



European citizenship, fake news, cyberviolence, attention economy & ethics

TABLE OF CONTENT

03

VOICES BEHIND DIGIDEM

04

THE DIGIDEM PROJECT

05

EUROPEAN DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

06

FAKE NEWS

07

HATE SPEECH & VIOLENCE

08

ATTENTION ECONOMY

09

DIGITAL ETHICS



VOICES BEHIND DIGIDEM

Together, we are building
the foundations of a
digital democracy where
every voice counts.

The DIGIDEM project brings together a vibrant and committed network of researchers, educators, practitioners and civic actors across Europe who share a common goal: to strengthen democratic participation through the critical, ethical and inclusive use of digital technologies. At the crossroads of digital citizenship, media literacy, online safety and civic engagement, DIGIDEM addresses some of the most urgent challenges of our time — from disinformation and hate speech to the ethical governance of algorithms and the attention economy.

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THE DIGIDEM PROJECT

DIGIDEM empowers citizens to shape democracy through ethical, inclusive, and critical use of digital technologies.

WHAT IS DIGIDEM ?

DIGIDEM (short for *Digital Democracy*) is a European cooperation project that aims to strengthen democratic participation through inclusive, ethical and critical use of digital technologies.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

1. Promote digital citizenship by enabling individuals to exercise their rights and responsibilities online;
2. Combat disinformation and hate speeches through education, factchecking and critical thinking;
3. Enhance digital literacy and civic engagement, especially among young people;
4. Foster ethical digital governance, transparency and the responsible use of algorithms and data;
5. Build inclusive tools and platforms that encourage participatory democracy

WHAT DOES DIGIDEM DO ?

- Creates educational resources and gamified learning tools to engage young citizens;
- Develops a collaborative platform, *NetizenSphere*, to facilitate civic digital participation;
- Supports initiatives in partner countries to address local and European challenges;
- Organises workshops, trainings and campaigns to promote media literacy, digital ethics and safe online spaces.

In a digital world, young people face risks like disinformation, polarisation and cyberviolence. DIGIDEM equips them with the tools and knowledge to participate safely and inclusively online.

WHO IS INVOLVED ?

DIGIDEM brings together a diverse network of organisations from six European countries including universities, NGOs, civic platforms and educational institutions:

- France: Université Clermont Auvergne (UCA) and Les Militants des Savoirs (MDS);
- Italy: Università della Calabria (UNICAL);
- Portugal: Innovative Prison System (IPS);
- Türkiye: Sustainable Education and Health Academy (SEHA);
- Malta: University of Malta (UM);
- Luxembourg: Insight S.A.



EUROPEAN DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

Exercising citizenship today means engaging in online debates, claiming digital rights and shaping more participatory democracy.

DEFINITION

Digital citizenship refers to citizens' ability to use technologies critically, responsibly and participatively in digital spaces, while exercising their rights and responsibilities within a digital democracy.

DIGIDEM PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The DIGIDEM project aims to strengthen digital skills, particularly among young people and marginalised communities, by equipping them with the tools they need to navigate the digital world safely and confidently. It also seeks to promote active and inclusive participation in democratic life by leveraging the potential of digital technologies to give citizens a voice. DIGIDEM is developing a collaborative digital platform, NetizenSphere, designed to foster civic engagement in line with the core values of the EU.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

