

**Misinformation, Fake News
and Conspiracy Theories:
Digital Citizenship in EU in
the Age of Artificial
Intelligence**

MODEL UNITED NATIONS CLUB

Advisor: MARY MARIN

A' Arsakeio Gymnasio Psychikou



Elisabeth Tsamoutali, Stelios Svoronos, John Mavraganis, Loukilia Konstantakopoulou, Nadia Loverdou, Rafaela Anagnostopoulou, Natalia Kosmidou, Sylvia Karra, Chara Arvanitopoulou, Argyro Arvanitopoulou



The Rise of Misinformation in the Digital Age

1 Rapid Technological Advancements

The rise of AI and social media has fueled the spread of misinformation, making it easier to create and share content.

2 Decline in Trust

Declining trust in traditional media and the rise of filter bubbles and echo chambers contribute to the spread of misinformation.



AI: Fueling the Misinformation Fire

1 Deepfakes

Hyperrealistic AI-generated content like deepfakes can be used to spread false information and manipulate public opinion.

2 AI-Powered Bots

AI-powered bots automate the spread of disinformation, amplifying its reach and making it harder to distinguish from genuine content.

3 Algorithmic Amplification

Algorithms designed to personalize content can inadvertently amplify misleading information, creating echo chambers and reinforcing biases.



The Impact of Misinformation

Social Impact

Misinformation can erode trust, polarize society, and lead to social unrest and violence.

Political Impact

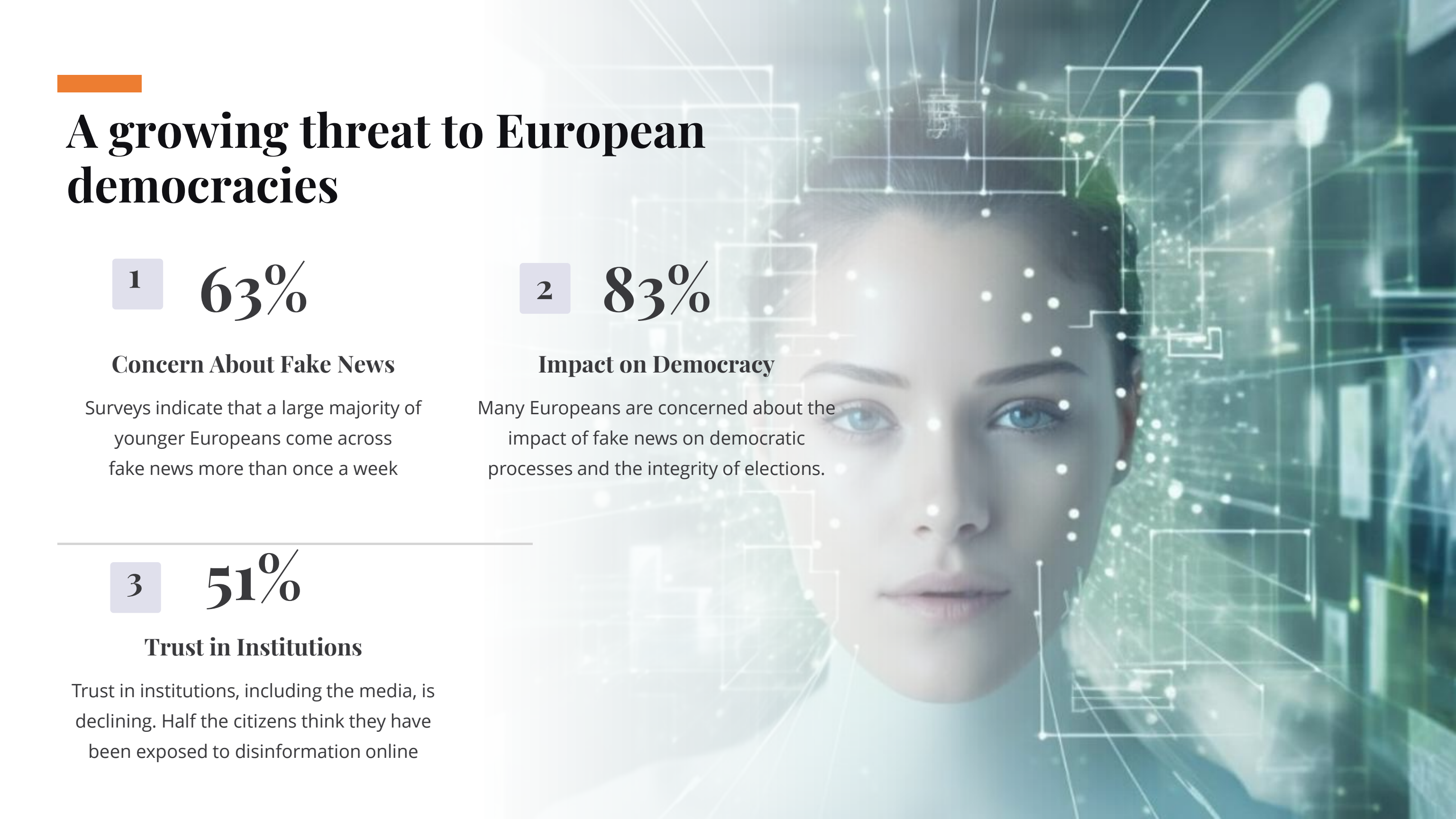
Misinformation can be used to manipulate elections, undermine democracy, and sow discord among citizens.

