



VIGILANT

VITAL INTELLIGENCE TO INVESTIGATE ILLEGAL DISINFORMATION



Funded by
the European Union

www.vigilantproject.eu
 @EUvigilant

Introduction

Background



Credibility & Bias

- PhD: Bias as a dimension of credibility
- IRC Research Fellow

Disinformation

- H2020 PROVENANCE project
- Horizon Europe VIGILANT project

UCD & ADAPT

UCD School of Information and Communications Studies

- Computer Science and Social Science
- Human Judgement of Information
- UCD Centre for Digital Policy



SFI National Research Centre

- 8 Universities
- 300+ Researchers & Support Staff
- 41+ EU Projects
- Funded Investigator
- Harmful Information Working Group

Horizon Europe

The Proposal

Disinformation and fake news are combated and trust in the digital world is raised

- [TOPIC ID: HORIZON-CL3-2021-FCT-01-03](#)
- CL3: Cluster 3 Civil Security for Society
- FCT: Fighting Crime and Terrorism
- Disinformation linked to criminal activities
- Innovation Action

The Proposal

Coordinated the Proposal

- April to November 2021
- Assembled a large intradisciplinary consortium
- Multiple exploratory workshops with European Police Authorities (what do they need)
- 12 proposals (4LEAs were a requirement!)
- Won with a rare perfect score of 15:15

The Consortium

MANAGEMENT



Brendan Spillane
Principal Investigator



Eva Power
Project Manager



Prof. Owen Conlan
Project Coordinator

CONSORTIUM



University College Dublin
An Coláiste Ollscoile, Baile Átha Cliath
Ireland's Global University



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

gerulata



Centre for
Security and Society
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg



