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RADIRIGHTS Project

Manual

Content

1. Introduction - About the RADIRIGHTS project

1.1. Project aims

The RADIRIGHTS project was implemented by four partner organizations who agreed the basic principle of the project: To support the creation of a just society whose members are free to actively and responsibly shape their fate and the fate of their communities.

The participation of citizens in general in the shaping of our common future – participating in decision-making and taking active steps in order to implement our aims – is crucial. Democracy can function only if citizens use their democratic rights, and they will do so only if they are informed about their rights and their circumstances, not when they are ignorant and being manipulated by a lack of information or by false information. The democratic deficit is very relevant in disadvantaged Roma communities. Their members have very limited information resources, and often only receive the manipulative, clickbait content of social media and mass media, which makes them either passive regarding the potential of their democratic participation, or panicked by manipulative media content. In order for these target groups to participate in democratic debate, it is important to support them in how to reflect on different media content and information, how to listen to different points, and how to create and articulate their own point of view – not dominated by others, and not dominating others either – in a democratic discussion.

We examined the spread and transformation of information within segregated Roma communities, with special regard to the knowledge of their social institutions and characterization of their opinion leaders. The long-term result of the project was to improve the effectiveness of communication with positive content (for the purpose of inclusion) by adjusting its modalities and messages in order to limit the spread of disinformation about social facts and to develop appropriate forms of democratic debate (dialogue).

This strengthened the Roma communities to recognize the disinformation and increase their trust in institutions and the social system.

The project targeted Roma communities and individuals. This distinction is important because – as our experience suggests – the members of Roma communities only rarely form functional communities. The 'positive stereotype' often predominates that Roma live in close communities with a lot of group solidarity and with close family ties that can protect them from the negative or harmful impact of the 'outside world'. The truth is more complicated, and it is dangerous to believe this stereotype, because to do so can hide what is often the terrible state of segregated settlements. Our project aimed in the four countries to empower these people to not become victims of disinformation and manipulation.

Finally, the partners in this project did not want to tell Roma people what to think about the world; rather, we wanted to empower them to be active, critically-thinking members of all the societies of which they are a part.

1.2. Partners

Autonomia Foundation, Hungary (leader of the consortium), www.autonomia.hu

Autonomia Foundation has been implementing programs in the field of Roma integration since 1990. As an independent organization, we face a very serious challenge in the recent Hungary,

as the current Government actively seeks to suppress independent communities and democratic dialogue.

According to the mission of the Foundation, it

- provides solutions and proposals for the development of Roma integration policies;

- provides professional support, cooperates with small communities, settlements, institutions, helps to build the trust and cooperation necessary for progress,

- supports the establishment and strengthening of active civil society organizations through its work.

Besides its core activities, the foundation is the founder of the Egalipe community, a network of Roma and pro-Roma organizations that critiques the Government's mostly manipulative policy on Roma, which offers no chance of Roma inclusion.

Through its programs, Autonomia is present in local Roma communities in segregated settlements, where it encounters a lack of knowledge among community members about the democratic institutional system (including the right to vote) and the presence of disinformation resulting from manipulative politics practiced against Roma communities. All of this leads to Roma greatly distrusting institutions in the majority society.

As a pro-Roma organization, the Autonomia Foundation does not want to speak on behalf of the Roma, but wants to do everything in its power to enable Roma people and communities to represent their interests and express their views in public discourse and politics.

Romea o.p.s, Czech Republic, https://romea.cz/en

The ROMEA civic association was established in 2002 as a nongovernmental, nonprofit, voluntary organization bringing non-Roma and Roma together to support the fight against racism, develop human rights protections, and aid with the development of democracy and tolerance in the Czech Republic. In 2013, ROMEA became a public benefit company producing high-quality news reporting about Roma-related issues in Czech and English, thereby promoting trust between people and communities in the Czech and English-speaking worlds through its website, Romea.cz, and its ROMEA TV channel on YouTube, while its print magazine, Romano voďi, is published in Czech with some Romani-language content as well. ROMEA also runs a scholarship program for Romani high school and college students in the Czech Republic and is involved in actively cultivating the online space through its own social media profiles and participating in various projects combating disinformation and hate speech. ROMEA's vision is for the culture of the Czech and the European media to be objective and serious when reporting on Romani-related issues, for non-Romani and Romani people to coexist in harmony, for Roma to no longer be the targets of antigypsyism, for Romani people to be active citizens participating in politics, and for a strong Romani middle class to develop.

Amalipe Association, Bulgaria, https://amalipe.bg/en/about-us/mission/

AMALIPE is the largest Roma organization working for better education, community development and equal integration of Roma in Bulgarian society. The name itself shows the goals and the way the organization works – "Amalipe" is a Roma word that means "friendship", ie. working for Roma integration, we include people from all ethnicities. Roma integration will make Bulgaria a more developed and economically strong country. It will help for a better life for all ethnic groups and active people from all ethnic groups should be involved in this process.

That is why the Amalipe Center unites the efforts of Roma, Bulgarians, Turks and others, guided by the values of interethnic dialogue and tolerance.

Representatives of the Amalipe Center have been elected by the Roma organizations as members of the Monitoring Committees of the operational programs Science and Education for Smart Growth and Human Resources Development.

