



# DIGIRES

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D2.2. Report on disinformation disclosure  
methodology development

## D2.2. Report on disinformation disclosure methodology development

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2 <sup>nd</sup> version	January 31, 2023	Aistė Meidutė Ieva Ivanauskaitė Brigita Sabaliauskaitė	Different sections of the text were reviewed, and conceptual links with other reports, such as the Deliverables <b>D2.2. Report on disinformation disclosure methodology development, D.1.1. Sustainability action plan (SAP), D3.6. Report on media literacy assessment, campaign and events</b> were identified and relevant information was added.
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## Executive Summary

In the framework of the task D2.1 of the project DIGIRES, the disinformation disclosure methodology used by the fact-checking unit of the news portal Delfi Lithuania 'Melo detektorius' (eng. Lie Detector) was used. 'Melo detektorius' is a professional fact-checking unit established in 2018 in response to the need to strengthen the role of professional media in the fight against disinformation. Since 2019, 'Melo detektorius' has become a signatory of the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) Code of Practice, demonstrating that its disinformation disclosure methodology and its commitment to transparency are in line with the highest standards for this type of organisation.

The editorial team of 'Melo detektorius' understands that the methodology used to verify information cannot be inert and must evolve in line with the development of technologies related to the detection and disclosure of disinformation, which is why the methodologies used are continuously reviewed and updated in cooperation with other organisations and through the sharing of best practices.

Throughout the DIGIRES project, the information verified by the 'Melo detektorius' was shared on the project website, informing readers about the most widespread narratives of disinformation and revealing the process by which the fact-checkers uncovered the truth.

During training sessions for regional journalists, VMU students and meetings with foreign experts and focus groups the methodology used by the 'Melo detektorius' and the most popular information verification tools were disclosed. In order to share best practices with other organisations, 'Melo detektorius' joined the European Fact-Checking Standards Network (EFCSN) working group, where it contributed to the development of a professional integrity code that unites European fact-checking organisations.

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## 1. Introduction

Although fact-checking as a distinct field of journalism has only been around for just over 20 years, in that time it has grown to 386 active and 131 inactive fact-checking organisations and initiatives around the world, operating in 69 different languages on 6 continents. In Europe alone, there are currently 110 such initiatives<sup>1</sup>.

Given the extremely rapid growth in the number of fact-checking organisations and initiatives, their wide geographical and linguistic coverage, and their core mission of ensuring transparency, credibility and the most accurate possible factual material, it is more important than ever to ensure the existence of common methodologies and verification tools that are freely available to all organisations.

In this context, the IFCN, founded by the Poynter Institute in 2015, which now connects 86 different fact-checking communities around the world, has played a major role. The IFCN's overarching mission is to ensure that all signatory initiatives conduct fact-checking with the same quality standards, have their own methodologies based on clear arguments and uphold the universal values of independent, credible and transparent journalism.

In 2023, EFCSN, another organisation uniting fact-checking communities, is launching its activities with the aim of promoting a code of professionalism for fact-checking organisations on the European continent based on the highest standards.

In the following sections, we will reveal how the Delfi Lietuva fact-checking initiative 'Melo detektorius' contributed to the values promoted by these organisations within the framework of the DIGIRES project, which methodology was followed and which verification tools were used, and how these methodologies and tools were presented to the target groups in focused training sessions.

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<sup>1</sup> Current and historical counts in this report are from the global database maintained by the Duke Reporters' Lab at Duke University in Durham, NC, in the United States.

## 2. Disinformation detection and claim verification strategy

Since the launch of 'Melo detektorius' in 2018, the initiative has followed a standard methodology for verifying information, which is publicly available on the initiative's website and is used for selecting, verifying and presenting claims to readers in both Lithuanian and Russian<sup>2</sup>. In 2019, 'Melo detektorius' became an IFCN signatory, an achievement that confirms that the methodology used by the initiative meets the highest standards for this type of organisation.

According to the methodology developed by 'Melo detektorius', the process of verifying a claim consists of three key elements:

1. The selection of the claim to be verified;
2. The journalistic investigation;
3. Evaluation and presentation of results.

The criteria and strategy used for each of these steps are outlined below.

