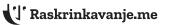
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Facts on Media Manipulations in 2020

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1. 2.

media content
that entailed some
form of audience
manipulation
have been done
by the Centre
for Democratic
Transition (CDT)
through its
Raskrinkavanje.me
project in the first
seven months of
2020.

foreign media have participated in the spread of misinformation or disinformation in the same period.

827 manipulative texts and features have been covered by our analyses, but their total number has been significantly larger.

3.

Out of the

10 media

broadcasters

that took the lead
in disinforming
citizens, none
were from the

Montenegrin
mainstream media.

4.

5. The list of TOP TEN DISINFORMERS in the last 7 months is the following:

Name of the media • Number of assessments • 38 In₄S 54 Informer 42 37 Alo Novosti Viralne objave 29 Srbija danas 26 24 **Espreso Sputnik** 24 21 Pravda Kurir

6.

Media from the "margins", tabloids from the Western Balkan countries and a large number of actors on social networks acted as fake news' factories and created an extensive network of misinformation and disinformation.

7.

In addition to organized groups and individuals, also influencers, musicians, actors, athletes, and other public figures participated in the spread of misinformation on social networks.

8.

In this period, social networks started removing misinformation posts from these areas as well. Facebook has launched independent fact-checking programs in Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Northern Macedonia and Croatia. Raskrinkavanje.me has been a part of this program since the end of July 2020.

9.

Reasons for the spread of media manipulations in this period have been geopolitical, political, and economic. Moreover, a significant number of misinformation proliferators engaged in these activities out of the need to broaden their influence on social networks.

10

Disinformation campaigns targeted the core values of Western democracies, the pursuit of real reforms of the Montenegrin society, the constitutional rights of citizens, and the secularity of the state.

11.

The creation of false narratives favouring Russia and China over the EU and the NATO has been constantly present in this period.

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Another important feature of this period was the raising national and religious tensions – often even hatred – as well as the radicalization of the political scene through the placement of misinformation.

13.

It was not uncommon for the various pro-fascist groups to spread hate speech on the extreme right-wing portals, in the comments below texts or on social networks, labelling citizens and entire nations and raging against anything that did not fit their value system.



21.

State institutions used an insufficiently clear and imprecise legal framework for regulating these issues, so that they reacted to disinformation and its proliferators in a selective way.

22.

Instead of rebuttals, the Government itself labelled some disinformers as "fake news", thus showing its ambition to extend its constitutional competencies to the assessment of compliance with the journalistic code.

23.

The Government did not react to manipulative texts of the like-minded media.

24.

The institutions of the repressive apparatus (police and prosecution) made an even bigger mistake compared to the Government, and opted for the arrest of individuals on charges of spreading panic and spreading false news. In addition, they did not treat all creators and transmitters of fake news in the same way.

25.

The Government's decision to publish the list of persons in mandatory self-isolation, strongly criticised by the relevant NGOs, was the reason behind many media manipulations. This decision was overturned by the Constitutional Court a few months later.

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