ontotext



GLOBSEC
IDEAS SHAPING THE WORLD

kinit



University of
Sheffield

Atos



KEMEA

TNO



Deutsche
Hochschule der Polizei



Generalitat de Catalunya
Departament d'Interior

mossos d'esquadra



Hellenic
Police



Estonian Police and
Border Guard Board

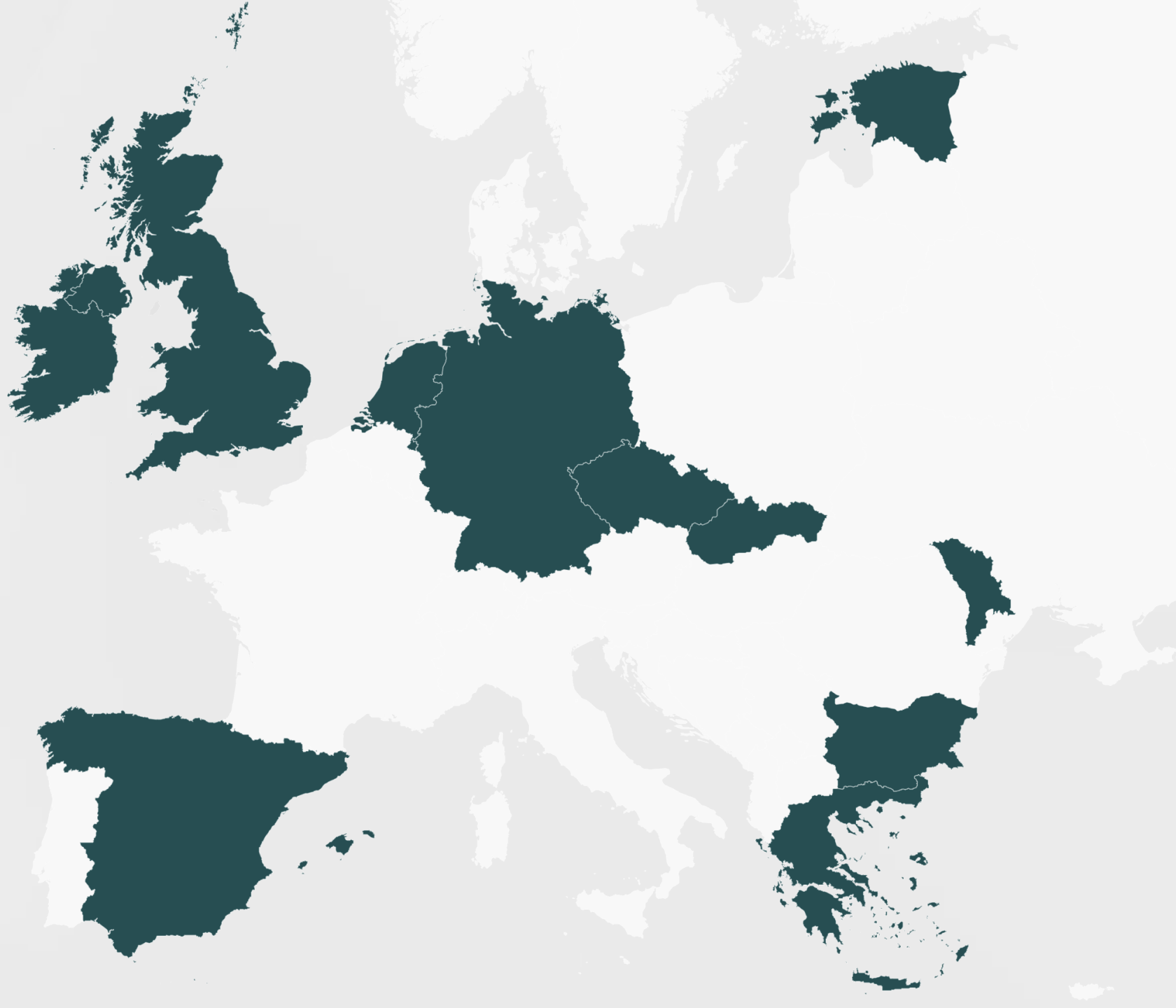


Politia Republicii Moldova
„Împreună pentru o societate mai sigură”

CONSORTIUM

Horizon Europe

- Nov 2023 – Nov 2025
- 13 Research, Commercial, Non Profit and Training partners
- 4 Police Authorities
- 8 Police Authorities have joined our Community of Early Adopters



Three elements

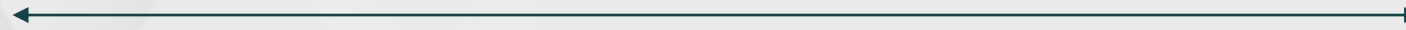
The Project



- 1. Platform:** An integrated platform that will equip Police Authorities with tools to detect analyse, and respond to disinformation campaigns
- 2. Training:** First-of-its-kind disinformation investigation and response training_s
- 3. Network:** A sustainable peer-to-peer support network for Police Units

An end-to-end platform

Social and behavioural dynamics



Social media
content

Website
content

Your data
sources
(videos,
docs, csv...)

Other files
from
investigation

Data ingestion engine

Data storage
& treatment

Knowledge engineering

Disinformation
toolbox

Image &
video

Network
mapping

Natural
language
processing

Interventio
n

Impact
analysis

Dashboard

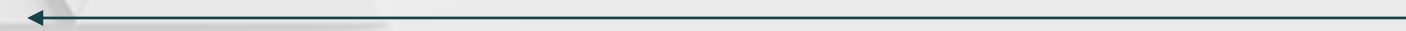
Stakeholder
reporting &
data sharing

POLICE
OFFICERS

Disinformatio
n reporting
interface

INVESTIGATION FILES & EVIDENCE

Ethics and personal data protection



Textual tools for
disinformation analysis

Image and video forensics

Network analysis tools



VIGILANT

VITAL INTELLIGENCE TO INVESTIGATE ILLEGAL DISINFORMATION

Universal and
interoperable data

Customisable and
interactive dashboard

Training and manuals

Data sources

Live ingestion of data from public online sources selected by the PA

- Fake news websites
- Blogs spreading disinformation / conspiracies
- Open (public) social media accounts / groups / channels
 - Platforms of primary interest: Telegram, Twitter, Facebook

Functionality for including additional resources provided by the PA

- Archived resources from past activities
- Raw and annotated texts, lists, tables graphs
- Image, video and audio files