### Claim selection

The claim to be verified can be found using different methods:

1. Using automated applications and tools to detect potential misinformation and disinformation;
2. Manual searches on websites and social networks executed by professional fact-checkers;
3. Using readers' suggestions submitted by email on the 'Melo detektorius' Facebook account<sup>3</sup>; via a special form 'Siųsk faktą' (report a fact) on the Delfi's Lie Detector's website<sup>4</sup> and by the direct submissions on the DIGIRES website special Rapid Responses area 'Pranešti' (to notify)<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.delfi.lt/news/melo-detektorius/?page=metodologija>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/DELFIEMeloDetektorius>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.delfi.lt/news/melo-detektorius/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://digires.lt/praneskite-apie-dezinformacija>.

Each of these ways of detecting a claim to be verified requires the professional expertise of a verification specialist, as the final decision on whether a claim is worth verifying is always taken by the fact-checker.

Most of the verified facts on the ‘Melo detektorius’ are selected for verification using the second strategy – manual searches on websites and social networks. Despite the existence of automated solutions and attempts to develop more advanced forms of machine assisted false information analyses<sup>6</sup> as well as the possibility for readers to collaborate with the editorial team, this method usually proves to be the fastest and most efficient.

As far as automatic tools for detecting disinformation are concerned, it is important to mention the following: the suspicious content detection tool developed by the Debunk.eu, as well as the social network analysis platforms, which allow the selection of relevant hashtags and keywords to be used to filter the information contained in different platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Telegram.

One of the first steps taken by Delfi Lietuva in the direction of combating disinformation was the launch of Debunk.eu (English version) or Demaskuok.lt (Lithuanian version) in 2017. This initiative aimed to unite experts from different fields for a common goal – to fight disinformation. A disinformation detection tool based on machine learning has been developed as part of the project. The tool allowed for faster identification of potentially manipulative content and subsequent deconstruction through journalistic investigation. The results were posted in text format on a dedicated project subpage on the Delfi portal<sup>7</sup>.

The tool developed within the Debunk.eu project showed the potential of similar automated tools and the need for their development, but also highlighted existing gaps. In particular, the solution worked much better with Russian content, while the filtering of Lithuanian content often gave false results.

As pointed out in **D2.1. Report on disinformation detection methodology development**, the development of similar tools for morphologically complex languages such as Lithuanian is challenging and requires a large amount of data and human resources, while tools developed for morphologically uncomplicated languages, such as English, are not efficiently scalable to the Lithuanian language.

For this reason, after the launch of the ‘Melo detektorius’ in 2018, which initially set out to check the statements of Lithuanian politicians and public figures on topics of interest to the

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<sup>6</sup> See Deliverable **D2.1. Report on disinformation detection methodology development**.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/demaskuok/>



Lithuanian audience, it was decided to discontinue the use of the tool developed by Debunk.eu. Instead, the Debunk.eu tool was used to analyse disinformation narratives as part of a separate project, and the search for statements to be verified in the 'Melo detektorius' was continued manually, with journalists tracking the information space and making judgements about the prevalence, relevance, and potential harm to the public of a statement.

'Melo detektorius' also uses social media monitoring platforms, such as Crowdtangle and NewsWhip for analysing information on Facebook and Twitter, or Telegago, a dedicated Telegram search platform, to track social media trends and monitor problematic groups or public figures who repeatedly spread misinformation and disinformation. The use of these tools speeds up searches on social networks and sometimes helps to detect the most relevant cases of disinformation, but also has limitations: for example, Crowdtangle's search function only allows for the analysis of material on Facebook groups or pages, but there is no possibility of searching private profiles, even if they contain public content, and it is often these profiles that are used to publish disinformation in a partisan manner, some of which have developed a large followers base.

Thus, there is no automated disinformation detection solution on the market that is fully applicable to the analysis of content in Lithuanian. However, on the duration of DIGIRES project five datasets in Lithuanian language were created to use in research whose main aim is to develop a tool for false news detection. All solutions proposed in the aforementioned report<sup>8</sup> were connected to a framework, that is a single predictive model to recognize fake news. However, due to the complexity of the task the proposed prototype would still require the expertise of professional fact-checkers and analysts to properly assess proposed disinformation cases.

This expertise is also necessary for the evaluation of claims made by readers. The Lie Detector supports open, transparent and inclusive journalism and encourages readers to report content that raises suspicions about the reliability of information. Currently, the following channels are available for reporting information. Any suggestions received from readers to verify the statements sent are analysed and the reader who sent the message is informed within 24 hours whether the statement he or she sent can be subject to fact-checking.

