ATHENA

An exposition on THe forEign informatioN mAnipulation and Interference

PRESS RELEASE

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ATHENA KICKS OFF A FIGHT AGAINST FOREIGN INFORMATION MANIPULATION AND INTERFERENCE

An exposition on **TH**e for**E**ign informatio**N** m**A**nipulation and interference, the ATHENA project launched in November 2023. This €3 million, three-year project represents a strategic response by the European Union to the escalating threat of **f**oreign **i**nformation **m**anipulation and **i**nterference (**FIMI**). With recent events, particularly the increase in cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns from Russia and China, ATHENA is more crucial than ever.

The project's primary goal is to scrutinize at least 30 instances of FIMI, analyzing the tactics, techniques, and procedures used by perpetrators. By understanding these methods, ATHENA aims to develop robust countermeasures and assess their societal impacts. The project's innovative approach includes creating a disinformation analysis toolbox, a comprehensive knowledge graph, and a dynamic dashboard to monitor FIMI activities and counter-strategies.

ATHENA will also conduct a comparative legal and regulatory analysis of how eight EU Member States deal with FIMI and will identify areas where policy can be improved. The consortium will also develop an accessible questionnaire for public use, empowering individuals and citizens to identify encounters with FIMI in their own lives.

Engagement with stakeholders is a key component of the project. ATHENA will conduct interviews and workshops with a wide range of stakeholders, and will engage a Stakeholder Board to help guide the project. ATHENA's commitment to knowledge-sharing and training extends to universities and schools, enhancing widespread awareness of FIMI and defense against it.

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"The ATHENA project is not just a response to current threats but a proactive step towards a more secure digital future for Europe," said Dr David Wright from Trilateral Research, coordinator of the project. Other partners in the consortium include Foundation for Research and Technology – Hellas (FORTH, Greece), the University of Cyprus (UCY), the Bavarian Police Academy (Germany), the Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE), Laurea University of Applied Sciences (Finland), Fundació Eurecat (Spain), Storyzy (France), Trinity College Dublin (Ireland), the European Organisation for Security (Belgium), Maldita (Spain), EU-Disinfo (Belgium) and University College Dublin (Ireland).

Consortium:

Trilateral Research (TRI IE), Ireland
The Foundation for Research and Technology (FORTH), Greece
University of Cyprus (UCY), Cyprus
Bavarian Police Academy (HfoeD), Germany
Research Institutes of Sweden (RISE), Sweden
Laurea University (LAU), Finland
Eurecat (EUT), Spain
Storyzy (ST), France
Trinity College Dublin (TCD), Ireland
European Organisation for Security (EOS), Belgium
Maldita (MAL), Spain
EU – DisinfoLab (EU-D), Belgium
University College Dublin (UCD), Ireland
ISSP (ISSP), Ukraine
Trilateral Research (TRI), UK

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