Amalipe's LONG-TERM GOALS are:

- to develop capacity within the community by raising the educational level of Roma children and youth to promote the development of Roma girls and women and to overcome negative traditional practices
- To develop skills for self-organization of the Roma community
- To strengthen the participation of Roma in the decision-making process
- Stimulating a consistent and responsible state policy, which envisages expanding the access of Roma to education, quality health care and social services, monitoring and feedback to improve policy measures and practices.
- Foster the emancipation of Romani women and the overcoming of harmful traditional practices such as early marriages.

Amalipe's APPROACH to achieving these goals includes:

- participation of Roma at all levels and application of a bottom-up approach; application of the principle "for Roma with Roma"
- application of innovative methods and practices at local level: in each of the areas in which we work we apply practical models that we test in the field;
- systematization of the practical results of the pilot initiatives of partner organizations in order to include them in the national policies;
- advocacy for national, regional and local institutions to continue and institutionalize good practices tested by Amalipe and other organizations;
- advocacy for institutions at the national level to form a sustainable model for Roma integration and to accelerate the integration process;
- development of a network of structures of the organization and partner organizations, which can apply certain practices on a national scale, as well as to advocate for local and national institutions: Roma Integration Network;
- preparation of analyzes, monitoring and evaluation of the existing policies related to Roma integration.

Fagic, Spain, https://www.fagic.org/?lang=en

The Federación de Asociaciones Gitanas de Cataluña – FAGiC (Federation of Roma Associations in Catalonia) was created in 1991, nowadays it gathers 96 Roma associations from all over Catalonia. FAGiC is the most representative Roma organisation in the region, which purpose is to defend and promote the rights and culture of the Roma people in Catalonia.

Fagic's mission is to:

- Improve the creation of actions addressed to the Roma Community, gathering their aspirations and worries, building bridges between Roma and non-Roma.
- Interact with the Catalan government and the Public Administration, at local and national level, to ensure Roma rights will be respected

- Promote the civic participation through community-based initiatives and support for the member associations
- Encourage activities and projects which promotes the coexistence between non Roma and Roma community.
- Unit and represent the voice of Roma associations of Catalonia in order to become stronger and more representative, developing a common action plan among Roma associations.
- Defend, promote and study the Roma language, history, and culture. Challenge Romaphobia, xenophobia and all kind of racism.

1.3. Actions and Methods

The phenomenon and impact of disinformation is linked to the problem of information poverty. The three dimensions of information poverty are generally closely linked:

- Lack of IT equipment and internet service;

- Content available on the Internet is not relevant or accessible to people living in information poverty but those can influence the lives of people in society;

- Lack of competences to access and understand the content available on the Internet, and structural, systemic barriers to get these skills and competences.

Implementing the project we had to face the fact that each of the three dimensions is characteristic of the communities and individuals involved in the project. Perhaps what is changing is that technological advances, the availability of smartphones, are removing the technical barriers to internet access even in the poorest communities. Thus, although it is far from being possible to talk about full access at the moment, due to the cost of Internet subscriptions, the dimension of technical access to internet content is losing the relevance as a factor in the causes of information poverty.

However, the lack of competence and the interpretability of relevant content has played an important role in all our communities. We can illustrate this with two examples:

During the COVID period, a lot of content was published that communicated the need for vaccination and its mechanism of action based on a scientific argumentation, which requires a higher level of education and cognitive level to understand - or even read. However, anti-vaccine, pseudo-scientific content is usually shorter and much simpler, and is much easier to absorb when embedded in a 'frame story' with black and white characters. In this case, it is clear that disinformation is much easier to find its way into and has a more destructive effect on lower-educated audiences than scientifically based information.

The other phenomenon in Hungary is the case of political smear campaigns. Disinformation concerning opposition political figures appears regularly in the media. These find their way almost unhindered to people who are largely informed through only one communication

channel usually controlled by the government and who do not have the ability of fact checking, they do not consider it important. Although this phenomenon is far from being the exclusive preserve of the socially deprived, it is perhaps not unreasonable to assume that we can find here a phenomenon of information poverty, which undoubtedly has an educational and socio-cultural dimension.

When designing the local actions, we had to face the limitations of the project, i.e. that we could not offer solutions to all three dimensions of information poverty, even if these actions were local. We viewed local actions more as opportunities and tools that can be applied in other settlements and communities. Accordingly, the focus was on:

- Active communicators from passive receivers. Minority communities should not be represented through the opinions of outsiders but should be able to influence the image of them themselves – Community filmmaking.
- Nothing that looks like it is true. In other words, do not accept all information from the media as fact, especially if its content leads to their subsequent action (manipulation) – Fact checking.
- In many cases, there is a political will behind communication. It is always worth searching for the political intention of the communicator, interpreting the news itself accordingly.
- In many cases, communication is driven by business interests (or at least economic motivation: scam). It is necessary to be prepared not only to recognize this, but also to prevent it. – TikTok videos.