The criteria used to assess reader submissions are the same as those used for other types of claim detection, taking into account the relevance of the topic, its prevalence, the public interest and the potential harm it could cause to the public if disseminated and not refuted.

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<sup>8</sup> See Deliverable **D2.1. Report on NLP/DL/ML based disinformation detection methodology development.**

For more detailed guidance on what constitutes a verifiable claim and what does not, please refer to the 'Melo detektorius' methodology.

## Journalistic investigation

Once a verifiable claim has been selected, the fact-checker can move on to the next step - journalistic investigation. This step requires the most specific knowledge and preparation on the part of the journalist. To carry out the journalistic investigation, the fact-checker will use the following tools, depending on the best strategy for the analysis of the specific case:

1. Manual text searches on the Internet and social networks;
2. Website monitoring tools;
3. Specialised websites and databases;
4. Social network analysis tools;
5. Commentaries by experts in the field;
6. Specific information verification tools.

The type of content to be analysed usually determines the choice of the appropriate strategy. Whether the analysis is limited to textual material, such as an article on a website that has raised suspicions about the reliability of the information, or to an image or a video, will determine the type of investigative journalism chosen.

## Textual information verification

For such content, manual text searches on the Internet and social networks using a *Lateral reading* approach are most likely to be used. Lateral reading<sup>9</sup> is a method of information retrieval commonly used by journalists and fact-checkers, whereby, when analysing a single source, the journalist opens new browser windows in which he or she searches in parallel for information about that source, in order to make the best possible assessment of the information it contains. By using this particular approach of lateral reading, the deeper levels of enquiring, analysis and learning are activated, hence this strategy can be performed also by the citizens to become more attentive to nuanced details (headings, metaphors, data, names, places, mistakes, etc.) of online texts or visuals. With DIGIRES approach to information source verification, we believe that by equipping citizens with the right tools and

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<sup>9</sup> <https://newslit.org/tips-tools/expand-your-view-with-lateral-reading/>

knowledge<sup>10</sup>, we can help ensure that at least some of the negative implications of disinformation can be minimized.

Furthermore, for the textual content analysis, it is also advisable to use platforms such as Media Bias/Fact Check, which provide more information on the credibility and objectivity of the content on a given website. If a website cannot be detected on the Media Bias/Fact Check platform, then tools such as who.is or infowebstats.com can be used to analyse the URL, to help determine when a particular website was created, who owns it, and in which country it is registered.

Specialised websites and databases hosting information on a specific topic can also be used for text analysis. This category includes both websites created by enthusiasts in a specific field and encyclopaedia-type databases such as the International Encyclopedia of Uniform Insignia, which contains information on the uniforms and insignia of the world's armies, or worldlicenseplates.com, which provides information on car number plates used in different countries, or specialised websites set up by experts, such as the Health Desk initiative, where public health experts answer questions on health topics from fact-checkers and journalists online.

Specialised databases also include databases set up by fact-checking initiatives, whose existence is particularly useful in countries where much of the misinformation comes "late", such as Lithuania, where much of the misleading content is disseminated from foreign sources, i.e. first disinformation is spread in the more commonly used major languages, English or Russian, and then later amplified and translated into smaller languages such as Lithuanian. The creation of databases such as the #CoronaVirusFactsAlliance or #UkraineFacts, initiated by the IFCN, helps to trace whether or not certain cases of misinformation have been seen before in other countries, and provides important data on the recurrence of certain claims and the actual spread of certain claims in different parts of the world.

'Melo detektorius' recognises the effectiveness and necessity of such databases and has contributed to both #CoronaVirusFactsAlliance and #UkraineFacts projects.

Another tool that can be used to analyse textual material is the social network analysis tools already discussed in the "Claim selection" section. With regard to social network analysis platforms, it is important to note their importance and necessity, but also to highlight the fact mentioned at the panel discussion "Zoom on De Facto, european project, member of the

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<sup>10</sup> Some of the essential tips and authentic methodology of fact-checking and source verification are disclosed in the DIGIRES MIL ToolKit 'Media Literacy without the Myths: Fact-checker's Recipes' (Medijų raštingumas be mitų: faktų tikrintojo receptai), which is publicly accessible on <http://digires.lt> (also, see Deliverable **D3.6. Report on media literacy assessment, campaign and events**).

EDMO network" organised on 26 January 2023 and held at the Maison des Journalistes in Paris, that these analytical tools have not been specifically designed for fact-checking and disinformation detection, but are rather marketing analysis tools, and that, although it is possible to adapt them to the specific function of analysing and detecting disinformation, journalists are faced with a number of limitations and a lack of functionality.