Economic Impact

Misinformation can damage businesses, influence financial markets, and undermine consumer confidence.

Health Impact

The spread of harmful health misinformation can lead to people avoiding proven treatments and making dangerous choices.

The background of the entire slide is a close-up of a woman's face, looking directly at the camera. Overlaid on her face and the background are complex, glowing digital network lines and nodes, suggesting themes of technology, data, and connectivity. The lines are primarily white and light blue, creating a futuristic, high-tech aesthetic.

A growing threat to European democracies

1 63%

Concern About Fake News

Surveys indicate that a large majority of younger Europeans come across fake news more than once a week

2 83%

Impact on Democracy

Many Europeans are concerned about the impact of fake news on democratic processes and the integrity of elections.

3 51%

Trust in Institutions

Trust in institutions, including the media, is declining. Half the citizens think they have been exposed to disinformation online

Why We Fall for Misinformation



1

Cognitive Biases

Confirmation bias and the availability heuristic can lead people to accept information that confirms their existing beliefs.



2

Emotional Responses

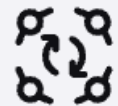
Fear, anger, and distrust can make people more susceptible to believing false information.



3

Lack of Critical Thinking

A lack of critical thinking and media literacy skills makes people vulnerable to manipulation.



4

Social Pressure

Social pressure and conformity can influence people to accept information even if they know it's false.



Key findings of 2018 Greek survey



1

Lack of Critical Thinking

Only 2% of children have the critical thinking skills needed to tell whether a news story is real or fake



2

Worried

Half of children (49.9%) are worried about not being able to spot fake news



3

Trust the News less

Two-thirds of children (60.6%) now trust the news less because of the wave of fake news



4

Increase of stress levels

Two thirds of teachers (60.9%) believe that fake news is damaging children's wellbeing, increasing their stress levels



5

National Curriculum does not equip

Half of teachers (53.5%) believe the national curriculum does not equip children with the literacy skills they need to identify fake news

