



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## What is False Information/Fake News?

Lots of things you read online especially in your social media feeds may appear to be true, often is not.

**False information is news, stories or hoaxes created to deliberately misinform or deceive readers.**

Usually, these stories are created to either influence people's views, push a political agenda or cause confusion and can often be a profitable business for online publishers. False information can deceive people by looking like trusted websites or using similar names and web addresses to reputable news organisations.

## How to spot False Information?

There are a number of things to watch out for when evaluating content online.

### 1. Take a closer look

Check the source of the story, do you recognise the website? Is it a credible/reliable source? If you are unfamiliar with the site, look in the about section or find out more information about the author.

### 2. Look beyond the headline

Check the entire article, many fake news stories use sensationalist or shocking headlines to grab attention. Often the headlines of fake news stories are in all caps and use exclamation points.

### 3. Check other sources

Are other reputable news/media outlets reporting on the story? Are there any sources in the story? If so, check they are reliable or if they even exist!

### 4. Check the facts

Stories with false information often contain incorrect dates or altered timelines. It is also a good idea to check when the article was published, is it current or an old news story?

### 5. Check your biases

Are your own views or beliefs affecting your judgement of a news feature or report?

### 6. Is it a joke?

Satirical sites are popular online and sometimes it is not always clear whether a story is just a joke or parody... Check the website, is it known for satire or creating funny stories?