Throughout the project, we encouraged either the partner organizations or the local teams to employ various methods, some similar and some different across different locations. The common thread was the use of *participatory action methods*, which served as the main tool for engaging the affected communities. At the beginning of the project, partner organizations learned the basic methods of conducting participatory workshops during an international workshop, and they also received guidance on how to initiate their own processes. Here, we also discussed the differing characteristics of the locations, emphasizing that depending on these factors, different specific methods, for example venues might be most suitable for community engagement in each place. The goal of the participatory processes was for communities to develop their own actions and ideas to reduce their vulnerability to disinformation. At the end of this Manual, we provide a brief description of these actions.

During the process, we also used other tools and methods, such as conducting interviews, creating participatory documentaries and making short videos and films in collaboration with community members, and holding sessions for school-age children. These methods are presented below.

2. Background: The Issue of Disinformation

Disinformation is prevalent throughout society. The more disadvantaged a population group is, the more vulnerable it becomes to "fake news." Certain characteristics of the local public used by these groups, along with their habits, attitudes, and relationships (e.g., trust), make them particularly prone to believe and act on false information, sometimes spread with malicious intent. Additionally, disinformation debunking efforts—typically operated by intellectuals, media workers, scientists, and activists—rarely reach these groups, and even less frequently have   an   impact.
Our goal is to understand these local information systems, identify how dysfunctional patterns are established, and develop viable alternatives.

2.1 Talking Points on Disinformation

- **Avoid using the term "disinformation"** when starting discussions. Most people are familiar with big lies or propaganda but may be intimidated by academic terminology.
- **Focus on issues directly impacting people's lives**. While Flat Earth stories are amusing, the real work should center on lies and propaganda that evoke fear in the community.
- **Always check the source**. Rediscover the simple question: "How do you know?" Encourage young people to research controversial points in real-time. Googling for lies can be quite fun!
- **Examine vested interests**. When harmful stories circulate in the community, ask who benefits from spreading such narratives.
- **Be cautious, but not cynical**. Encourage people to seek out trusted individuals when they hear troubling stories, but also question those sources: "How do you know what the truth is?"
- **Address the human tendency to believe gossip**. Let community members know that believing in gossip or propaganda isn't a sign of stupidity. Even wise people can be misled. Share examples of how you were once fooled to foster a learning environment.

3. Participatory Action Research (PAR)

In RADIRIGHTS project the four partners applied PAR method to examine the phenomenon of the disinformation.

3.1 What is Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Why Use It?

In the term "Participatory Action Research," all three words hold special significance:

- **Research**: It involves gathering information about societal phenomena.
- **Action**: This is not just descriptive research but one aimed at understanding how certain actions impact and transform the social settings we study. The goal is to drive change—whether in knowledge, behavior, or attitudes.
- **Participatory**: The research includes direct involvement from the affected population, not merely as "subjects" but as contributors in defining the problem, designing solutions, and evaluating outcomes.

PAR emerged from marginalized communities in Africa, Asia, and Latin America in the 1970s. Everyday people, often living in poverty, took the initiative to investigate and improve their circumstances while reflecting on the knowledge they generated. Through PAR, oppressed groups gain the opportunity to understand and challenge the structures that shape their lives, empowering themselves and promoting democracy.

Traditionally, science was the exclusive domain of experts. However, the spread of participatory methods reflects a shift: "experts with lived experience" and the collective wisdom of non-experts are increasingly valued. By involving diverse, heterogeneous groups, we can tap into a richer knowledge base that experts alone may not possess.

Besides knowledge generation, PAR provides several advantages:

- **Motivation**: Involvement in the process fosters a deep sense of commitment to the issue at hand.
- **Cohesion**: Participants build empathy and understanding by sharing their stories and insights.
- **Democratic Engagement**: Involving people in decisions that affect their lives promotes human rights and democratic values.

3.2 Basic Rules and Tools in Participatory Processes

While PAR can be unpredictable, certain basic principles can be applied across various contexts. Below some aspects to be considered before research design are listed, as well as some additional notes for facilitators.

Research Design Considerations

- What would be the ideal format for fieldwork in the community? Would it be better to have formal or informal sessions, smaller groups or larger groups? Should they be homogenous or mixed (e.g., by gender, age)?
- Are there recent instances of disinformation within the community or country that could serve as starting points for the conversation?
- Is there awareness about disinformation and fake news within the community? Do people recognize these as existing phenomena?
- How much do community members trust individuals outside their community? Whom do they believe, and whom do they distrust? What are the underlying reasons for these trust dynamics?
- What are good "keywords" to ensure clarity and build trust when asking questions? What topics should be avoided?
- What are the anticipated challenges or supportive factors (e.g., resistance from some community members, outside interference, internal conflicts)?
- How many people from the community could participate in the planned workshops?
- Are there individuals who could be more deeply involved? How many, and in what capacity?
- What is the optimal length for daily workshops? Would it be 2 hours, two sessions of 2 hours, or longer?

Additional Notes for Facilitators

- **Preliminary Work**: Research begins months before the first meeting, involving stakeholder analysis and mapping, and paying attention to diversity.
- **Workshop Preparations**: Choose a neutral, comfortable location accessible to all. Offer refreshments and ensure the timing works for your group (no more than 1.5-2 hours of uninterrupted work).
- **Engaging Participants**: Make sure all participants feel comfortable sharing their thoughts. Some individuals may be shy or hesitant to speak up, so facilitators should actively encourage participation from everyone, creating an inclusive atmosphere.
- **Handling Sensitive Topics**: Discussions about disinformation may touch on sensitive subjects (e.g., politics, healthcare). Facilitators must manage these conversations carefully, ensuring respect and avoiding personal conflicts.
- **Ensuring Accuracy in Recording**: Facilitators should ensure that all group findings are recorded accurately and fairly. When summarizing the group work, check in with participants to confirm that their views are being represented correctly.
- **Next Steps**: The outcomes of the workshop should be used to inform further stages of the research project, including designing follow-up workshops or interviews based on the insights gathered from the community.