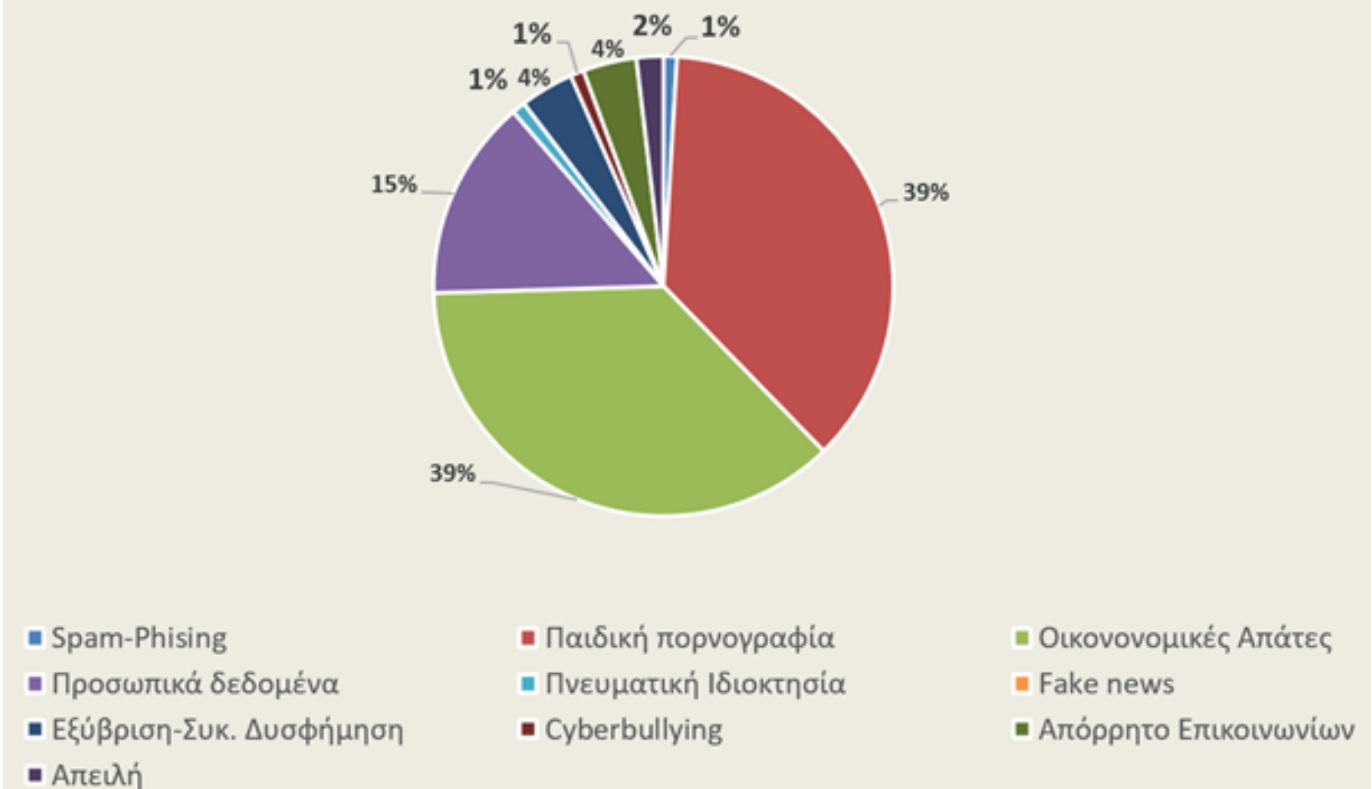


Annual statistics 2023 of the SafeLine.gr and Help-line.gr Internet Content Hotline

