



Wires-Crossed Community Audit Report

Acumen Training
Poland



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

WIRES-CROSSED Community Audit Report Poland Acumen

Introduction

The Community Audit was conceived within the Erasmus Project Wires-Crossed, in partnership with 7 other European countries, Germany, Cyprus, Croatia, Ireland, Italy, the Czech Republic, and Poland. The present document is the executive summary of available media assets in partnership communities through research conducted for the needs of Wires-Crossed project in Poland in March 2020 and compiled by ACUMEN Training. For research purposes, a series of qualitative and quantitative questions were included in the Audit in order to measure competence assets and needs in the local community regarding ICT and media literacy. The summary considers an online survey via Google Forms sample of 101 participants in Poland.

Methodology

Engaging Stakeholders

A Local Media Action Group comprised by six individuals active in the field of youth, community media, social affairs and citizen engagement was formed to help carry out the Community Audit and was familiarised with the aims, objectives, and planned outputs of the WIRES-CROSSED project during meetings in March 2020.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the ACUMEN Training conducted the research via an online questionnaire with the final participation of 101 respondents from the local community.

Data collection

Following the WIRES-CROSSED Community Audit Guide, the Asset Based Community Development (ABCD), Needs Based Community Development (NBCD), and Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches were used.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the following closure of all non-essential institutions and organizations, the data collection process was carried out using Google Forms that made possible the secure collection and analysis of the responses. ACUMEN Training promoted the google form questionnaire via its social media accounts and sent by email directly to participants by the Local Media Action Group members. Both quantitative data (closed-ended questions) and qualitative data (open-ended questions) were collected. Thanks to this approach ACUMEN Training achieved a more representative sample as well as a faster process of data collection.