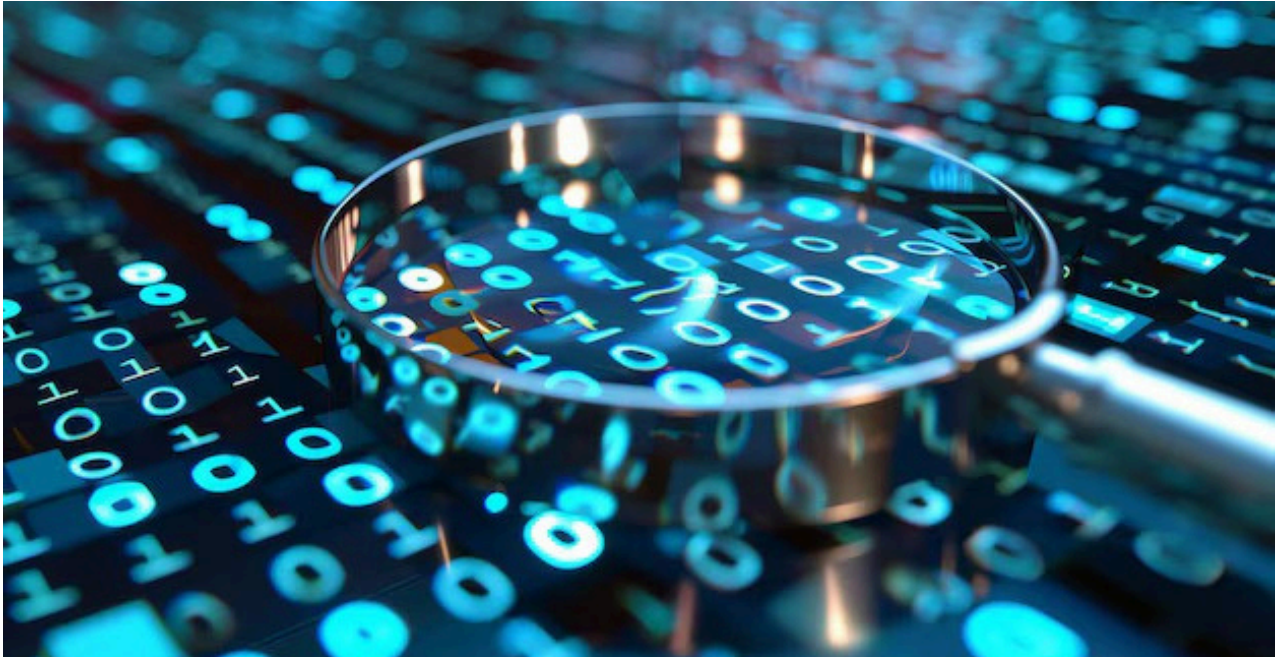
In today's digital age, citizenship goes beyond voting or accessing information via traditional media. It now involves actively engaging in online public debates, asserting digital rights and contributing to a more participatory and inclusive democracy. This is especially crucial for young people and marginalised groups, who are often excluded from decision-making processes.

Strengthening digital citizenship helps prevent democratic inequalities, combats digital exclusion and promotes more representative governance across Europe.

SENSE MAKING PRACTICES

The Italian platform *Milano Partecipa* enables citizens to propose, discuss and vote on local policies through a participatory digital tool. It demonstrates how institutions can open up decision-making processes to the public through accessible digital platforms, reflecting DIGIDEM's goal of integrating young people and citizens into active digital citizenship.

In Portugal, the platform *ConsultaLEX* enables citizens to follow and comment on draft legislation in real time. This initiative enhances civic engagement by young people to contribute to political discussions and monitor policy-making processes.



DIGITAL ETHICS

Ethical digital governance ensures that technological progress serves democratic values: fairness, transparency, inclusion and accountability.

DEFINITION

Digitaethics refers to principles and practices that ensure technologies—especially algorithms and digital platforms—respect human rights, transparency, fairness and democracy.

DIGIDEM PROJECT OBJECTIVES

DIGIDEM focuses on promoting the ethical governance of technologies and algorithms, ensuring they align with democratic values and human rights. The project addresses the challenge of bias in digital systems by working to eliminate unfair discrimination and protect individuals' personal data. It strives to guarantee fairness in how digital tools are designed and used. By advocating for transparency, it aims to foster trust in the digital environment, ensuring technologies serve the public good in an open and just manner.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Algorithms, data collection, content moderation and automated decisions have profound impacts on our lives. Without safeguards, these technologies can reinforce discrimination, threaten privacy, obscure public decision-making and undermine individual freedoms. Ethical governance is therefore essential to ensure technological progress serves democratic values: fairness, transparency, inclusion and responsibility.

SENSE MAKING PRACTICES

In France, after the failure of the Avia law, co-regulation with institutions such as ARCOM has helped establish a balanced framework to combat hate speech while safeguarding freedom of public debate.

In Portugal, the *Internet Governance Forum* brings together citizens, businesses, government and civil society to collaboratively develop rules for digital ethics, exemplifying participatory digital democracy. EU-funded projects like *kNOwHate* are creating multilingual AI tools designed to detect hate speech, with respect for different cultural and linguistic contexts.

In Türkiye, the *e-Devlet* platform allows citizens to see who has accessed their personal data, enhancing transparency and control.



FAKE NEWS

Fake news blurs the line between truth and lies, weakens trust in institutions and endangers democracy.

DEFINITION

Fakenews refers to deliberately false or misleading information shared in the media, especially online, with the intent to manipulate public opinion or cause harm.