4. Deliberative Workshop Structure and Facilitation

4.1 Preparation Before Workshops

1. **Location and Accessories**
   o Choose an accessible and neutral location, suitable for all participants, that is well-lit, comfortable, and quiet. Basic accessories include chairs, tables, paper, pens, post-its, flip charts, markers, and perhaps scissors and glue.
   o Consider community-specific adjustments. If a formal gathering may not attract attention, invite participants to an event with music, dancing, or another element of local culture. The goal is to engage the community effectively.

2. **Timing**
   o Plan carefully, specifying the order of activities, expected outcomes, and the timing of each session. Written plans help organize workshop activities into manageable blocks. A typical plan should outline:
      ▪ Activity blocks
      ▪ Name and type of activity (e.g., group, plenary)
      ▪ Content and goals
      ▪ Instructions for participants
      ▪ Time allocation
      ▪ Responsible facilitators
   o Keep in mind that people can focus for about 1.5-2 hours at most, and it's recommended to have three such blocks per day with ample breaks. Plan shorter workshops if participants are not accustomed to sitting for long periods.

3. **Comfort**
   o Ensure participants' comfort, which includes a welcoming environment with available food and drinks. If working with young people, establish clear rules to maintain focus and participation.

4. **Co-hosting and Facilitators**
   o It is best not to run workshops alone. Divide tasks (process management, conflict resolution, timekeeping, and notetaking) among co-hosts to ensure smooth facilitation. Flexibility is key—roles may shift during the workshop depending on emerging needs.

4.2 Facilitating a Workshop

The success of a participatory workshop hinges on participants feeling safe, respected, heard, and comfortable. Many groups create their own rules at the outset, or facilitators can suggest guidelines such as:

- The workshop is a **conversation, not a debate**—everyone shares their views but doesn't aim to convince others.
- Respect others' time—speak plainly and avoid repetition.
- **Stick to time limits** and avoid dominating the conversation.

- It's okay to ask for clarifications, but not to question someone's legitimacy.
- Everyone has the right to speak and to be listened to.
- Behave and speak respectfully—discrimination, insults, and oppression are not tolerated.

The facilitator's role is to ensure adherence to these rules and create an environment where participants feel encouraged and valued.

4.3 General Workshop Structure

While the exact structure of a workshop can vary, depending on the topic and participant group, a general outline inspired by the "citizens' assembly" model might look like this:

1. **Arrivals and Introductions**: Facilitators welcome participants, introduce themselves, and engage in light conversation to make everyone comfortable. Offering food and drinks helps create a welcoming atmosphere.
2. **Welcome and Overview**: Outline the goals and process of the workshop—why everyone is gathered and what will happen over the course of the day.
3. **Personal Check-In**: Participants can briefly introduce themselves and respond to a simple question such as "How are you feeling today?" This helps create a sense of connection. (For groups larger than 10, break into smaller teams of 5-8 people.)
   - *Note*: Although check-in may seem trivial, it is essential for setting a positive tone, fostering connection, and creating a welcoming environment.
4. **Thematic Blocks**: Each workshop should have a direction, often starting from general themes before narrowing down to more specific issues.
   - **Information Sessions**: Experts provide brief presentations on key topics.
   - **Group Work**: Participants discuss topics in small groups and nominate one person to present their results.
   - **Plenary Discussions**: Groups share their insights with the entire workshop, followed by questions and feedback.
   - This cycle can repeat up to four times a day, depending on time availability.
5. **End-of-Day Harvest**: In the final session, participants reflect on key messages from the day, pose lingering questions, or suggest ideas for the next workshop.
6. **Check-Out**: Similar to check-in, participants briefly reflect on the day's events, possibly by sharing one thing they learned or an insight they will take away.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

1. Promises and Responsibility

When researchers engage a community and draw attention to issues that may not have been in focus before, they can create needs or hopes. It is essential to manage these expectations responsibly. Researchers must be transparent about their intentions, the potential consequences

of the research, and the options available to address the issues raised. If the resources to implement a solution are not within reach, this must be clearly communicated from the outset.

2. Framing and Power of Facilitation

Participatory research holds the promise of revealing a community's true perceptions and opinions. However, facilitators wield significant influence in shaping these discussions. The wording of questions, the choice of topics, and even body language can all steer the conversation in a particular direction. This power must be acknowledged and managed carefully.

- **Teamwork**: Co-facilitators should regularly check in with each other to ensure balance and avoid bias. External supervision may also be helpful.
- **Recording and Reporting**: When summarizing or reporting on conversations, facilitators should double-check their interpretations with the participants to ensure accuracy and avoid imposing their own views.