Disinformation Toolbox

Disinformation Toolbox

Text

- 30+ text analysis tools (developed in previous EU-funded research projects as well as specifically for VIGILANT)
- Detect tone, writing quality, recognise entities, individuals, events, threatening language, stance, text reuse, central factual claims, machine-generated text or hate speech
- All new tools developed and tested to work across a wide range of languages

Image / video

- Detect tampered or modified images, object recognition, reverse search billion-level size database of known fakes

Network

- Coordinated campaigns, link and image sharing, user mentions, hashtags, temporal information

Application areas

Applications

Forms of Content

- Disinformation, Hate Speech, Radicalisation, Extremist, Violent nationalist or Separatist, Incel and Terrorist

Foreign Information Manipulation and Interference (FIMI)

- Targeting marginalised groups & those dissatisfied with government and society
- Increasing division between groups and decrease trust in government and the rule of law
- Reduce the ability of government to deliver services

Criminal Networks

- Recruitment
- Raising finance
- Further their political and economic goals

Social Science and Ethics

Three Pillars

Police Authority Needs

- Buy in from the users

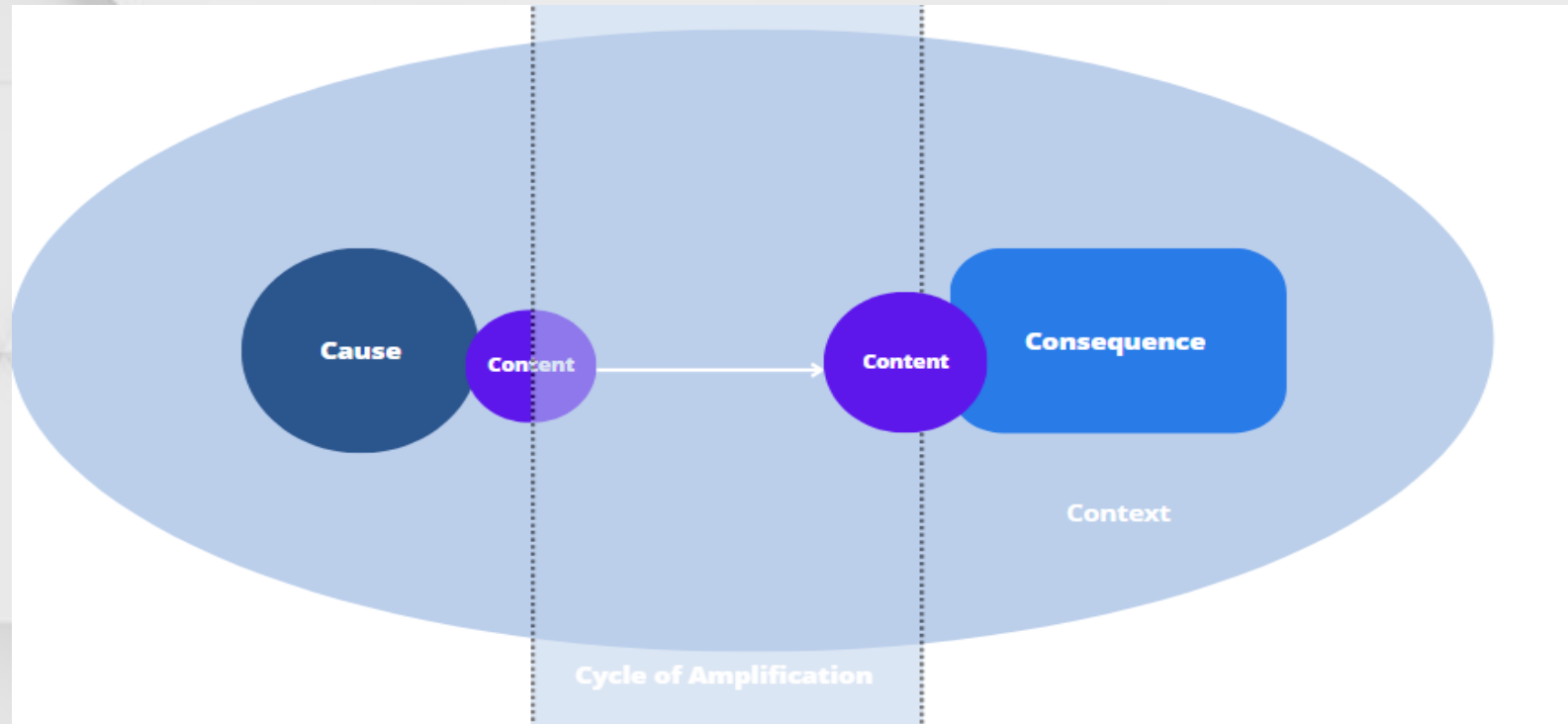
Social Science and Humanities

- Understanding the underlying social drivers and behavioural dynamics of disinformation
- Causes, Contents and Consequences Model

Ethical & Privacy and Security Considerations

- Considerable ethical oversight & Ethics Framework for PAs
- Development phase
- Deployment phase
- Many of our deliverables are non public

5C Model

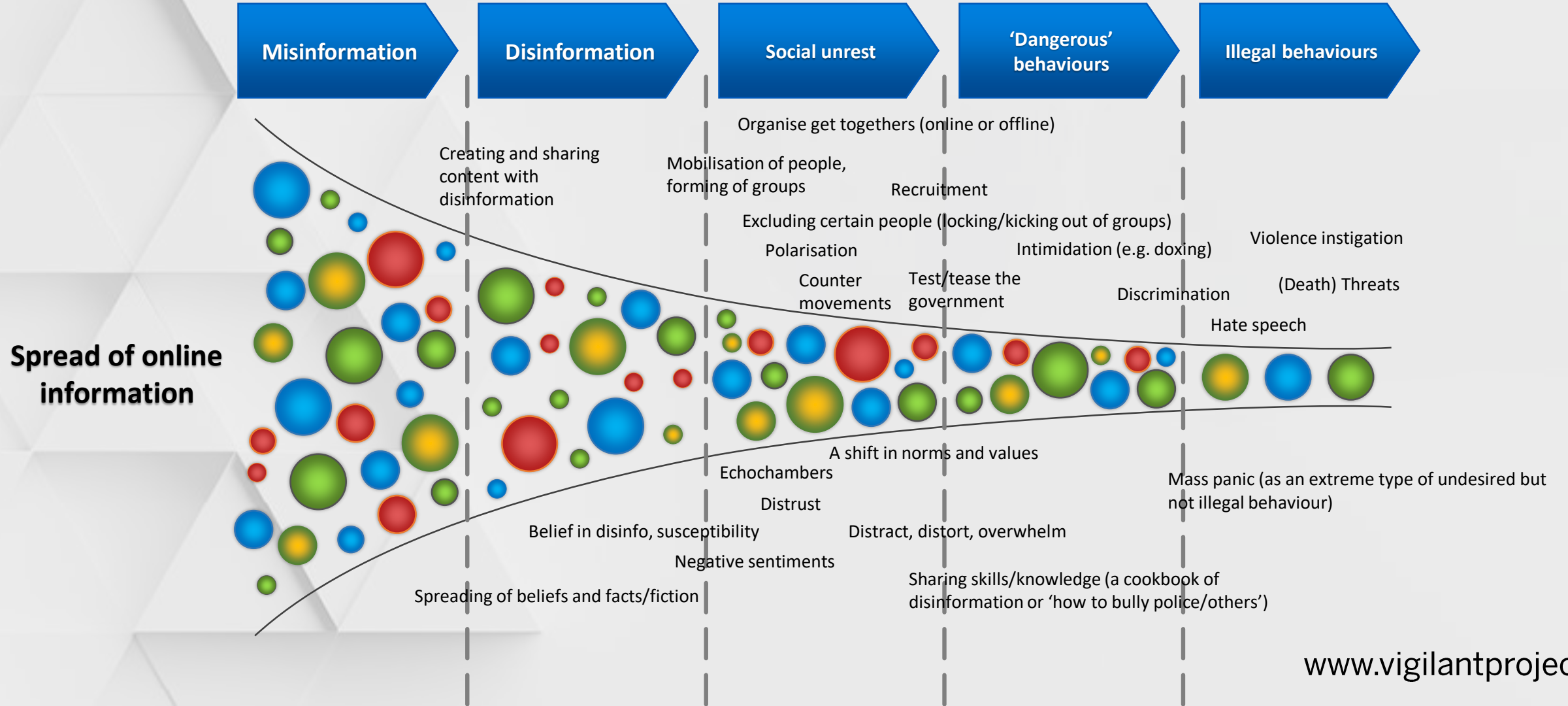


Generic process:

1. Context
2. Causes
3. Content
4. Cycle of Amplification
5. Consequences

Intervention

When is Disinformation relevant to PA's?