Social networks are widely recognised as a particularly favourable medium for the spread of disinformation due to the huge data flows, the large amount of user-generated content and the loose control mechanisms, and it is therefore particularly important to pay attention to the design and development of adequate tools to analyse such platforms that can be fully adapted to the mission of the fight against misinformation.

Another tool for checking textual material can be independent expert commentary. Ideally, expert commentary should be used in conjunction with other supporting arguments, such as scientific research results and other primary sources chosen according to the topic of the claim analysed, to substantiate the claims made by the expert. As the 'Melo detektorius' is a fact-checking unit within a larger media organisation, the fact-checkers draw on the editorial expertise of the editorial team to select suitable experts and interview those experts whose professionalism has been proven in the preparation of articles for other Delfi columns.

Briefly, the experience of DIGIRES fact-checkers highlights the need to develop suitable tools that can identify and assess the credibility of information published or shared on the Internet (be it static texts or dialogic, i.e. social media, posts). As shown, fact-checking is a process that is highly dependent on the knowhow of the fact-checker and the tradition and editorial policies of the newsroom. The practical approaches include both automatic and manual strategies, but none of these is currently sufficient to reach the required accuracy of decisions made. Hence, further research is needed to improve the accuracy and effectiveness of both methodologies – that of automatic and machine-based examination of large amounts of online texts<sup>11</sup>, and that of evidence-informed<sup>12</sup> learnings and reflections about the individual procedures used in the fact-checking process.

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<sup>11</sup> See Deliverable **D2.1. Report on disinformation detection methodology development.**

<sup>12</sup> Some of the essential tips and authentic methodology of fact-checking and source verification are disclosed in the DIGIRES MIL ToolKit 'Media Literacy without the Myths: Fact-checker's Recipes' (Medijų raštingumas be mitų: faktų tikrintojo receptai), which is publicly accessible on <http://digires.lt> (also, see Deliverable **D3.6. Report on media literacy assessment, campaign and events**).

## Visual information verification

While disinformation in the form of text is not losing popularity and is often used to convey false claims, there is an increasing use of visual content for manipulation. In particular, amateur images and videos created by internet users are often used, which are more difficult to trace due to the poor quality of the recordings.

While the tools listed in the section "Textual information verification" can be used to verify images and videos, the use of specific information verification tools is the most beneficial for the initial verification of such content.

Some of the most widely used tools for image and video verification are the "Reverse Image Search" function and the "InVID We Verify" browser plugin, which has been developed specifically for the needs of fact checkers and journalists. The first functionality of "Reverse Image Search" is also included in the list of functionalities of the "InVID We Verify" browser plug-in, so we will discuss these two tools together.

"The InVID We Verify" plugin has been specifically designed to verify images and videos on the Internet. This free and publicly available plugin allows users to perform a "Reverse Image Search" on different web search engines at the same time and thus find out when the image was first used, what its original source is and in which contexts it was used. The reverse image search functions of "Google Lens" and "Yandex" provide the most accurate results for image verification. The former can be applied on a wider scale, but may not give the desired results in specific cases where lower resolution images are analysed. In contrast, the "Yandex" image search function is better suited to specific tasks, such as identification of people in images.

Other features of the plug-in can be used for a deeper analysis of the image, such as optical character recognition, which helps to identify the foreign-language writing on the image and translate it into a language known to the fact checker. Meanwhile, the forensic analysis function allows users to assess whether the image has been digitally altered, for example by photo editing software. Although the information provided by this function cannot be relied upon blindly and must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, the data generated by forensic analysis can provide additional evidence that an image has been falsified.

In addition to these features, the "InVID We Verify" plugin is particularly useful for image verification. One of the most widely applicable features of the plugin, "Keyframes", allows users to split selected videos into individual frames and do the reverse image search with each of them. This makes it easy to discover in which contexts the same video has been used, what events or people are depicted in it, and when it came online. The "InVID We Verify" plugin can also reveal the metadata of videos hosted on the Youtube platform, which can be used to analyse the recording.

The developers of "InVID We Verify" are constantly updating the tool with new features useful for fact-checkers, which is why it is important to keep up to date with the developers' training. The Delfi Lie Detector team has participated in "InVID We Verify" training organised by Bellingcat, EDMO and the developers of the tool multiple times, and continuously follow the schedules of the new trainings in order to keep their knowledge up-to-date.