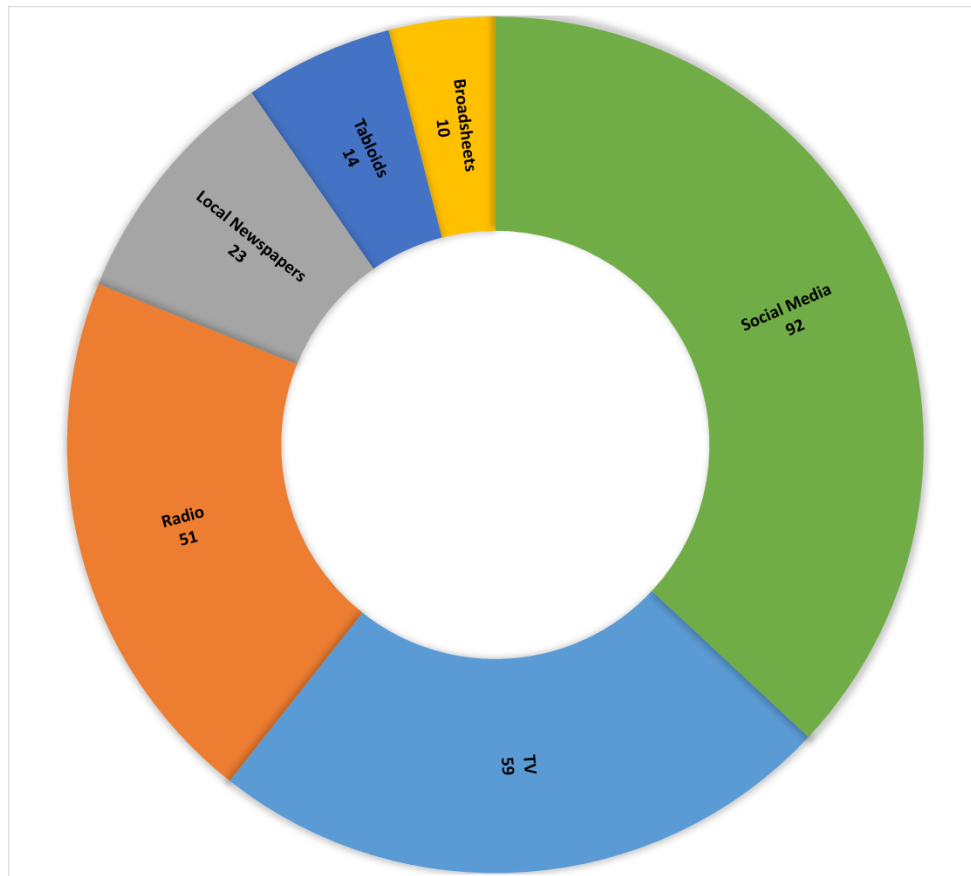
Data Analysis

For gaining an in-depth understanding of the community Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis methods were used. The ACUMEN Training decided to put all gathered Quantitative data into graphs and tables with the help of Excel to make it easier to analyse. Regarding Qualitative data ACUMEN Training carefully analysed and sorted responses in order to find patterns and summarize them. During the analysis, most frequent as well as interesting answers were isolated. Combining Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of underlying reasons, attitude and motivations of the community.

Results and reflections

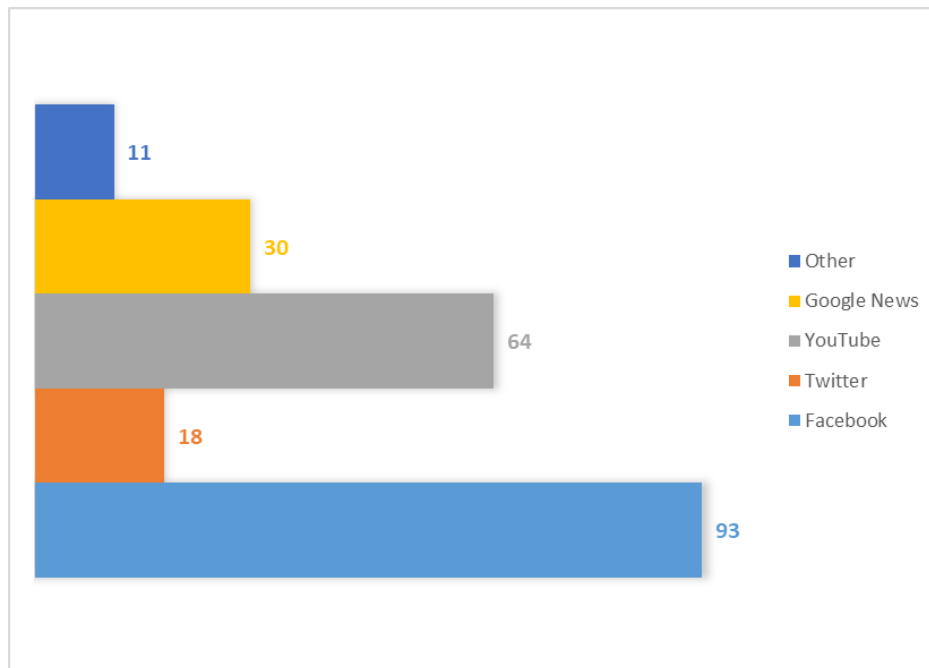
The data obtained from 101 respondents (100%) via the google form questionnaire on media literacy led to the following results:

Graph 1 shows where do people access news and media content. It appears that 92% of the respondents use social media, followed by TV (59%) and Radio (51%); tabloids (14%) and broadsheets(10%) are less popular.



Graph 1: News and media content access

This bar Graph 2 shows which platform respondents use to access news through social media. Most of the news sources have Facebook which is used by 93% of the respondents, and the second one Youtube with 64%, followed by Google News with surprising 30%, comparing to them, Twitter and some local social media are not so common in use, less than 20%.