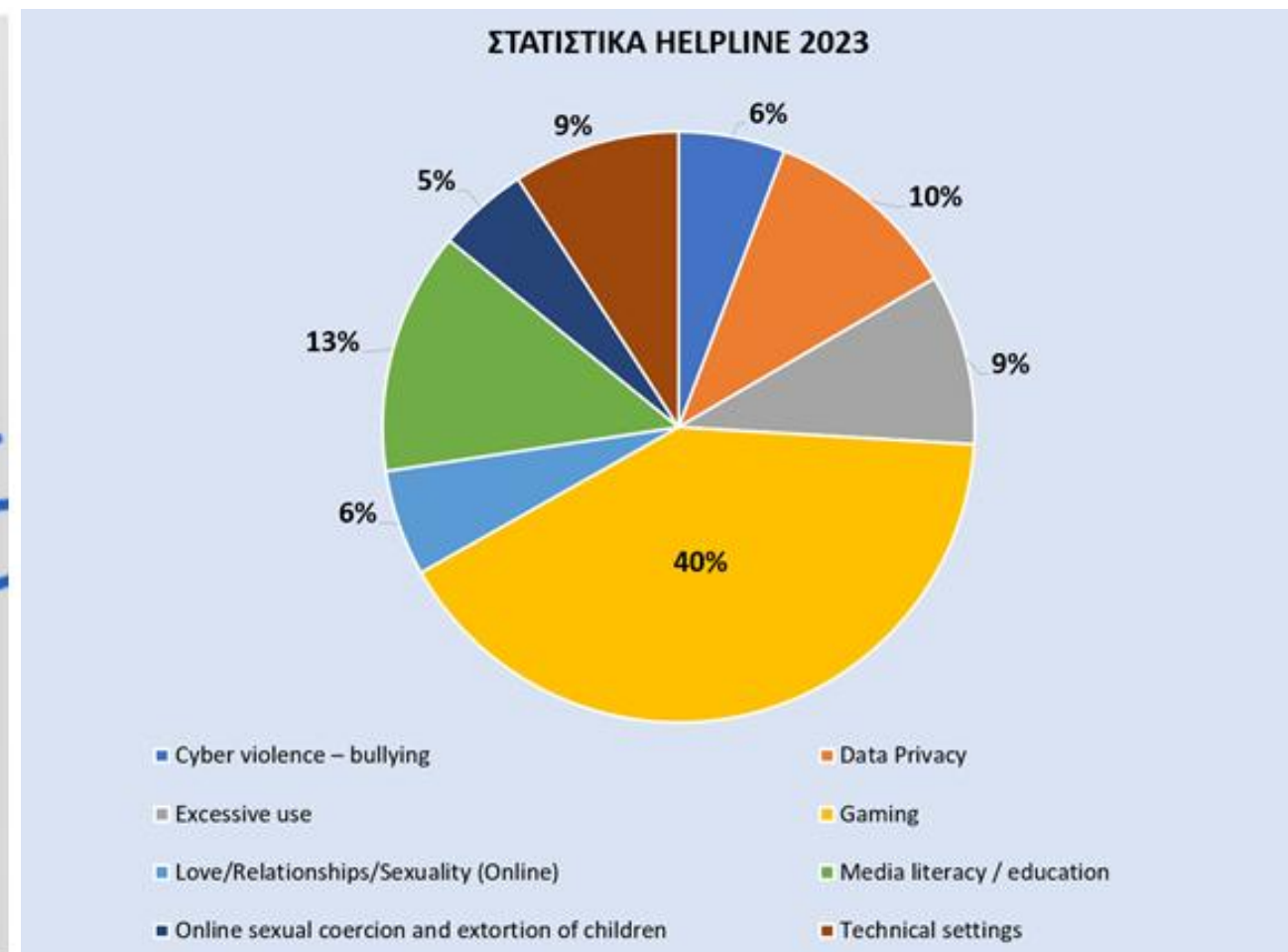
Ετήσια στατιστικά στοιχεία 2023



ΣΤΑΤΙΣΤΙΚΑ ΚΑΤΑΓΓΕΛΙΩΝ SAFELINE 2023



- 1 ✓ 18.5% increase in total complaints
- 2 ✓ 5.4% increase in complaints of child abuse and exploitation material and an increase in calls for management of such incidents
- 3 ✓ Increase of 14.9% in financial fraud and
- 4 ✓ 6.7% in personal data breaches
- 5 ✓ The main reason for contacting Help-line.gr is excessive engagement



Annual statistics 2023 of the SafeLine.gr and Help-line.gr Internet Content Hotline

- 1 ✓ The first place is shared by **complaints about child sexual abuse and exploitation material and financial fraud**, accounting for **78%** of all complaints.
- 2 ✓ Complaints about **financial fraud** increased by **14.9%** and
- 3 ✓ Complaints about personal data breach by **6.7%**.
- 4 ✓ A decrease of **50.77%** is observed in the category of **violation of confidentiality of communications**.

Deepfakes: The New Face of Deceit



1

Creation and Use

Deepfakes are created using AI algorithms that can convincingly swap faces in videos, manipulating visual information.

2

Potential for Harm

Deepfakes can be used for political manipulation, blackmail, and reputational damage, undermining trust and spreading falsehoods.