DIGIDEM PROJECT OBJECTIVES

DIGIDEM aims to educate young people in fact-checking and critical thinking, helping them question and verify the information they encounter online. To support this, the project seeks to develop interactive and gamified tools that make it easier to identify disinformation in engaging and accessible ways. Beyond individual skills, DIGIDEM also works to foster a shared culture of digital responsibility, encouraging citizens to assess sources critically and contribute to a healthier, more informed digital public sphere.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Disinformation weakens the foundations of democracy: it blurs the line between truth and falsehood, fuels polarisation and undermines trust in public institutions. Young people, who are highly active online, are particularly vulnerable to fake news spread via social media. Equipping citizens to identify, understand, and counter disinformation strengthens their intellectual autonomy, judgement skills and helps protect the public sphere from manipulative content.

SENSE MAKING PRACTICES

In France, initiatives such as Les Décodeurs and PIX help young people learn how to verify sources and analyse digital content critically, equipping them with essential media literacy skills. In Türkiye, the organisation Teyit.org trains young journalists in factchecking and investigative journalism, encouraging peer-to-peer education and spreading good practices among youth communities. Meanwhile, in Portugal, online platforms and national awareness campaigns tackle disinformation through interactive lessons integrated into the formal education system, making critical thinking a part of everyday learning.



HATE SPEECH & VIOLENCE

Guaranteeing digital safety means protecting individuals and preserving the integrity of democratic debate.

DEFINITION

Cyberviolence refers to psychological, verbal or symbolic abuse committed via digital technologies, including cyberbullying, hate speech or radicalisation.

DIGIDEM PROJECT OBJECTIVES

DIGIDEM aims to raise awareness among young people and educators about key digital risks, including cyberbullying, radicalisation and hate speech. The project promotes ethical moderation practices and participatory approaches to content governance, helping create safer, more inclusive online spaces. It also supports the creation of respectful, positive digital content and encourages dialogue grounded in mutual respect and democratic values

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Online violence – such as bullying, hate speech or radicalisation – prevents citizens, particularly the young and vulnerable, from expressing themselves freely in digital spaces. These behaviours create hostile, exclusive and sometimes dangerous environments. Ensuring digital safety not only protects individuals but also safeguards the integrity of democratic debate and promotes respectful, inclusive and pluralistic civic expression.

SENSE MAKING PRACTICES

In France, the educational game 2025 Ex Machina engages teenagers through interactive scenarios that raise awareness of cyberbullying, the risks of disinformation and digital privacy.

In Italy, various school-based programmes address cyberbullying by actively involving both teachers and students in practical, educational initiatives that promote empathy and safe online behaviour.

In Türkiye, community workshops and digital learning platforms like *BTK Akademi* offer courses on cybersecurity, hate speech and digital rights, helping to build a culture of online safety and digital citizenship.



ATTENTION ECONOMY

Reclaiming our attention is key to protecting critical thinking, especially among young people.

DEFINITION

The attention economy refers to the mechanisms by which digital platforms capture, retain and monetise users' attention—often using sensationalist or polarising content.

DIGIDEM PROJECT OBJECTIVES

DIGIDEM aims to equip young people with the skills needed to use social media critically and thoughtfully, enabling them to recognise misleading content and resist manipulation. It promotes the use of gamified educational tools that are designed to capture and maintain users' attention, fostering engagement without resorting to exploitative tactics. DIGIDEM also encourages young people and digital creators to produce responsible and meaningful content, contributing to safer, more respectful and accountable online communities.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The attention economy is based on seizing users' time and focus, often through emotional, divisive or addictive content. It influences how information is consumed, prioritising what attracts rather than what informs. This undermines the quality of public debate, increases vulnerability to disinformation and weakens concentration and critical thinking— particularly among young people. It is therefore essential to teach citizens how to recognise these dynamics and reclaim control over their time, attention and digital choices.

SENSE MAKING PRACTICES

In Türkiye, engaging quizzes, AI challenges and interactive leaderboards are used to help young people recognise manipulation online in a way that does not exploit their attention.

In France, platforms like PIX and tools such as Wooclap and Kahoot! incorporate motivational features such as badges, points, and instant feedback, all designed to encourage learning without emotionally manipulating users.

Immersive role-playing activities allow users to experience and better understand the effects of filter bubbles and polarising messages, fostering active awareness of these phenomena.



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You can also find us on LinkedIn (Project DIGIDEM) or Instagram (@digidem.eu)

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