Disinformation often contains personal data

‘Step-by-step’ and ‘low hanging fruit’ approaches

Justifications and protections for POPD and AI

- Personal data as a last resort – synthetic
- External Ethics Advisory Board
- No processing on sensitive special categories of personal data
- Data deleted as early as possible
- No development of advanced predictive AI or models which leverage personal data
- Bias audit
- Public interest
 - EU Policy is moving towards providing platform data to researchers
 - Analogous to journalism

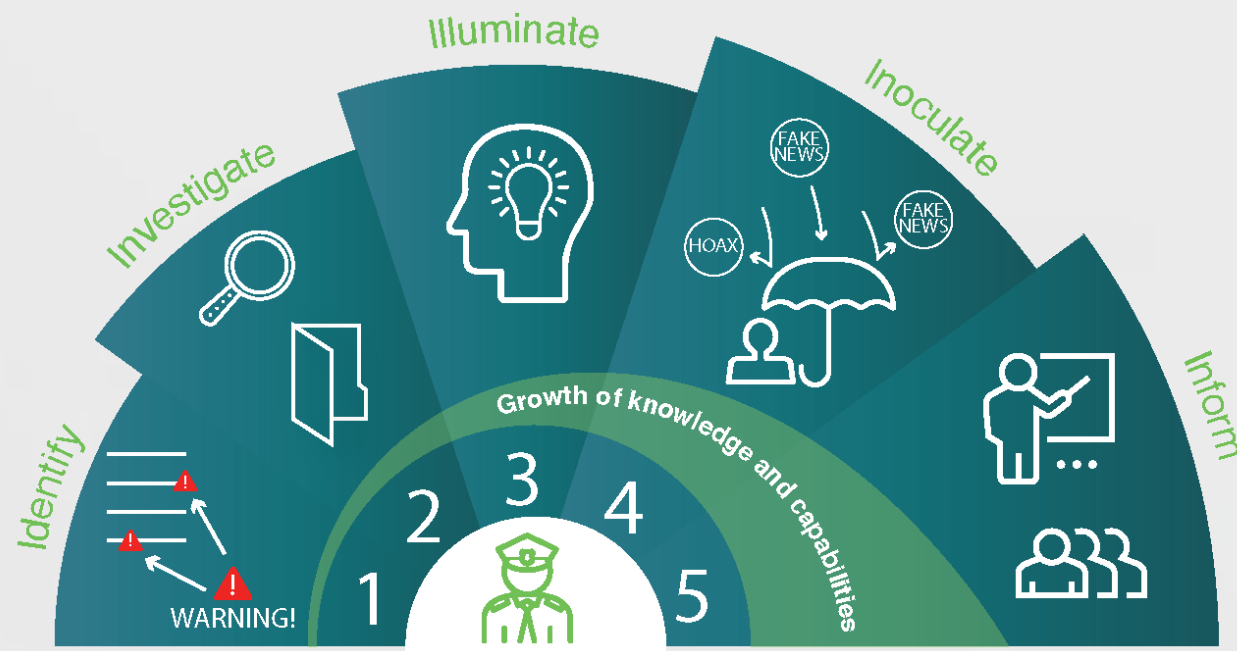


Join us

Get Involved

Community of Early Adopters

- Receive regular project updates
- Attend seminars
- Get access to project intel
- Contribute to co-design workshops
- Access to platform demonstrations
- Evaluate prototypes



Get Involved



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Hellenic
Police



Estonian Police and
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Poliția Republicii Moldova
„Împreună pentru o societate mai sigură”

GET IN TOUCH

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THANK YOU!



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