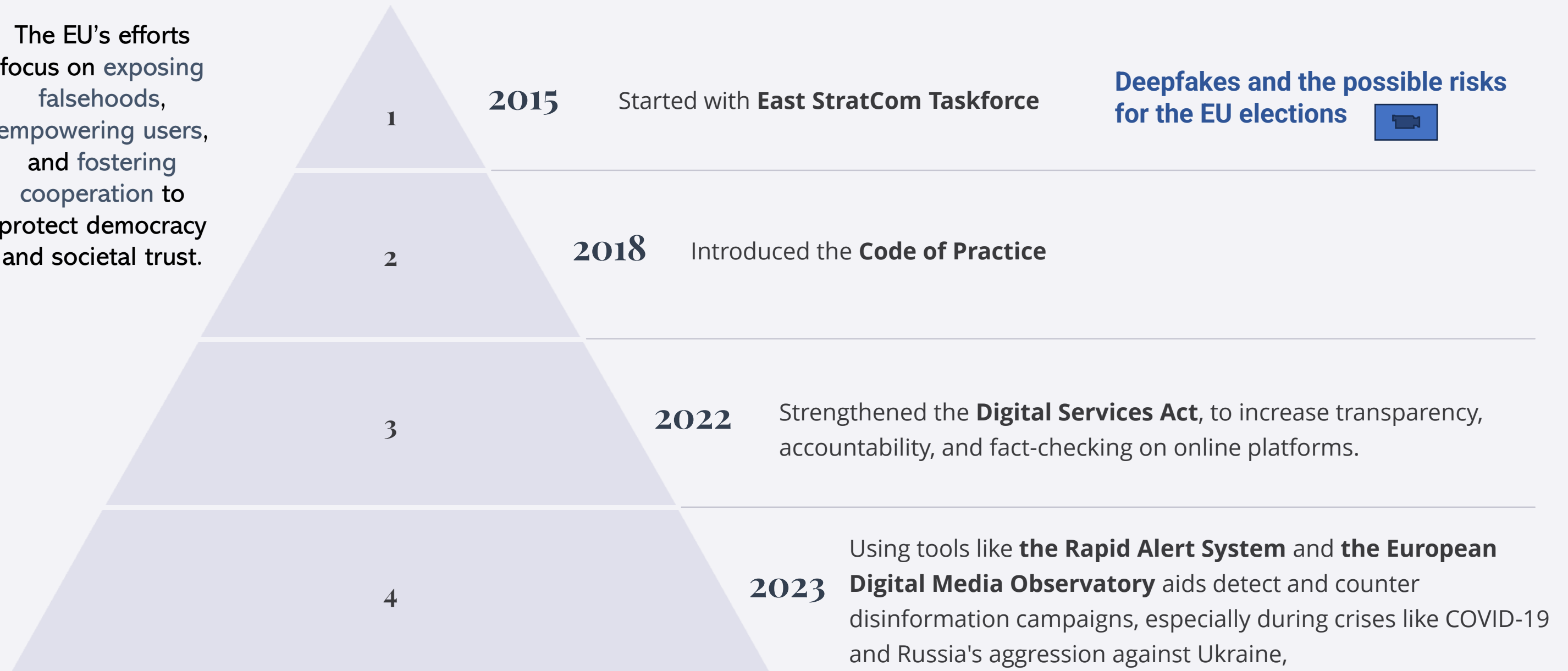
3

Detection Challenges

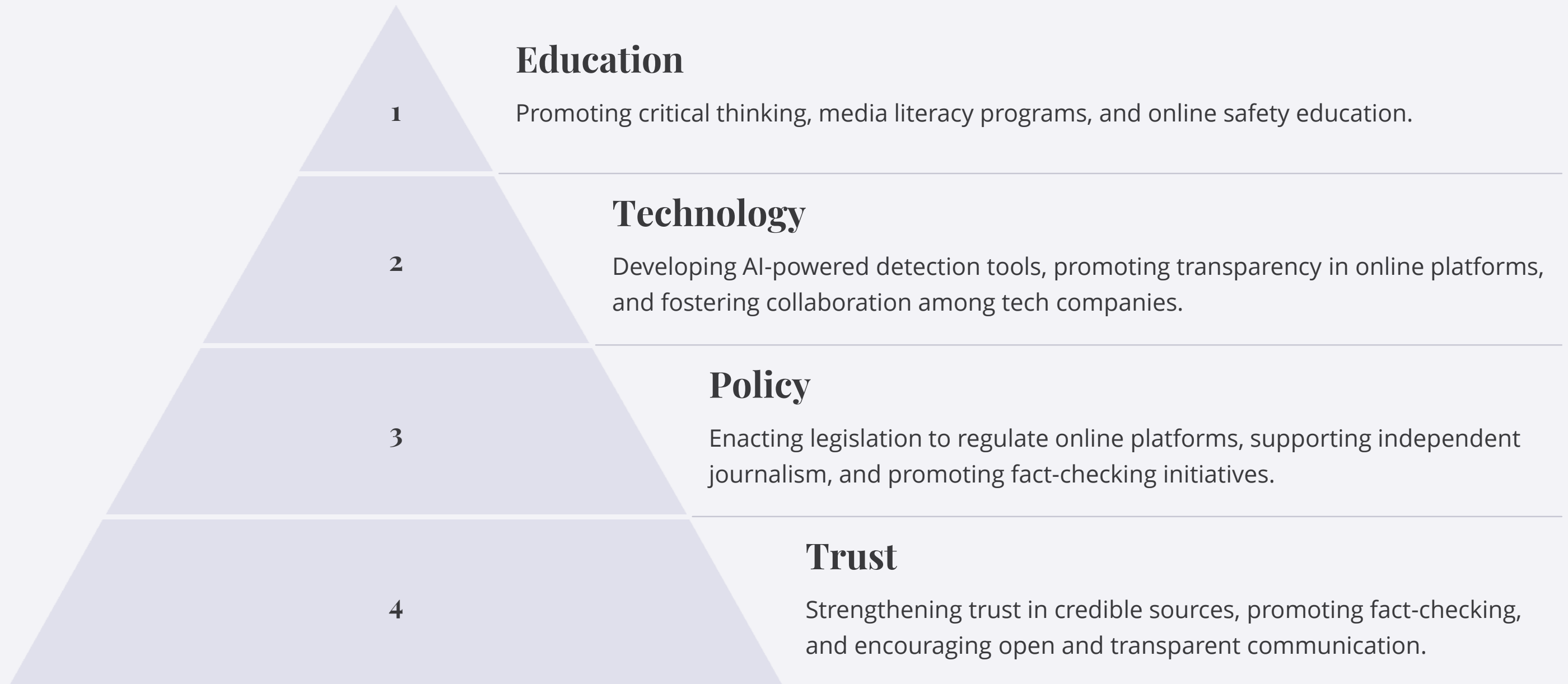
Detecting deepfakes requires specialized tools and expertise, making it difficult to distinguish real from fabricated content.

EU Robust Strategy against Disinformation

The EU's efforts focus on exposing falsehoods, empowering users, and fostering cooperation to protect democracy and societal trust.



Fighting Back Against the Tide of Disinformation



How do we know that a publication is accurate?



- 1 ✓ The site comes from a reliable source (official news site - Kathimerini).
- 2 ✓ The presence of a small padlock at the beginning of the URL confirms the credibility of the website.
- 3 ✓ The publication is signed by the journalist.
- 4 ✓ The date and time of the publication are given.
- 5 ✓ The origin of the photo is indicated.
- 6 ✓ Reference is made to statements made by credible and real people, (with a quick search on internet search this is easily verified).

 kathimerini.gr/world/563408434/pos-schediazai-na-elegxei-o-tramp-ti-groilandia-tesse



Κόσμος

Πώς σχεδιάζει να «ελέγξει» ο Τραμπ τη Γροιλανδία; Τέσσερα σχέδια βγαίνουν από το συρτάρι

Τους τέσσερις τρόπους μέσω από τους οποίους ο νεοεκλεγείς Αμερικανός πρόεδρος μπορεί να ελέγξει το μεγαλύτερο νησί στον κόσμο, παρουσιάζει το Politico

4* 47* χρόνος ανάγνωσης [Ανοίξτε το άρθρο](#)



(Φωτογραφία αρχείου από Reuters)



12.01.2025 - 09:34

[Κοινοποίηση](#) [Εικόνα](#)

Ο νεοεκλεγείς πρόεδρος των ΗΠΑ, Ντόναλντ Τραμπ, παρουσιάζει αποφασισμένους να ελέγξει το μεγαλύτερο νησί στον κόσμο, ακόμη και να το αγοράσει, εάν εκείνο κηρύξει την ανεξαρτησία του από τη Δανία.