3. Confidentiality and Trust

In participatory settings, the issue of confidentiality often arises. Group members may share personal stories or sensitive information. It's important to establish clear guidelines:

- **Group Confidentiality**: The group may agree to a "group secret" rule, ensuring that no personal information leaves the room.
- **Personal Boundaries**: Each participant should feel free to indicate when they are about to share something private that requires discretion.

4. Navigating the "Groan Zone"

As previously discussed in the Kaner Diamond Model, participatory processes often pass through a difficult "groan zone" where tensions arise due to diverging views. Facilitators should expect this and understand that it is a natural, necessary phase of the process.

- **Encouraging Dialogue**: When disagreements or discomfort emerge, facilitators should encourage open discussion while maintaining a respectful and structured environment.
- **Trusting the Process**: Facilitators must remain patient and reassure participants that this phase leads to better understanding and eventual consensus.

4.5 Process Dynamics: The Kaner Diamond Model

Sam Kaner's model illustrates the typical dynamics of participatory processes. At the beginning, participants often assume shared understanding. However, as discussions unfold, it becomes clear that divergent perspectives exist. This leads to what Kaner calls the "groan zone," an uncomfortable but critical phase in which participants work through differences before arriving at a consensus.

Facilitators should recognize this as a natural part of the process and reassure participants when things feel difficult. Trust the process—discomfort often precedes breakthroughs.

The following part of the Manual is a description of the specific methods used in the RADIRIGHTS project. Using these methods, we carried out community actions on disinformation at the project sites, involving university professors and students.

5. Participatory filmmaking

"Participatory filmmaking is an inclusive and collaborative process that engages a community or group - usually disadvantaged - to collectively conceive, gather, film, and present their own story." This is how Nick and Chris Lunch summarize the essence of participatory filmmaking in their book "Insights into Participatory Video." The method dismantles the traditional duality and hierarchy of the usual roles of observed and observer, object and subject, educator and student (etc). Participatory filmmaking usually works towards generating new knowledge and understanding about the perspective and experiences of a particular group or community, therefore it is valuable tool for working towards the empowerment of disadvantaged groups. Through inclusion and collaboration it engages the members of a group and uses the camera as a catalyst for the process of ingroup and intergroup community building. Ingroup, because the community can experience itself as a capable social agent and by exploring self-representation (which is always partly internalized representation from the dominant social hegemony) build a more positive identity. And intergroup, because as a result of reinforcing equality throughout the process, both the members of the oppressed and the oppressor groups get to shed the normative social expectations and build better connections based on solidarity, shared goals and values. In practice this means that the community in question not only appears in front of the camera, but is in position to decide about the narrative, hold creative controll and operate behind the camera as well.

5.1 Participatory filmmaking course

As part of the RADIRIGHTS Project, a participatory filmmaking course was delivered during spring 2024 to students of Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest. The aim of the course was both to acquaint students from different educational backgrounds and disciplines (media studies, social policy and law) with the emergence, causes and consequences of disinformation among people living in segregated areas and to put that to practice in collaboration with the residents of two segregated areas of Hungary with the help of participatory documentary methods the process consisted of two parts: preparation and fieldwork. During the preparation part, after laying the theoretical groundwork, students participated in several participatory filmmaking activities and tasks. Afterwards, using the afore-studied methods, the participants were required to prepare a workshop plan. Subsequently those workshop plans were used (although with alterations) for working together to examine how disinformation operates with the residents of Kakucs and Gilvánfa (Kakucs is located in the central part of Hungary, 25 km South of Budapest, Gilvanfa is one of the first homogeneous Roma small village in South-Hungary in a depressed micro-region). Kakucs is economically better-off settlement with a 10% Roma habitants but they live in the outskirt of the village.

5.2 Experiencing Dis/Misinformation

The size of the project did not allow for a larger film to be made in this case, but the participant got experiment with different kinds of methods used in participatory filmmaking. It was all connected to the overarching theme of the unit: disinformation. Both the students during the preparation and the participants on the field got familiar with the concepts of misinformation and disinformation, how informational inequalities work and interact with other kinds of inequalities, and some ways to recognize and combat them. Those were the most hands-on, and from my perspective, the most useful parts of the project: both for the students and the residents. Instead of lengthy theories, we were all able to experience disinformation first-hand as a result of some of the tasks included in the workshop. My strong conviction is that the most effective way to convey knowledge is through empiricism, and it is still oftentimes overlooked in academia. Thus, the toolkit that this course provided participants with will also be useful in other settings both inside and outside academia for its versatility.

5.3 Experiencing Inter/Transdisciplinary cooperation

Another key endeavor of the course was to offer experience in the area of inter/transdisciplinary cooperation. While interdisciplinarity combines angles borrowed from multiple fields when examining a subject, transdisciplinarity, beyond putting together knowledge deriving from different disciplines, aims not only to connect the respective fields, but to see beyond academia, and integrate non-academic sources of information and experience. This approach has a strong social commitment, as it recognizes the significance of lived reality and moves towards correcting the inequalities in the way production of knowledge generally works.

5.4 Potentials of the course

In addition to the participatory methods, the project provided students with insights into how informational inequalities work and the everyday lives of the residents of segregated areas, and hopefully contributed to the equipment of residents with some tools for empowerment. Based on student feedback, the course served its twofold purpose as an introduction to the field and a catalyst for further similar projects quite well. The latter are especially significant for the social change, that the project (and in a broader sense, the whole methodology) was trying to assist by dismantling informational inequalities and enabling disadvantaged groups to tell their own stories.

