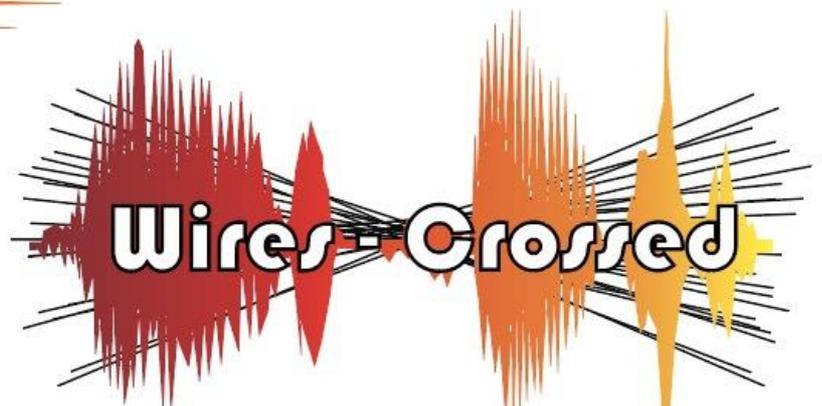




Wires-Crossed Community Audit Report

English Summary
JKPeV
Dresden, Germany



**Developing Community Media to Mitigate
the Impact of Fake News**

WIRES-CROSSED Community Audit Report Summary, Dresden, Germany

Introduction

This report reflects the findings of the Community Audit that was implemented in Dresden, Germany, within the framework of WIRES-CROSSED Project, IO1-Community Audit Toolkit and Report. It aims at analysing and interpreting the qualitative and quantitative data collected by the 100 responses to the audit questionnaire and to provide certain ideas about the next steps that could be taken. This report highlights the citizens' behaviour regarding accessing information and media content and the digital competence and educational assets within the local community of Dresden that comprises of ordinary people-students, youth workers, professionals in various fields such as youth workers-and the deficits also present.

Methodology

Stakeholder involvement

The first step taken in order the community audit to be implemented successfully was the formation of the Local Media Action Group and its induction training. The six members of the Local Media Action Group were youth workers, students, culture managers, professional trainers and people that work in the field of digital technologies. These volunteers got trained to undertake the audit and the natal promotion of the project in January 2020. They found the purpose of the WIRES-CROSSED project very important and inspiring and they were very willing to proceed with the audit and to actively get involved in the project. This was obvious by their testimonials:

“Fake News and Media literacy are important topics to talk about [...] I’m really excited about this project, because critical education is only possible when you enable the people to educate themselves. I’m looking forward to see, what people are going to make out of it.”

- Professional in the field of IT and father

“I really like the project, because I think it tackles a really abstract problem, which is Fake News on a local level, which I think is a very good way to solve this Problem.”

- Culture manager

In order to attract people to take part in the community audit JKPeV and the Local Media Action Group used mainly the digital tools available such as project presentation and a presentation regarding the aim of the community audit, and they spread the word by using various Social Media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram and informative newsletters to their networks. It was not possible to implement face-to-face events as the issue that came up due to the COVID-19 brought measures that didn't allow close interactions. Only one event was taken place, the “Culture Jam Session”, in the premises of JKPeV, in the end of February 2020, during which the project and the community audit were introduced to the participants.

Data collection

In order the appropriate data to be collected qualitative and quantitative data collection methods were used.

Quantitative data collection is a method of empirical social research and provides answers to questions such as who? when? where? what? and how many? The well-structured

Community Audit Questionnaire largely falls into this category as it was consisted by many closed-ended survey questions that supported the numerical data collection that were statistically processed to gain new insights (Qualtrics, n.d.). Google forms were used to develop the online questionnaire.

Qualitative data collection was used to obtain detailed, subjective and individual knowledge on various topics. The interviews conducted by JKPEV and specific questions of the audit questionnaire that were open-ended fall into this category.

The approaches that were followed are:

- Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)
- Needs Based Community Development (NBCD)
- Participatory Action Research (PAR)

The Community Audit was primarily distributed online (70%), but interviews (30%) were also conducted in person and over the phone. The online questionnaire was shared via social media platforms, e-mail/newsletters and blog posts.

Personal interviews and the use of other face-to-face data collection methods were not possible to be implemented in March 2020 due to COVID-19 issue.

Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used, and the findings were discussed and analysed also in cooperation with the Local Media Action Group.

The methods used regarding the qualitative research were (Research Methodology, n.d):

- Content analysis: this refers to the process of categorising verbal or behavioural data to classify, summarise and tabulate the data
- Discourse analysis: a method of analysis of naturally occurring talk and all types of written text.

Critical thinking and analytical thinking were practiced in order to identify patterns and relationships within the 100 responses of the sample group.