Πώς μπορεί να το επιτύχει; Θα μπορούσε να επιδιώξει να το καταστήσει περιοχή της Αμερικανικής κοινόπολιτείας, όπως το Πουέρτο Ρίκο, ή ακόμη και να συνυψεί με τη Γροιλανδία μια συμφωνία όπως με τη Μικρονησία και τα Νησιά Μάρσαλ, που θα προσφέρει στον αμερικανικό στρατό απεριόριστη πρόσβαση με αντάλλαγμα αμυντική και οικονομική βοήθεια.

«Υπάρχει πλήθος δυνατοτήτων», δήλωσε στο Politico ο Αλεξ Γκρέι, προσωπικός του Συμβούλου Εθνικής Ασφάλειας κατά την πρώτη προεδρική θητεία του Τραμπ. «Υπάρχει προηγούμενο», πρόσθεσε ο ίδιος.

How do we know that a publication is accurate?

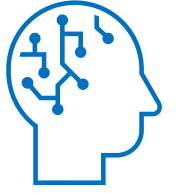


- 1 ✓ it is not a professional website
- 2 ✓ There are no basic elements at the bottom of the page (such as About us or communication)
- 3 ✓ The website name should make us suspicious (Gepeto)
- 4 ✓ The URL of the website does not belong to the trusted ones (.gr, .com., .gov etc.)
- 5 ✓ There is no security padlock at the beginning of the URL
- 6 ✓ The text encourages individuals to donate to support the cause of a better future (donate now)
- 7 ✓ The hosted article is an opinion piece, not a journalistic one
- 8 ✓ There is no identity of the journalist, nor the date of publication
- 9 ✓ There are spelling mistakes
- 10 ✓ Strong encouragement for reposting
- 11 ✓ The request for the reader's personal information is made without providing a clear explanation of its intended use





Spot the Deepfake



ORIGINAL



DEEPFAKE

'Deepfake' Tom Cruise goes viral on TikTok with over 11 million views



Can you spot a deep fake from a real person?

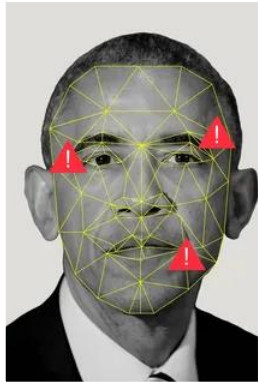


START



How to spot and avoid AI scams

With advances in AI, scams are becoming more sophisticated – here's what to look out for



Some deepfake videos use lip-syncing, so watch the video carefully for lip-syncing that's slightly off.



Pay attention to details in the quality – do the hair, lighting and skin tone of the person look believable? Is there any blurring in the video?



Listen out for strange background noises or robotic voices.



Look for unnatural expressions – it's hard to mimic natural blinking, and AI often lacks facial emotion and AI body movements can seem off.