Exemplary outline for the preparatory documentary filmmaking workshop

15 minutes: Introduction circle (15 minutes)
Energizer ("My chair") (10 minutes)
Methods description (sociodrama), Group contract (10 minutes)
Getting acquainted/warm-up (25 minutes)
- walking
- share in pairs (1) why you came here (major/specialization, this course) - one sentence.
- continue walking, share in pairs (2) what is your personal relationship (not necessarily experience) with poverty and exclusion;
- continue walking, share in pairs (3) what is your personal relationship and experience with disinformation.
- Find common ground in pairs!

Connecting to previous – Sociodramatic statues (10 minutes assembly, 20 minutes presentation, 10 minutes processing)
- Pairs share with the group what they have in common; similar ones form groups of four.
- Create "My disinformation / information lacking experience" statue/vignette (one per group)
- feedback after processing

Break (15 minutes)
Fake/News production: Small groups write true and false news (3-4 pieces) (existing or made up), record them (15 minutes creating fake news, 15 minutes recording + 45 minutes reflection)
- Small groups (of 4) create approx. 30 sec long videos
- Speaking to camera, can include style variations (e.g., interviewing each other), genre can be news reading, interview situation, informal situation, anything.
- Should be structured, have context, not just a sentence but have a story.
- Should be something that potentially impacts people's lives (makes you do something etc.)
- The group reviews and guesses which piece of news is true which isn't. Should make people believe the fake ones. At least 1 true and 1 false. Winner gets a sticker.
- Discussion:
    - which has harmful effects?
    - why, what is the mechanism of the effect?
    - why did we believe it? why not? what makes it work? what are the turning points?
    - who benefits from it working?

Presentation: Disinformation / Misinformation / Urban legend (45 minutes)
Lunch break (30 minutes)

Afternoon session: Preparation for the field visit workshops.
Getting to know Kakucs and Gilvánfa (60 minutes)
- What kind of place is Gilvánfa + Kakucs.
- Video from Bag (third locality of the project where participants collected the stereotypes with the Roma and made a film illustrating that why these stereotypes are untrue and dangerous)
- Q&A
Planning and designing the workshops, presenting the plans (90+30 minutes)
Closure, checkout (30 minutes)

Games from the participatory filmmaking workshops

1. Games for warmup and introduction

1. Introduce your Neighbors!
Players form a circle and introduce themselves to the two people standing next to them, sharing a few basic facts about themselves (shared facts can be personal, professional, related to the topic, etc., according to the actual needs and situation of the group). Once everyone has finished getting acquainted, each person in turn introduces the person to their right, then the person to their left, and finally themselves to the group. This ensures that everyone's name and additional information is heard three times, making it easier to remember and maintaining attention.
WHEN/WHY: This game is best played among strangers, as its purpose is to make introductions and name learning fun.

2. "Shooting" game
Players form a circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle points ("shoots") to someone in the circle and calls their name. The two neighbors of the chosen person must quickly say each other's names. The loser (who is slower, cannot answer, or says the wrong name) switches places with the person in the middle.
WHEN/WHY: The goal of the game is to learn and practice names. It's best played in a group where people have been introduced but are still unsure of each other's names. Since everyone needs to say names quickly, constant attention is required. While the current goal is name learning, this format can be adapted for other themes (for example, say an animal, a cartoon character, etc.), or the person in the middle can also ask a different question in each round from those in the circle.

3. Gossip Game – with words
Players stand in a line, and the first person whispers a sentence to their neighbor, who then whispers it to the next person. The sentence travels down the entire line, likely experiencing distortions along the way.
WHEN/WHY: This activity demonstrates information distortion: how information can become distorted through mishearing or misunderstanding when not obtained from the original source.

4. Gossip Game – with movement
Similarly, to the previous exercise, players stand in a queue, facing one direction, with their backs to the one behind them. The last person in the queue presents a simple set of movements (e.g., pretending brushing teeth, or dance moves, etc.) to the next one, who then presents what they just saw to the next one, and so on. The movement travels down the entire line, likely experiencing distortions along the way. For extra fun, the whole process can be recorded.
WHEN/WHY: This activity demonstrates information distortion: how information can become distorted through misunderstanding or misinterpreting when not obtained from the original source.

5. Gossip game – with video
Form groups of 2-3 people, and all groups except one leave the room. Players create a statue pose and record it on their phone. Then one group joins them and is shown the finished video once. Their task is to recreate the statue pose and video, with only one attempt. Then let each

group in one by one. When everyone has recorded their video, they can watch together how the original statue and video transformed through the participants' interpretations.

WHEN/WHY: The game aims to demonstrate how detailed observation is needed for perfect imitation, how stories can become distorted through multiple retellings, and promotes teamwork. A phone is needed for recording videos.

6. Choose One!

Based on a predetermined theme or question, each participant chooses an object from a shared box in the center that they feel connects to the theme (for example, the theme might be "secrets", but it also might be "me in this group today" or similarly personal). Participants then share with others because they think their chosen object relates to the given theme or phenomenon, or how they relate to the object.