For analysing the quantitative data descriptive statics were deployed so as to summarise and organise them in a way to be easily understood. Google forms automated responses' summaries and graphical representation of the responses were the main tools used for data processing. Critical thinking and rational were applied as well.

The most revealing questions that surprised JKPeV's team dealing with their analysis were the one regarding clickbait and the one concerning the use of the traditional media that are not considered to be obsolete, contrary to the popular opinion. Other interesting questions were those related to the participants' self-assessment, which came out to be predominantly positive.

When analysing the data, it was observed that the participants' responses were very diverse reflecting the participatory nature of the audit.

Results and Reflections

The interpretation of data obtained via the questions on media literacy led to the following results:

Over 70% of the respondents use digital platforms to access news and media content (Fig. 1), having as their favourites the social media platforms and in specific Facebook and YouTube (approx. 63% each) (Fig. 2). The most favourable traditional media are TV, radio and local press (approx. 50% each).

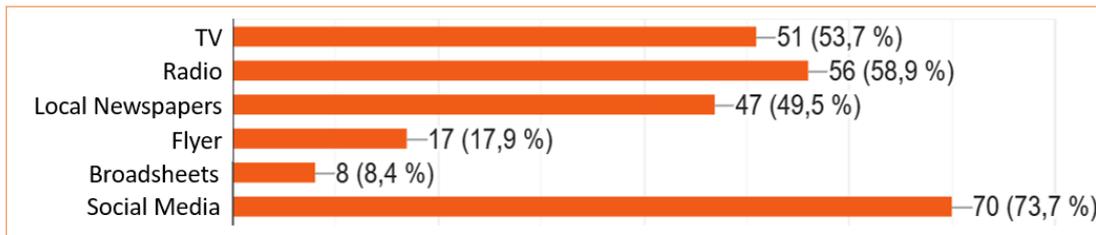


Figure 1: News and media content access

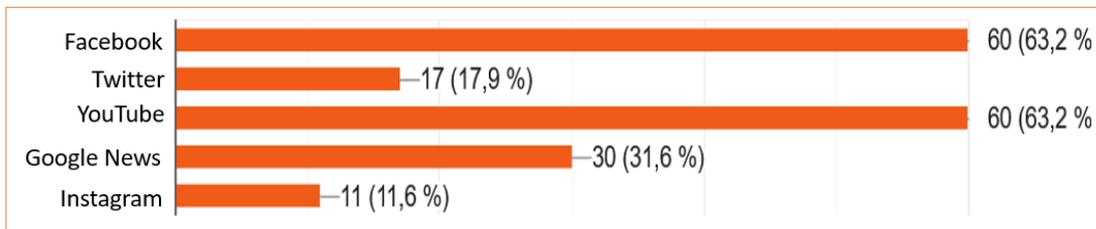


Figure 2: News and media content access via digital platforms

65% of the interviewees can often identify the intention and assess the perspective of the content, while 17% of them always.

It is noteworthy that about half of the responders haven't ever heard the term "click bait" (Fig. 3) but, at the same time, almost 60% of them believe that they have never fallen for it (Fig. 4). Based on the collected data, click-bait happens mainly on Facebook and YouTube. However, it should be emphasised that it is increasingly appearing in "renowned" media such as online newspapers.

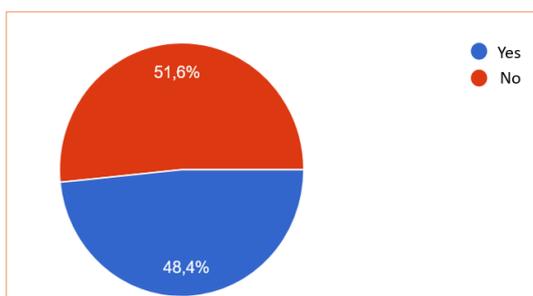


Figure 3: The understanding of the meaning of the term "click-bait"

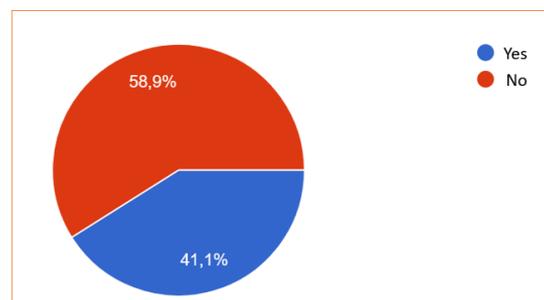


Figure 4: Fall for "click-bait"

The respondents' media checking behaviour is mixed and diverse.

The term “Fake News” is well-known among respondents. They are aware of fake news incidents that occur in Germany. Most of them are political misinformation aiming at misleading and intentionally deceiving the public, especially those spread by AFD.

