

National Counter Disinformation Strategy

Minutes

3 July 2023

Attendees: Martina Chapman (Independent Chair)
Seamus Hempenstall (D/TCAGSM - Secretariat)
Paul Kilkenny (D/TCAGSM - Secretariat)
Fiona Shevlin (D/TCAGSM - Secretariat)
Anthony Kilcoyne (Digital Technologies, PDST)
Una Fitzpatrick (Technology Ireland, Ibec)
Cathal McCauley (Maynooth University)
Patrick Forsyth (Department of Justice)
Stephanie Comey (Coimisiún na Meán)
Susan Daly (Press Ombudsman representative)
Elizabeth Harvey (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment)
Eunice Delaney (An Coimisiún Toghcháin)
Muiriosa Ryan (Health Service Executive)
Cathal Digan (Department of Foreign Affairs)

All participants were welcomed to Dublin Castle for this meeting of the National Counter Disinformation Strategy Working Group.

1. Minutes

The Working Group approved the minutes of the previous meeting on 25 May, along with the minutes of the Workshop held on 8 June. It was noted that these minutes and associated papers will be published on the NCDS webpage. The Secretariat agreed to circulate the link for the webpage to all members.

2. Consultation and communications

The Secretariat gave an update on the consultation and the associated communications plan. It was agreed that the public consultation would have an expected launch date of Q3 2023.

The privacy of individuals who submit views to the public consultation was also considered, along with ways in which to publicise the consultation.

There was some discussion about engaging with interested stakeholders, in particular with the platforms alongside or in addition to the public consultation. Secretariat and the Chair will consider.

There was also discussion about the proposed consultative forum event, its format and timing.

3. Draft scoping paper and consultation questions

The draft scoping paper was discussed. Members made observations and Secretariat agreed to consider and circulate a finalised version of the document by early next week.

4. Next steps in process;

There was an update from the Secretariat on the next steps in the Strategy development process. The development of the Strategy from this point on was considered and there was discussion about any potential recommendations that may arise from the Strategy. It is expected that recommendations will be developed using an iterative process with relevant Working Group members.

5. Next meeting;

It was agreed that an online meeting of the Working Group will be held in August, with the afternoon of Tuesday 8 August proposed by the Secretariat. It was also suggested that the next in-person meeting of the Working Group could take place on Thursday 28 September.

6. Meeting with EU Rapid Alert System delegation

The Group then met with the EU Rapid Alert System (RAS) delegation, who presented their work. The RAS delegation outlined the FIMI Toolbox and the complexity of the risk posed by foreign interference was stated.

The Chair gave a presentation to the RAS delegation on the development process of the Strategy. There was some discussion of current disinformation threats in Ireland along with the role of the new media regulator, Coimisiún na Meán.

NCDS Secretariat

04/07/2023