Graph 2: News and media content access via digital platforms

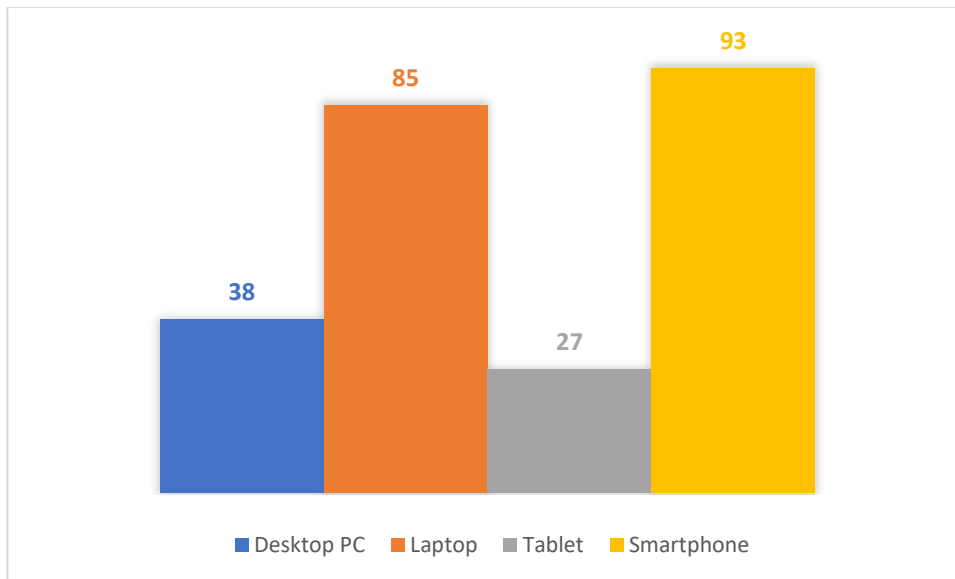
Although the participants showed a great capacity to evaluate news (Approx. 50%), a little part of them is not able to identify both the target audience and the perspective of a news story they are reading (Approx. 28%). An interesting thing, 65% of participants are familiar with the click-bites, even knowing that, 36% still fall for click-bait. Most often they see these click bait articles published on YouTube, Facebook, Onet, etc.

ACUMEN tried to summarise responses about how often participants check the source of the media content they consume in a few categories in order to better understand the community. A majority (26%) of the participants rarely check the source because of lack of time or they are not interested in it; 19% never check the source because of credible editors or don't care about that; 13% sometimes check the source because of lack of time or depends on the importance of the subject; 12% often compare information and check the reliability; 10% always check with another source to verify that it is true, and only 5% check source quite often because not all news are true.

As for the credentials of online journalists and bloggers participants' responses are divided in approx. 50/50, half of them never checking the credentials because of lack of time or they never feel the need, and another half, check credentials rarely or sometimes depends on the topic or information hard to believe.

Surprisingly only 54% of the respondents claim to be aware of fake news instances, mostly in connection with politics and celebrities, global issues such as viral crisis and in a migration crisis, government and reporting. 37% of participants don't associate false, and 10% don't recall.

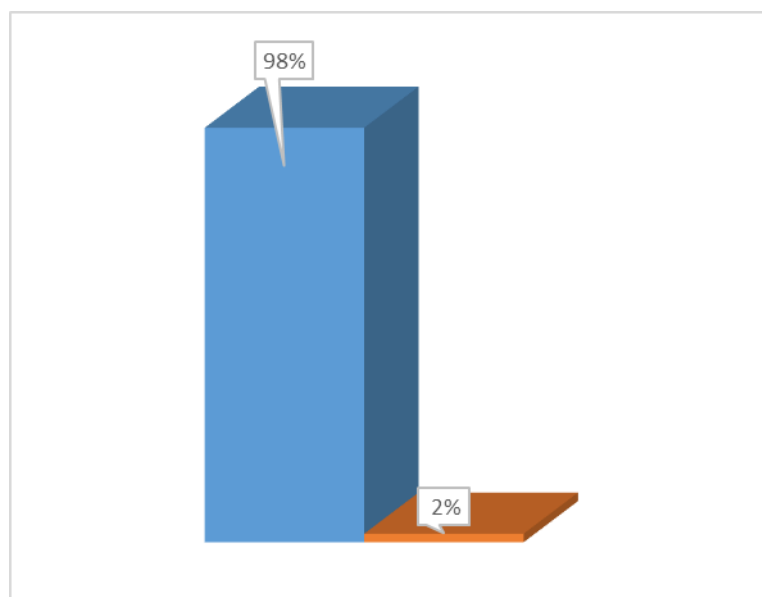
" The content is often manipulated or even untrue, or "mistakes" are called "mistakes" only when someone overwhelmed by the subject makes an affair of it"



