

Half of Romanians believe exposed to fake news; 52% indicate TV channels (INSCOP survey)

Over 50% of Romanians believe that they have been exposed over the last months to fake news or misinformation, and 52.6% consider that TV channels are the information channels most exposed to misinformation and the spread of fake news, according to a survey conducted by INSCOP.

Asked to what extent they believe they have been exposed in recent months to fake news or misinformation on various channels (TV, news sites, Facebook), 50.1% answered in the affirmative (25.7% to a very large extent, and 24.4% to a large extent), while 45.6% answered in the negative (19.3% to a small extent, and 26.3% to a very small extent or not at all).

Regarding the information channels most exposed to misinformation and the spread of fake news, 52.6% indicated TV channels; 34.9% social media (Facebook, Instagram, Tik-Tok); 4.4% newspapers and magazines; 2.3% radio stations.

The only age group that believes social media are most exposed to misinformation were young people in the 18-29 age group. The other age groups indicated TV channels first of all, with the highest percentage being recorded in the age group over 60 years old. By educational attainment, only those with a higher education background said social media are more exposed to the spread of fake news.

As many as 74.4% of the respondents say the voting options of the Romanians are 74.4% affected by misinformation and fake news.

Regarding countries or organisations that support propaganda and the spread of fake news: 25.2% indicated Russia, 13.8% - the European Union, 12.2% - China, 8% - Hungary, 7.9% - the USA, 3.5% - Germany.

As many as 72.7% were of the opinion that Romania still has to recover in many areas compared to the Western states, but culturally it is superior to most of them.

"Sociological data from June 2021 confirm the conclusions of the March 2021 survey, showing that at least half of Romanians are aware that they have been personally exposed in recent months to fake news or misinformation on various channels (TV, news sites, Facebook). Also, a little over half believe that the most exposed channels for misinformation are TV channels, followed by social media, but with significant differences in perception between young people, who consider social media to be a more exposed environment to misinformation, and the elderly who indicate television channels. This type of perception is also influenced by the fact that TV channels are still the main source of information for the majority of the population, against which it is remarkable that three quarters of the population believe that Romanians' voting options are affected by misinformation and fake news," according to Chairman of the Strategic Thinking Group Remus Stefureac.

The opinion poll "Public distrust: West vs. East, the rise of the nationalist current in the age of misinformation and fake news" - Part II was conducted by INSCOP Research in partnership with Verifield, commissioned by the STRATEGIC Thinking Group think tank as part of a research project supported by The German Marshall Fund of the United States and funded by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Co-operation under the True Story Project.

The data were collected between June 1-15 through a questionnaire in telephone interviews. The volume of the multistage stratified sample was 1,100 people, representative by significant socio-demographic categories (sex, age, occupation) for the non-institutionalised population of Romania, aged 18 and over. The maximum allowed

data error is a 2.95%, for a confidence level of 95%.