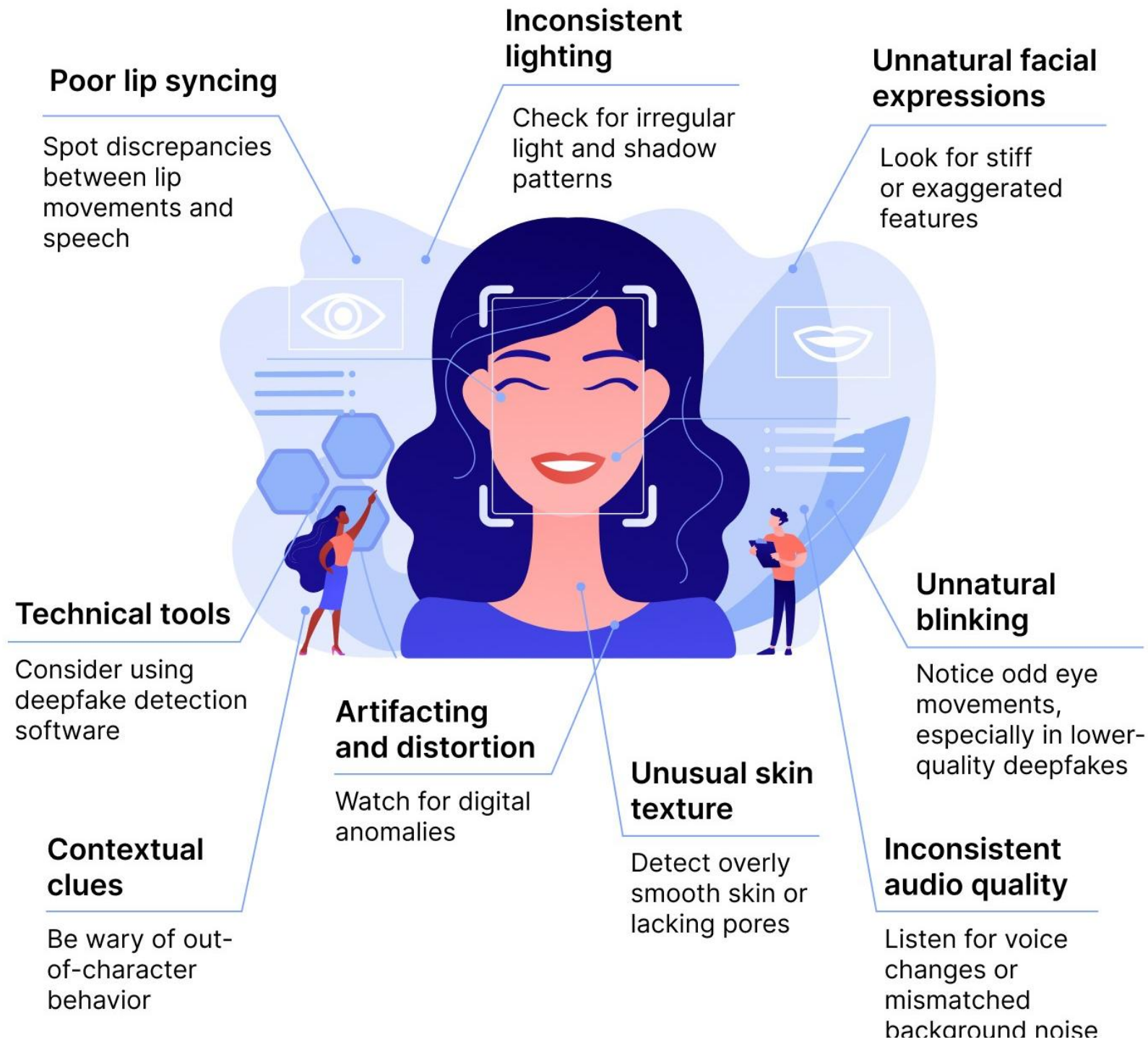


Where does the video come from? If it's not an official account or if it's an account you've never heard of and you haven't seen the video anywhere else, be wary.