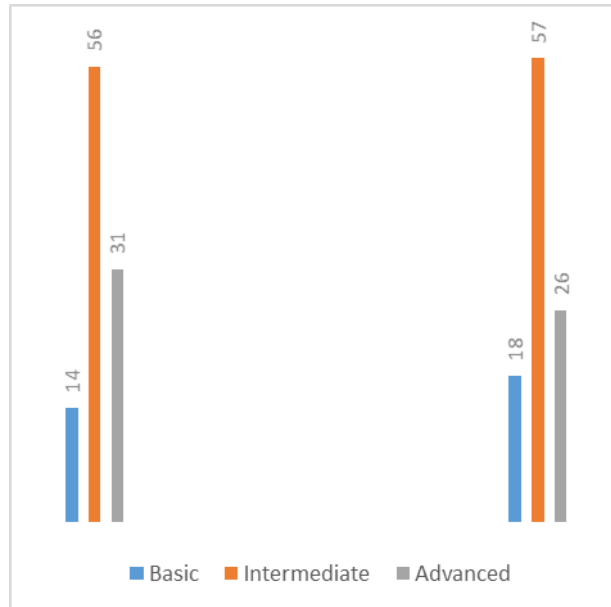
Graph 3: Devices used

The following bar Graph 3 representing the number of respondents using different devices. Approximately 100% of respondents have a smartphone and a laptop, 38% have access to PC and 27% using tablets.

The similarity is evident concerning Internet access, (98%) of the respondents have daily access to the Internet and only 2% don't (Graph 4).



Graph 4: Daily access to Internet



Graph 5: a - ICT skills; b - Media literacy

Respondents reported a rather high level of ICT skills (14% basic, 56% intermediate, 31% advanced) and similar level of media literacy (18% basic, 57% intermediate, 26% advanced) (Graph 5: a, b).

As for the willingness to participate in training answers was as follows (34% yes, 38% no, 29% maybe), and the reason is covered under the following question, 89% participants haven't completed any media-related training, and only 12% had reported a degree in field of Social Media and a few free online courses about internet safety. 15 out of 101 respondents have work experience in media, such as running the websites, product marketing and Sales and Marketing Manager. Even if nowadays blogging turns into a career 73 out of 101 participants do not consider starting a blog or YouTube Channel. *"I don't think that everyday activities are interesting enough to share."*

Regarding the research 57% would support the production of a community newsletter online channel or blog, with 24% claiming to be interested in participating in a local media team.