The interpretation of data obtained via the questions regarding media assets assessment led to the following results:

Approximately 94% of the respondents have access to a smartphone and 84% of them to a laptop. The same trend is evident concerning Internet access (approx. 95.6%).

52,6% of the respondents rate their ICT skills and their ability to use a computer as intermediate, while 27,4% of them are ICT advanced users (Fig. 5). Nearly half of the interviewees stated that they are media literate, meaning that they have the skills to access, analyse, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms (Fig. 6). Regarding their willingness to get trained to enhance their ICT skills, they stated yes, maybe and no in the following percentages respectively: 22,1%, 43,2% and 34,7% (Fig. 6). Although they declared that they are competent in media literacy, nearly 80% of them have never attended any media-related training. Finally, three-quarters of the respondents don't have any experience in working in a media-related role.

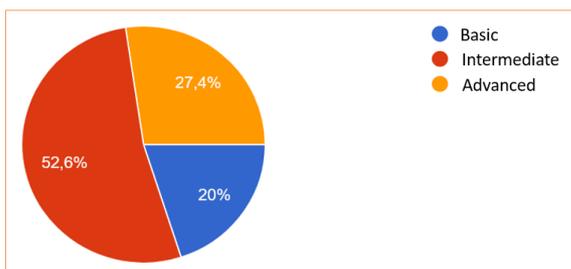


Figure 5: Self-assessment of ICT skills

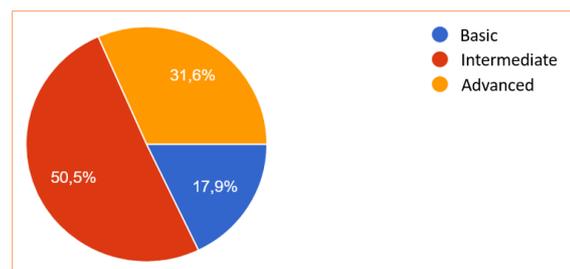


Figure 6: Self-assessment of Media Literacy

Many of the responders, 72,6%, have never considered to be active online as vloggers or bloggers. The most common reasons for their unwillingness are the lack of necessity, data protection or privacy issues and the time required to do so. But, half of them are eager to develop a community newsletter, or a blog or a vlog individually covering topics such as news, local politics, environmental issues, art, music and culture, youth news and alternative perspectives (LQGBT, feminism etc.). Unfortunately, almost 70% of them are not interested in being part of a local media team. Those who are positively inclined towards such activity often want to positively influence society.

The interpretation of data obtained via the questions regarding physical assets assessment led to the following results:

Half of the respondents know a place where community members can have access to IT and Internet, but only 20% are aware of a local space that is available free of charge or at a low cost. Suggestions for possible premises include “JKPeV”, the "Weltclub Afropa e.V.", the "Grüne Ecke" or “AZ Conny”.

Nearly 85% of the participants, unfortunately, do not know any local groups that have access to media equipment. Some suggestions include teams of “JKPeV”, the "Medienkulturzentrum Dresden" and the "Hole of fame".

Dresden's community believes that laptops, smartphones, internet access, printers, cameras, an annual budget and software are necessary in order the local media team to work effectively. When asked if they can identify any local supports where these physical assets can be provided to the community media team, only 12% of them responded and they mentioned that probably "Media Culture Centre Dresden", the "Youth Art School", "JKPeV" and some local libraries and youth centres might provide some kind of support.

Implications, recommendations and next steps

As can be seen from the results, the need for projects like WIRES-CROSSED is evident.

Most of the respondents think that are able to spot the sources and the intentions behind the media content they consume, but probably the reality is different and this is something that should be checked to avoid the feeling of "supposed security".

The results also show that a big majority of the respondents believe that their media literacy skills are of intermediate level. Taking into consideration that they have never attended any "formal" training course in this field, they are mainly self-trained. Given that, is not safe to take their self-assessment concerning media literacy for granted. An evaluation quiz to test their skills would be helpful. The same applies for their ability to spot fake news. These facts underline the necessity of implementing workshops in the fields of "spotting fake news" and "developing real news", like those planned within the framework of WIRES-CROSSED project.

Despite the aforementioned, based on the results, the biggest challenge will be to engage members of Dresden's local community in the project's activities and in forming the local media team. The volunteering mindset is not so popular in Dresden. The same difficulty exists with ensuring the availability of the necessary infrastructure and of a suitable workplace for the media team.

In order to overcome these barriers, JKPeV has already contacted key players of Dresden's media sector in order to work together in fighting fake news. Furthermore, JKPeV is planning to implement several project promotional activities such as social-media campaigns and local events to inform the local community about the benefits they will have by participating in WIRES-CROSSED project actions.

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