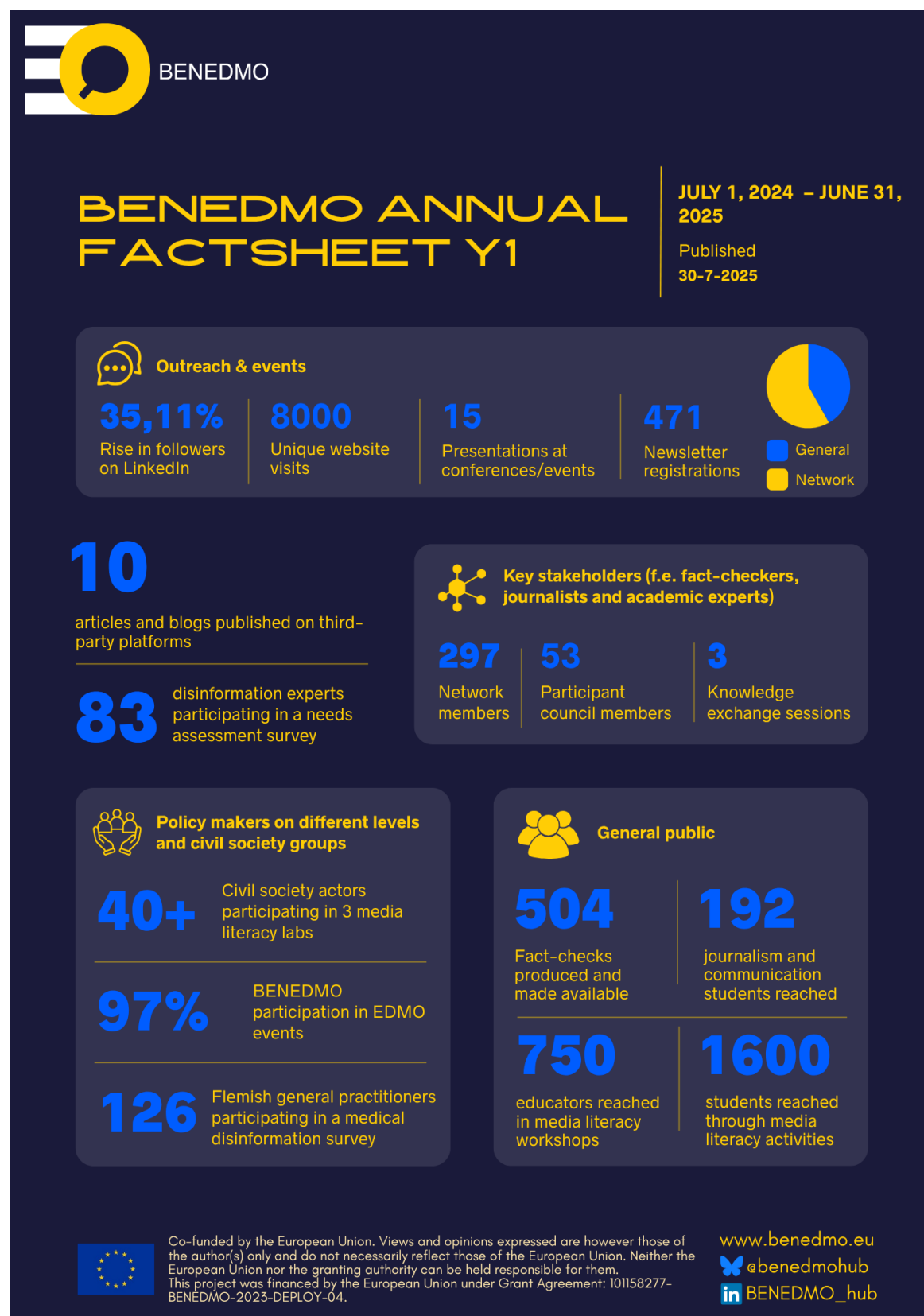
This funding operates on a co-financing model, meaning it covers 50% of approved, eligible costs, with the remaining 50% secured through own contributions or other sources. To overcome these challenges, the consortium partners integrated project objectives with their respective organisational ambitions, and in certain instances, procured additional funding.

A Grant Agreement between consortium partners and the European Commission specifies the outcomes and deliverables BENEDMO committed to achieving, based on the independently developed proposal. The work is governed by partners' core principles of accuracy, impartiality, and established academic and fact-checking standards. Operational and editorial independence is contractually safeguarded within the framework of the DEP grant agreement.

Beyond EU support, the Dutch research partners also receive additional co-funding from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) for their planned activities. This national support acknowledges that the hub's efforts contribute to the Dutch national strategy for improving resilience against disinformation, without granting the Ministry influence over the independent research or findings. Additionally, BENEDMO coordinator NISV has received further support from the Ministry of the Interior (BZK) to study and strengthen the fact-checking network in the Netherlands. This entails mapping the national fact-checking landscape and exploring sustainable, independent funding models for fact-checkers. Furthermore, BENEDMO will map out the often-complex collaboration between fact-checkers and large digital platforms to advise on more effective cooperation structures.



4. Annual outreach factsheet



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