Spot the Deepfake



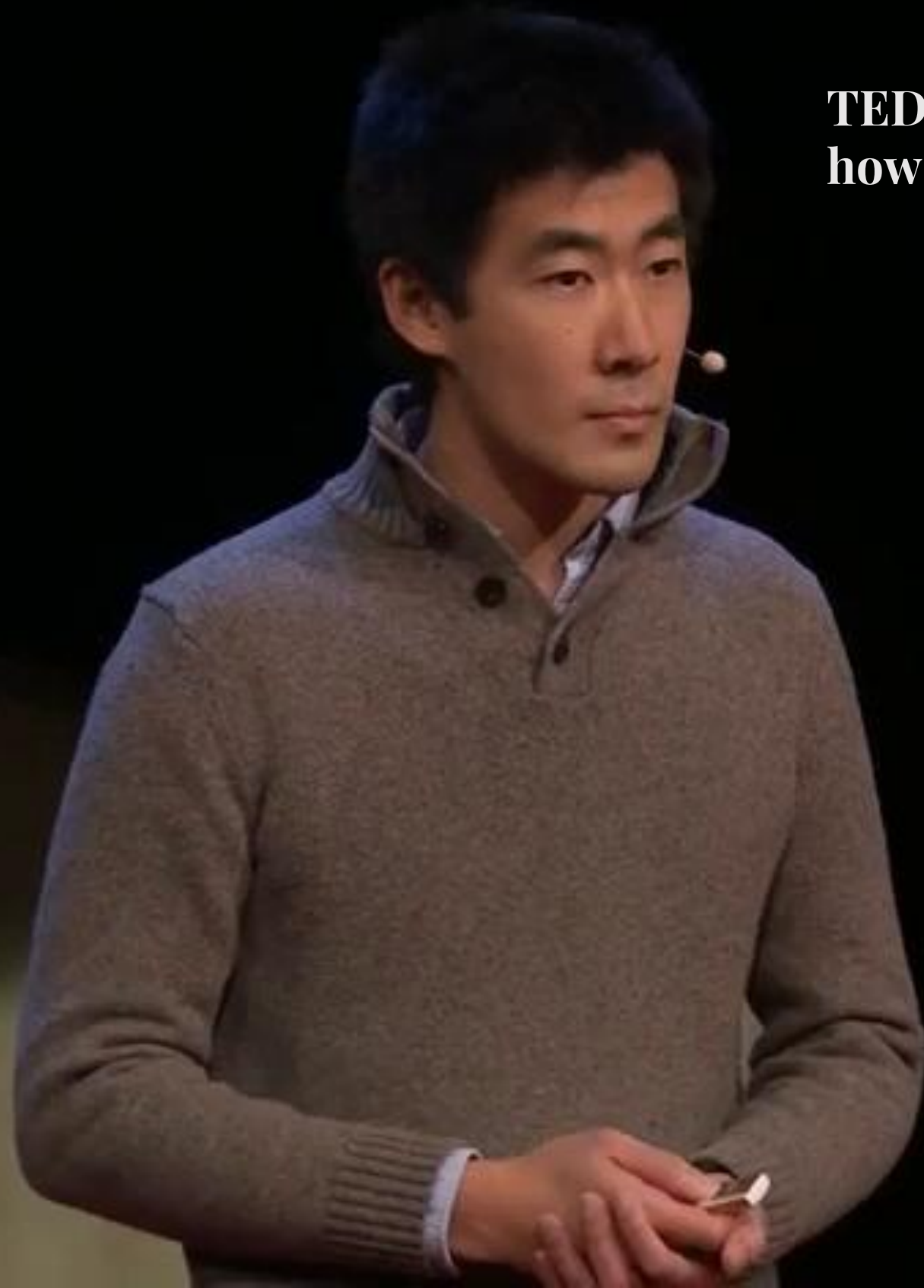


Take the deepfake video quiz



START

**TED TALK – Fake videos of real people and
how to spot them | Supasorn Suwajanakorn**



Fake



AI-generated image: a fake image of the Pope wearing a white puffer jacket.

FAKE NEWS?



Fake

AI-generated image: a fake image of former President Donald Trump being arrested.

COMMON CONSPIRACY THEORIES

- The earth is flat
- Moon landings were faked and what was shown on TV was actually a Hollywood studio
- Climate change is a hoax
- Barack Obama was born in Kenya, not the US and thus was an illegitimate president and Michelle Obama is transgender whose real name is Michael
- Covid-19 was a hoax created by the Chinese as a bioweapon vaccine contained microchips to track people
- MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccine causes autism



The infographic features a teal background. At the top, a white banner contains the title 'WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?' in large, bold, purple and red letters. Below this, five hands of different skin tones hold up smartphones, each displaying a news article titled 'FAKE NEWS' with a red 'SHARE' button. The bottom section has a solid purple background with the text 'What is fake news?' in white. Below this, a white text box contains the message: 'Have you fallen for fake news before? Take the quiz to find out what it is, how it spreads online and how to avoid it. Put your knowledge to the test!'. At the very bottom, a purple button with white text says 'TAKE THE QUIZ'.

WHAT IS FAKE NEWS?

of the

FAKE NEWS

SHARE

FAKE NEWS

SHARE

FAKE NEWS

SHARE

FAKE NEWS

SHARE

What is fake news?

Have you fallen for fake news before? Take the quiz to find out what it is, how it spreads online and how to avoid it. Put your knowledge to the test!

TAKE THE QUIZ



HOW DOES **FAKE** NEWS SPREAD?

Watch out for the **“woah”** – emotion fuels fake news. When you see something that makes you feel super sad or super happy, it might be playing on your emotions to get a reaction

Beware exaggeration – words like “terrible”, “worst”, “amazing” or “shocking” add drama to a story and make us want to click on it

Pause before you share

Fight the **‘Illusory Truth Effect’** – the more you hear or see something, the more likely you are to believe it’s true – even if it’s not. If a story seems to be everywhere, remember that doesn’t mean it’s 100% fact

Check your **‘filter bubble’** – social media and ads are designed to suggest stories that match your browsing habits, interests and opinions, so watch out for being taken in by fake news that sounds too good to be true!



1. The 2024 Baltimore bridge collapse

- This image featuring Homer and Lisa, supposedly showing the collapse of the Baltimore bridge, went viral with more than 36m views on X. At first glance this image looks legit, but it was actually generated using AI.



2. Donald Trump becomes President of The United States

- One of the most famous 'predictions' from The Simpsons was that Donald Trump would become the President of the United States. However, this image above, which often accompanies stories about the presidential prediction is from a short episode called 'Trumptastic Voyage' which was broadcast in 2015, after Trump had already announced running for President.



3. The Notre-Dame Cathedral fire in 2019

- Another image that has been viewed almost 400,000 times on TikTok and even featured in TV news reports, is one supposedly showing The Simpsons predicting the 2019 Notre-Dame fire. However, this image has been digitally altered. In this example of fake news, Mr Burns and the flames on the cathedral were added using photo-editing software, proving that you shouldn't always believe everything you see online.

<https://app.bookcreator.com/read/tG9VLOdPRT-DtKFAGylcyQ/9ekdNIBiSyqFxYHGudkjtA>