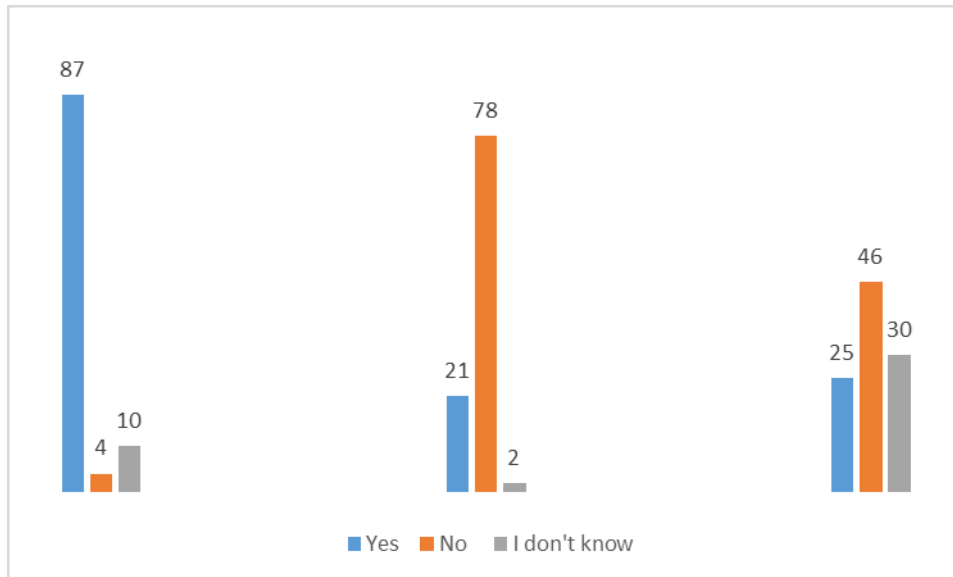
Moreover, in a follow-up question, they listed social topics, related to the development of the culture of the community and the infrastructure of the locality, abortion, homosexuality, sex, contraception, social initiatives, daily issues concerning the immediate environment, information on available opportunities to support development, training, benefits for the inhabitants of the region.

87 out of 101 know a place where community members can have access to IT and the internet. The majority mentioned public libraries, university libraries, and Internet cafes. The opposite situation with identifying that would be available free of charge, or for a small fee, to a local community media team, only 21 participants know such places, in particular, they mentioned public libraries and schools, universities, some NGOs, community centers and Internet cafés (Graph 6: a, b).

Most of the participants do not know any local groups that have access to media equipment, 29 participants mentioned universities, radios, music bands, student clubs, photography groups, Organizations that organize local exhibitions, concerts, public universities, bloggers, trade schools, social media – Facebook, Instagram.

Respondents provided mixed answers to the question on which physical assets would be needed, but the most common responses included access to the meeting place, access to multimedia devices, recording equipment, and relevant programs, someone mentioned strategy, the idea, creativity, inspiration, a leader who has an idea of how to give it to people.

Respondents found difficult the last question of certain research about identifying local supports where these physical assets can be provided to the community media team, only 25 participants know such spaces, in particular, they mentioned EU funding, municipal or communal cultural centers, local grants, private establishments, universities, local radios, FB groups, local newspapers (Graph 6: c).



Graph 6: a - Access to IT infrastructure and Internet; b - Local space
c - Identifying local supports

Implications, Recommendations and Next steps

The key point of this research is to find the right direction for the further steps of project development and fit the partnership' communities. The concept of combining Qualitative and Quantitative data analysis is considered to be particularly suitable for gaining an in-depth understanding of underlying reasons, attitudes, and motivations of the community. The analysis indicates both the inconsistencies in respondents' answers as well as the need for implementing the WIRES-CROSSED project in the local community.

As a result of research, the access of respondents to devices, news, and media content, and the internet is highly accessible. Although participants reported a moderately high level of ICT skills (14% basic, 56% intermediate, 31% advanced) and media literacy (18% basic, 57% intermediate, 26% advanced). Also, the participants showed a great capacity to evaluate news, even if a little part of them is not able to identify both the target audience and the perspective of a news story they are reading.

Additionally, respondents show their willingness to support the production of a community newsletter, an online channel, or a new community initiative, and at the same time, their answers related to their past experiences reveal that they might be easily discouraged by a lack of time or other difficulties, like fear of something new.

In order to support community engagement in the WIRES-CROSSED project, ACUMEN Training plans on more heavily promoting the project via digital channels as well as using Local Media Action Group members to inform more local community members about the project and encourage them to take part in WIRES-CROSSED project activities.

Wires - Crossed



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