## **Evaluation and presentation of results**

The final step in the claim verification process is the evaluation and presentation of the results to the readers. The implementation of this step is defined in the 'Melo detektorius' methodology.

Firstly, the fact-checker who carried out the investigation summarises the results obtained and, on the basis of these results, draws conclusions about the credibility of the verified claim and reveals the correct information. Fact-checker must allow the evidence obtained in the course of the investigation to dictate the conclusions and may not rely on his or her own subjective opinion.

When the information from the investigation is summarised, the results shall be presented to the readers in text form in clear and understandable language. The results obtained must be presented in such a way that the reader is able to replicate the process of verifying the claim. To this end, the text shall use active references and a list of sources. The list of sources shall include all primary and secondary sources used, including expert commentary and the manner in which they were obtained. 'Melo detektorius' shall not rely on anonymous sources for the purpose of verifying a claim, unless the source cannot be named because naming the source would put the source at real risk.

A standard 'Melo detektorius' article consists of a short headline, the claim being verified, immediately followed by a short verdict identifying the key findings of the investigation, and finally the largest block of text, the 'Melo detektorius' comment. It gives the full process of the verification of the claim, with more detailed context. Each verified claim is concluded with a list of sources. This structure of the verified fact was not chosen by accident. The arrangement of the parts provides the reader with the essential information in the shortest possible time - the person visiting the website immediately sees the fact under analysis and the brief conclusions as to why the information contained therein is incorrect.

## 3. Sharing of authentic knowledge and expertise

'Melo detektorius' has a policy of openness and transparency and, as part of the DIGIRES project, has shared its experience in implementing the methodology and knowledge of tools to help perform basic fact-checking with various target groups as well as informed society on the most impactful disinformation narratives spreaded online via DIGIRES website.

### Dissemination of fact-checks through DIGIRES website

Throughout the DIGIRES project, the 'Verified Facts' section on the project website was regularly updated. A total of 122 claims verified by professional fact-checkers, reflecting the 'Melo detektorius' methodology discussed above, were posted on the website by 31 January 2023<sup>13</sup>. This section was dedicated to deconstructing the disinformation stories that attracted the most public interest, taking into account their relevance at the time of publication and their potential to harm. Each case was thoroughly studied and the reports presented show the underlying evidence.

### Training to media outlets

The importance of the IFCN principles for the global fact-checking community, practical examples of their application, as well as the best fact-checking tools and their applicability to journalistic work were highlighted during a training session for regional media. The online training took place between March and April 2022. In two sessions, DIGIRES Project Coordinator Prof. Aukse Balčytienė, Delfi Lietuva head of business development Ieva Ivanauskaitė, IFCN Community Impact Leader Enock Nyariki, editor and lead fact-checker of 'Melo detektorius' Aistė Meidutė and a speaker from the Strategic Communications Department of the Lithuanian Armed Forces Konstantinas Rečko all shared their experiences and insights relevant to the topic. For more detailed information on the content of the training and the involvement of regional journalists in the learning process, please refer to the Deliverable **D3.5 Report on training to media outlets**.

### Working sessions with mixed foreign experts groups

Exposing disinformation as a distinct field of journalism and the methodologies used to do so are globally relevant. As the introduction to this report notes, the number of fact-checking

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<sup>13</sup> [https://digires.lt/#patikrinti\\_faktai](https://digires.lt/#patikrinti_faktai)

initiatives grows every year, making it more important than ever to share our methodologies with emerging organisations and to absorb the experiences of initiatives with a long tradition of information verification.

DIGIRES considers disclosure of fact-checking methodologies as its core strategy<sup>14</sup>. Familiarity with fact-checking tools and techniques is vitally important to different stakeholder groups, but especially to youth educators, seniors, also different professional groups, who could use the disclosed methodologies in media literacy and digital skills development.

In response to the need to explain the methodology used by fact-checkers to a wider audience, Melo detektorius participated in The Faces of Diversity project that consisted of one training for youth workers on the topics of media literacy, minority rights, related issues, and tolerance held in Trnava, Slovakia in May 2022<sup>15</sup>. During one of the training sessions, Aistė Meidutė, editor of 'Melo detektorius', talked about the most common forms of information disorders, the work of fact-checking organisations and the most popular tools for verifying and archiving information. During the training session, participants were given examples of how to use tools freely available on the internet to check the credibility of websites and find the original source of images or videos.