WHEN/WHY: The objects can be a diverse collection of everyday objects (e.g., paper cups, bags, pencils, lighters, straws, bottle caps), but also can be images (e.g., Dixit is often used), or more special objects, can be natural or man-made, similar or very different, small or big. Players don't necessarily need to know each other, and the game can be adapted to various themes. Its purpose can vary but is often used to identify common themes in the group. It also serves to experience how the same objective things mean completely different, for different people. It also develops associative abilities and creativity, while encouraging precise communication.

7. "This Reminds Me Of"

Participants stand in a circle with one person in the middle who begins telling a detailed story. After listening carefully, if anyone in the circle thinks of another story they'd like to share, they replace the person in the middle by interrupting by shouting "This reminds me of..." They continue until someone else interrupts, and so on.

WHEN/WHY: The game aims to show how different stories exist in people's minds that can interconnect at certain points. It works best with at least 8-10 people to keep the game moving with frequent exchanges in the middle.

2. Games to express and share thoughts and identify common themes

1. Scale game (sociometrial preferences)

The facilitator points out a scale, an imaginary line across the room, from very negative through neutral to very positive. Participants line up in front of them, and the facilitator makes various statements, while participants decide how true these statements are for them or how much they agree, positioning themselves accordingly on the appropriate side of the scale. The facilitator can interview participants from one extreme and the other and also from the middle, why they are standing where they are standing.

WHEN/WHY: One purpose of the game is for players to get to know each other better, but also to demonstrate how greatly opinions can differ inside one, possibly seemingly homogenous group. Also, accepting all the differing opinions equally and treating with respect strengthen participants' trust and confidence and encourages them to be honest and open inside the group. The game can be varied and themed through topic selection, with the goal of helping participants better understand each other.

3. Training for teenagers (it was used with classes of vocational school students)

The following exercises aimed to identify and debunk misinformative content.

Participants received some fake news on paper were similar to the real ones in the media.

Examples for discussion:

> 1 According to NASA, life on Earth could soon reach a critical juncture if humanity does not reduce its water consumption to half a litre per person per day.

Discussion starter questions to help you process

- According to NASA does not mean anything without a reference (link or exact reference tot he original publication) of the NASA or other entities.
- Half a litre of water is not enough supply for a human beeing. It is impossible which has to be realized easily.
- This news a typical doomsday content without exact recommendations what should be done. Let's find similar fake news.
- How could you find evidences that this news is not true? Let's do fact checking!

> 2 The words of Jesus were found on a three-thousand-year-old stone tablet that an Israeli farmer's daughter had recently plowed out of the ground. The tablet says that before the end of the world, the Jews and the Philistines will fight a war and destroy a hospital. It is time to think and give power to those who believe in the coming of the one true God.

- The content of this news also makes it hard to believe because the it is excessively correlated with the present Israeli situation relating to the terror attacs. Moreover, mentioning hospital on an old tablet is very unlikely given that hospitals did not exist that time.
- Communication that would give power only to one religious group is in fact exclusionary and not in line with democratic society. This is a typical purpose of disinformative messages.
- Of course, the words of Jesus could hardly have been written on a 3,000-year-old stone tablet. Anyone who recognises this usually gets chocolates at training sessions. ☺
- How could you find evidences that this news is not true? Let's do fact checking!

> 3 In an interview, the *Head of the Institute of Original Hungarians* said that the Hungarians are not related to the Finno-Ugric or the Sumerians, but it can be clearly shown that our people descended from Attila, the Hun and we still carry his genes. Being

descended from the Lord of the World also brings with it a responsibility. It is not for us to chase after Europe, but for us to take the lead. Those who cannot do so disown their ancestors.

- In this news, we see once again the message of exclusion, of a certain group of people being superior.
- The news is a mixture of what appears to be a scientific background (genetics) and a messianic view of history. It assigns power not to merit or elected right, but to descent.
- This news also mobilises, it wants to achieve something in the thinking of the recipient. This is particularly visible when an emotional argument ('disowning one's ancestors') is used in the political space.
- It may also be suspected that such an institution does not exist and it is easy to find out on the internet. (*Anyway, very similar entities establised by the Hungarian government are existing with similar activities.*)
- How could you find evidences that this news is not true? Let's do fact checking!

4 A fight broke out in a german bar yesterday, which ended in a stabbing. The stabbing men were all muslim-looking. This is what happens when foreigners invade our countries. That's all.

- This news is a typical FB post in Hungary. It should be noted that the language of a news item is also important. A news item that contains many grammatical or stylistic errors can hardly have passed the editorial system expected of a medium, i.e. no one has checked its veracity. Both German and Muslim words are in lower case, and the article ends with an uncharacteristic turn of phrase: *That's all*. The difference between news and personal expression is a good illustration of the difference between formal and informal language use. (Note that this is not true of the media in general, but of news, since there are other formats of the media than news: publicity, entertainment.) The text cannot be news because it never appears in a news story as a sloppy wording: 'in a German bar'. If such a sloppy, reference-free designation is encountered, it should be suspect.
- This 'news' is specifically biased against Muslims, i.e. it implies that all people belonging to this group are a risk. The term 'invade' is also used against migration, as it is a negative, hostile verb that threatens the peace of society.
- The term "Muslim-look" is also important. The Muslim religion has no 'look', nor does any other. The 'look' thus suggests a general exclusion of minorities other than the majority, of foreigners.
- How could you find evidences that this news is not true? Let's do fact checking!

