[DE] State media authorities publish disinformation report

IRIS 2020-10:1/5

Jan Henrich
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

On 1 October 2020, the German *Landesmedienanstalten* (state media authorities) published a report on the different forms of disinformation and its distribution from both communication-related and legal perspectives. The report defines various types of disinformation, categorises them from a legal point of view and describes measures that can be taken to combat them.

The report describes the seven main forms of disinformation or misinformation and the threats they each pose to society and democracy. They include deliberate decontextualisation of real information; deliberate misinformation; manipulative (political) advertising; misleading pseudojournalism; and propaganda. The legal section of the report then analyses different categories of preventive and repressive responses to disinformation in the context of their potential to restrict the fundamental right to freedom of expression and dissemination of ideas. The report also considers some of the methods currently used to remove, correct, identify or sanction disinformation.

The report was commissioned by the *Konferenz der Gremienvorsitzenden* (Conference of Chairpersons of the Decision-Taking Councils – GVK) of the *Landesmedienanstalten*. The GVK, which comprises the chairpersons of the decision-making bodies of the different *Bundesland* media regulators, advises on matters relating to media policy and cooperation between the *Landesmedienanstalten*.

The GVK also published a position paper in response to the report, highlighting the importance of freedom of expression and opinion, which should not be restricted in the fight against disinformation. It stated that, in order to combat disinformation, a legislative framework laying down mandatory procedures and guaranteeing transparency was required. Self-regulation could be useful in this respect, but it must be monitored and, if necessary, adjusted by independent media regulators. Platforms and intermediaries had a duty to take diversity of opinion into account and present the full range of views without distortion. Not every act of misinformation needed to be countered by regulatory means. For example, in order to safeguard diversity, the GVK supported the idea of independent fact checks that should be easy to find in search results and newsfeeds. Measures to tackle disinformation should also be supplemented with support for and the strengthening of media literacy among users.

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

Meldung der Landesmedienanstalten vom 01. Oktober 2020 sowie das dazugehörige Gutachten und Positionspapier

https://www.die-medienanstalten.de/service/pressemitteilungen/meldung/vorgehen-gegen-desinformation-ist-fundamental-fuer-die-kommunikative-basis-unserer-gesellschaft

Press release of the state media authorities of 1 October 2020 and the associated report and position paper

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026

© European Audiovisual Observatory (Council of Europe) 2026