Following the announcement in Spring 2022 of the European fact-checking organization's efforts to create a new professionalism code that would unite similar organisations under the name of EFCSN, Aistė Meidutė joined the working group<sup>16</sup> to develop the code, where together with other fact-checking experts from different European fact-checking organisations, she shared best practices and helped to define the standards of professionalism and integrity that organisations wishing to join the EFCSN will aim for. Discussions on the professional standards to be met by FCOs took place mainly during the live meetings between the project's consortium and the working group in Oslo in June 2022.

In August 2022, the DIGIRES team Auksė Balčytienė, Ieva Ivanauskaitė and Aistė Meidutė took part in a meeting organised by the non-profit organisation Active Youth with a group of youth from Georgia, where DIGIRES achievements in the popularization of fact-checking methodologies and trainings to stakeholders were revealed. Another meeting with a mixed group of young professionals and students from 9 countries took place in October 2022 during

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<sup>14</sup> See Deliverable **D.1.1. Sustainability action plan**.

<sup>15</sup> <https://europskydialog.eu/2022/06/12/faces-of-diversity-trnava-2022>

<sup>16</sup> See under section 'Kurs vieningą profesinio integralumo kodą' in <https://www.delfi.lt/m360/naujausi-straipsniai/delfi-melo-detektoriuje-didesnis-demesys-melagienoms-is-rusijos-ir-baltarusijos.d?id=89781851>



the International Journalism Laboratory programme organised by the DIGIRES partner NGO Media4Change. During the programme in Antalieptė, Aistė Meidutė led one training session, where she discussed the most common ways of distorting information and shared practical tips on how to use open sources to analyse different cases of disinformation.

## **Trainings to Vytautas Magnus University students**

A special 12 academic hours training module was designed and tested with the 3<sup>rd</sup> year Communications students from the Public Communications bachelor's program at Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas in which trainings of influencers took place on October 12-16 with special attention to information verification tools, pitfalls of prejudices and disinformation narratives. Fact-checker Aistė Meidutė participated in the event sharing her insights on the information verification practice and the best methodologies used to disclose disinformation<sup>17</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> For more detailed information on the content of the training and the involvement of students, please refer to Deliverable **D3.6. Report on MIL assessment campaign and events.**

## 4. Conclusion and a way forward

The DIGIRES project has made a significant contribution in increasing the awareness of the fact-checking actions in Lithuania. All the organized trainings and advocacy campaigns have assured that the highest interest among the different stakeholder groups in fact-checking and information source verification techniques was attained.

Briefly, the diverse activities where DIGIRES and ‘Melo detektorius’ fact-checkers were involved (participation in trainings, public speaking in national and international sessions, panel discussions, interviews, focus groups, writing of different assignments, etc.) were also extremely useful to reflect on gained experiences from daily professional routines. All these activities assisted in developing authentic fact-checking methodologies, which later were disclosed in different writings and other kinds of undertakings<sup>18</sup>.

Moving forward, the DIGIRES project has made a significant input in the field of digital resilience development in Lithuania (and also in the broader **Baltic countries** region<sup>19</sup>), and these activities must be continued to sustain the stakeholders’ interest in both – freely available technological instruments, and authentic methodologies developed by the DIGIRES professionals (working at the Delfi’s ‘Melo detektorius’).

Furthermore, we must and will continue investing into research, communication, and advocacy campaigns<sup>20</sup> to sustain the acquired knowledge among the public about the significance of journalism for providing accurate and trustworthy news.

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<sup>18</sup> DIGIRES team has developed a number of products (printed materials, video products, text-based resources of false information to be analyzed in trainings) specifically focussed to assist the learners. We consider one of these products – MIL ToolKit ‘Media Literacy without the Myths: Fact-checker’s Recipes’ (Medijų raštingumas be mitų: faktų tikrintojo receptai), which is publicly accessible on <http://digires.lt> – as being of exceptional significance in making fact-checking a practically applicable endeavour (see Deliverable **D3.6. Report on media literacy assessment, campaign and events**).

<sup>19</sup> Since December 2022, DIGIRES association is expanding activities into the **BECID (Baltic Engagement Center for Combatting Information Disorders)**, <https://becid.ut.ee>) Hub, i.e. the partnerings with research, media and MIL institutions in Latvia and Estonia.

<sup>20</sup> See Deliverable **D.1.1. Sustainability action plan**.