5 A famous Hungarian celebrity has crashed his car. The at-fault driver was drunk and on drugs. All that is known is that he has often appeared at anti-government protests. Of course we can't say who he was, but we'd be interested in your tips.

- This news links the social deviance with anti-government opinion. Without anything concrete in this news, it is capable of creating the impression in the reader's mind that anti-government people are clearly drinking alcohol and taking drugs when they drive, breaking all social rules. In other words, a political opinion is coupled with a socially generally condemned form of behaviour, and a negative perception of it is imposed on the politically different opinion.
- The most manipulative part of the text is that it leaves room for conjecture, thus allowing an almost infinite number of anti-government actors to be smeared. The commentators will start the uncontrollable spreading of rumours, not even started by the 'news' provider, of anyone whose name is mentioned.
- How could you find evidences that this news is not true? Let's do fact checking!

4 Interview guide

Very little empirical data is available on disinformation, and information specific to Roma communities is even scarcer.

The project also involved university students, with whom we started to prepare a questionnaire and interview based survey. Data collection will take place after the project period, hopefully in several countries.

Questions about information consumption, habits, perception of, exposure to, and vulnerability towards disinformation

I The position of the respondent and her/his community

- Demographic and socioeconomic information (gender, age, place of residence, marital status, education, labor market status)

- What is your primary identity? (Handing out "identity cards" and choosing them in order of importance can be an option: e.g. man, woman / child, parent, grandchild, grandparent / worker, jobseeker, on welfare, etc. / Roma, non-Roma, Hungarian and Roma, Roma and Hungarian / brave, reserved, outspoken / etc.

- What is the perception of your community in the settlement and surrounding settlements? (They look down on them, envy them, fear them, etc.)

- What is true about it: It plays a central role in the community; participates in making decisions; (s)he is happier when other people do things, he just watches…

- How many people do you meet every day?

- How many people do you have regular contact with…

    - on FB?

    - on Insta?

    - on Tik-Tok?

    - on other platforms (name it)!

- How many friends do you have on these platforms?

- Do you have an email address and do you use it?

- What were your last three acts of communication (with whom? about what?)

- What was your last official (non-private) act of communication? (On what platform, or in person?)

- Do you prefer to be active or passive on these surfaces? (What was the last thing you posted, when? what was the last thing you read and remember its content?)

II   *Media use habits*

- How big is your TV at home? What is on the TV (TV channels, if so, what package, what types of channels are you watching; Internet content)
- When is it turned on and off? Who manages the TV, tunes the channels?

- Please start listing TV channels! [It must be written in the same order as mentioned!]

- How much time do you spend in front of the TV?

- Who in the family watches TV (what, how much?) Do they watch something (what?) together and then discuss what they saw?

- Do you listen to the radio? (What, where, how much?)

- What kind of internet access do you have? On the phone, wired? Data package size? (Does it happen that there is no internet, why?)

- What do you use the internet for? (Social media, news, searches, administration, entertainment... Which site did you visit last? What sites can you name?)

- Do you ever share your opinion on the internet? Where?

- Do you recommend content to others or friends? How (send link, share, draw attention verbally, etc.)?

III   *Literacy and interest*

- Do you follow the news? What kind of news do you pay attention to (sports, politics, entertainment, economy, etc.)?

> - Say at least three news, cases, events about the place where you live (settlement, community) - don't be family related!
>
> - Say at least three news, cases, events related to the country!
>
> - Say at least three news, cases, events from the world!

- How and from whom did you know and hear about these?

- If you wanted to make sure that these news and things were true, what would you do?

- Who are the people whose opinion you listen to? Who do you think listen to your opinion?

- In your opinion, what is the biggest problem (challenge...) of your community, living environment / country / the world right now? Could you do about it, improve the situation? What? If not, why not?

- What would you do (here we are interested in communication activity) if this happened:

> - A very unfavorable rumor about him would spread in the community (town, segregated area) (e.g. he was involved in something criminal)
>
> - They would break into the house where (s)he lives
>
> - Your family would be accused of abusing a bank loan
>
> - Your community would be accused of deliberately not sending their children to school
>
> - *[should be amended by locally relevant examples]*

IV   Worldview, values

- How do you think about these questions:

(*Attitude scales should be applied here that give an idea of one's own perception on their social role and social activity. A set of questions should be used that allows comparison with the results of other research*).

- Who makes the decisions that affect our lives? (Locally, in the settlement, nationally, in the world) Do/Could these have any effect on you? (Asked in order of listing and mention.)

- Can you imagine taking the lead in representing a case? What could be such a case? If you wouldn't take the lead, could you imagine that he would support some initiative?

- What do you currently consider to be the most serious personal / community-local / national / global problem?

- What can be done when an obvious hoax starts to spread on the Internet / by word of mouth in your environment / in your family?

- Has it ever happened that you didn't believe something, didn't trust some news? What did you do then?

- What should happen in order for your situation and that of your community to improve? Who should do what?