[IS] The Icelandic Media Commission's awareness campaign on disinformation

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Fjölmiðlanefnd (the Icelandic Media Commission) has started an awareness campaign in order to help people detect fake news and disinformation. The campaign is called *Stoppa, hugsa, athuga* (Stop, think, check), and is a collaboration between the Icelandic Media Commission, Embætti landlæknis (the Directorate of Health in Iceland) and Vísindavefurinn (the University of Iceland's Web of Science), with support from Facebook.

The focus of the campaign is to increase people's awareness of and ability to detect fake news. The aim is to enhance critical thinking and media literacy and to highlight the importance of professional media and journalism. In the campaign, attention is drawn to the fact that false and misleading information is often intentionally disseminated on social media. Therefore, it is important to be able to spot the difference between fake news and real news. The campaign focuses specifically on misstatements and misleading information on social media relating to the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

The awareness campaign is based on a Norwegian campaign by Medietilsynet (the Norwegian Media Authority), which was translated and adapted for Icelandic audiences. Similar campaigns have been conducted or are running in other states, for example, *STOP, THINK, CHECK* in Ireland and *SHARE* in the United Kingdom.

Currently, fake news and disinformation on the coronavirus flows on the Internet. This wrong and misleading information masquerades as real news, and it can affect people's opinions, ideas and even public health. The results from newly conducted research, for example, from the Norwegian Media Authority, indicate that four out of ten individuals have difficulty detecting fake news from real information, and individuals who are 60 years of age or older find it more difficult than other age groups.

The message of the campaign is simple: Stop, think for a moment and check more sources when you look for information. The awareness campaign is based on the various questions about COVID-19 which the University of Iceland's Web of Science has answered on their website. One element of the campaign is a video highlighting the catchphrase of the campaign (*Stop, think, check*) and the importance of critical thinking. People can also do a quiz to learn more about the

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difference between disinformation and news from professional media. There is also extensive information on the matter available on the Icelandic Media Commission's website.

The awareness campaign is a temporary initiative and is only being conducted on Facebook and Instagram, with the aim of reaching every Icelandic user of both these social platforms. Users are encouraged to do the quiz and read more about the matter on the Icelandic Media Commission's website. Facebook is supporting the awareness campaign by posting all material and ads free of charge, in line with the support granted to other states' awareness campaigns in Europe.

Árvekniátakið Stoppa, hugsa, athuga á vefsíðu fjölmiðlanefndar

https://fjolmidlanefnd.is/stoppa-hugsa-athuga/

The awareness campaign Stop, think, check, Icelandic Media Commission

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