

The SocialTruth Project



Embedding Veracity in
Social Media and the Web

Addressing Coronavirus-related news in SocialTruth content verification research

Following the increasing appearance of news related to coronavirus, the SocialTruth consortium initiated on February 4th 2020 a new thread of interlinked activities to address this topic, within the scope of the action. We considered it an important case study, given the many indications for **misinformation and fake information circulated** on this subject.

The SocialTruth consortium has agreed on the following plans to be carried out, with each partner undertaking specific role and activities:

- Partner QWANT (FR) – an independent European Search Engine vendor – will be aggregating **large volumes of datasets** enriched with metadata that will be useful to assess credibility levels. Our plan is, first, to make available Coronavirus-related Tweets and News Feeds to be used by SocialTruth partners for **misinformation analysis** and for preparing and validating computer **algorithms for identifying fake news**. Furthermore, these training and validation datasets can also be made **available to EU researchers and R&D**

projects via the SOMA CSA. The option to deploy datasets from SocialTruth via SOMA has been discussed earlier during the plenary cluster discussions.

- As a Media Group, Partner ADNKRONOS (IT) will contribute to the **dissemination** of verified news and information on Coronavirus. Adnkronos has developed an RSS feed on Coronavirus-related news and it is available free of charge here: https://www.adnkronos.com/RSS_Coronavirus.xml

The partner informed that: *"Adnkronos have been working for years daily, to ensure the quality of the news in such a delicate area as the health and well-being of people. So, in a time of difficulty for the whole country, institutions, businesses and citizens, we have considered the dissemination of qualified information on the current emergency of fundamental importance, through an operation aimed at the maximum diffusion of the most relevant news for the readers"*.

- Misinformation based on **content taken out-of-context**: As partners TECOMS (IT) and LSBU (UK) have pointed out, one of the biggest problems (that occurred especially during the beginning of this crisis) is the spread of photos allegedly coming from China and showing sick people in the streets (later proved to be photos from other times and/or locations). For this reason, a priority would be to build a verification service able to designate those inconsistencies, for example by detecting if part of the content (such as the photos) inside a news article has already been on the internet for some time and with metadata referable to other contexts."

- Accelerate the development – by QWANT (FR) and ICCS (GR) – of the **Digital Companion**, designed as a browser plugin for checking fake news, and prepare a short video to present it. As consumer organization, INFOCONS (RO) can in turn use the Digital Companion demonstration, together with information about food waste, to correctly and **responsibly inform** citizens about the effects of fake news related to Covid-19.

- Accelerate the publication of a questionnaire to study **citizens' behaviour towards false data**, posting it on the project website (in English language). As extensively discussed within the consortium, and as highlighted by InfoCons (RO), misinformation on Coronavirus already causes **economic harm** to the European citizen. For example, due to the economic speculation, the Romanian Government has been forced to regulate, for a period of 3 to 6 months, the price of all medical protective equipment and materials against Covid-19 that are sold to the population.

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SocialTruth is moving on to the

implementation phase of its engine and is approaching the first test version

After a preliminary analysis that led to establish the functional requirements of the system, the technological architecture, ethic requirements and journalistic use cases, **SocialTruth is now entering the prototyping phase and getting closer to the first test release.**

We are proud to spread information throughout Europe on the state of our project!

Here are some of the press clippings.

- **MEDIA – LANGUAGE (COUNTRY)**

- [Yahoo Finance](#) – ENG
- [Palo News](#) – GR
- [La Repubblica](#) – ITA
- [Notre Siecle](#) – FR
- [IT News online](#) – ENG
- [TechFruit](#) – ENG
- [Finanzen.Ch](#) – ENG (*SUI*)
- [Money](#) – ENG
- [Media Key](#) – ITA
- [Picante](#) – ENG (*ROM*)
- [Wall Street online De](#) – DE
- [Market Watch](#) – ENG
- [Innovando.biz](#) – ESP
- [Adnkronos](#) – ENG
- [PrNewsWire](#) – POL
- [Trend on line](#) – ITA

You will find the complete press clippings in here: [browsable format](#) / [PDF format](#) (note that note that both in the browsable version and in pdf, you can click on the image to see the page).

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Funded by the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme,

SocialTruth will benefit individual users, by checking the reliability of Social Media content and stopping misinformation in its tracks, and will help media organisations, content authors and journalists to improve their investigative resources with a better option to crosscheck different multimedia sources and **create a more sustainable quality and security-oriented web and social media ecosystem.**

The functionalities of SocialTruth will be tested and assessed in four hands-on trials in different European sites and settings, addressing a wide range of end-users, use cases and market requirements, and in 2021, after 3 years of efforts and tests, it will be made available to the wide community.

SocialTruth's consortium includes:

- 3 partners from the world of research and university: **ICCS** – Institute of Communications and Computer Systems; **UTP**-University of Sciences and Technology; **LSBU**-London South Bank University;
- 5 industrial and commercial partners: **Thales; Expert System, Qwant, Tecoms, Zanasi&Partner;**
- 3 end-users as facilitators for an early implementation of the system: **Adnkronos; DeAgostini Scuola; InfoCons** – from **6 different European countries**, namely Greece, Poland, France, Italy, Romania and the UK.

Stay updated: visit our web site www.socialtruth.eu

