

The Balkan Forum

Monthly update

March – April 2024



March 26 – 29

The Balkan Forum has organized the four-day event (March 26-29) with the topics: Situational awareness of disinformation in V4 countries and Kosovo; Disinformation endangering Western Balkans – how to recognize disinformation and their consequences in the region; Involvement of civil society in countering disinformation and The importance of free media and civil society in the fight against disinformation.



Partners

The project “Countering False Information in Kosovo: Experience-Sharing between V4 and Prishtina” was organized by The Balkan Forum, in partnership with the organizations “Association For International Affairs - AMO” from the Czech Republic, “The Institute of Central Europe” from Poland and “The Balkan Views” from Slovakia.



Four-day Event

This four-day event physically gathered about 62 participants and 1 virtually. We invited 6 experts from the Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Kosovo, civil society representatives from Kosovo, experts in the field, journalists, and students.

March 26 – 29

This four-day event was divided into two days, March 26-27, the debate was held on the topics of Situational awareness of disinformation in V4 countries and Kosovo and the Involvement of civil society in countering disinformation.

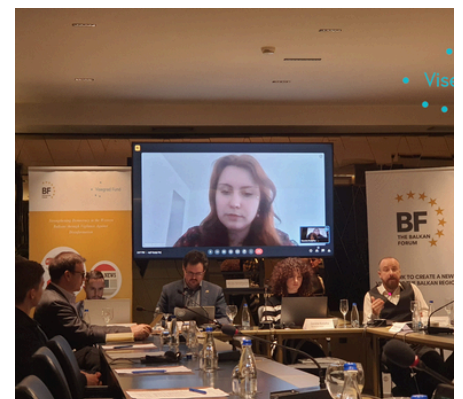
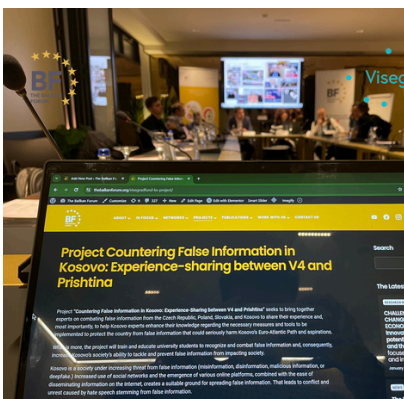
On the other two days, March 28-29 the students listened and debated on two topics of discussion which were: Disinformation endangering Western Balkans – how to recognize disinformation and their consequences in the region and The importance of free media and civil society in the fight against disinformation.



“It is a great pleasure to welcome you to this table where the topic of discussion will be this phenomenon, which is mainly one of the aspects that the whole world is facing, we are also living in a period where online platforms are growing, hence the topic of the project and this round table is to discuss these elements: how do we see this phenomenon, how should it be fought in order not to create panic in society and in the public, where this proves that in the countries that are in areas close to the war, are more affected by this news, also the Western Balkans”.



Gazmend Bërlajolli - The Balkan Forum



The second part of the project “Countering False Information in Kosovo: Experience-Sharing between V4 and Prishtina” continued in April, the activity followed with the targeted lecture at the University of Prishtina, which was part of the series of deepening the understanding of tactics of disinformation and countermeasures at the students. The event was attended by many students, who were quite active during the lecture and displayed a great interest in the fight against disinformation. This comprised the technical details of how disinformation is being fought, the role of regulations, tools, and modern technologies including artificial intelligence, among others.



The project, serving as a demonstrator of such an approach with the support of the International Visegrad Fund, addressed urgent education needs but was aimed at building the solid basis for further cooperation within the complex of activities aimed at increasing societal resilience. This initiative is rooted in the belief that only by working with others at an international level can the integrity of information and democratic processes truly be assured in the digital era. As “The Balkan Forum” and partners build from this basis, their work can bring about the development of additional strategies and interventions that promise to protect societies from the negative impacts of misinformation and secure an informed public able to protect democratic values.

Distinguished guests

The presence of distinguished guests, such as Czech Ambassador Bohumil Mazanek and Slovak Deputy Head of Mission Michal Plsko, and civil society personas, NGOs, and successful journalists made the event even more remarkable by accentuating the support and unity in responding to the global challenge of misinformation.





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Goals

- The sharing of experience and practices regarding the fight against disinformation between the Visegrad countries and Kosovo,
- Identification of different platforms that influence the spread of disinformation in the countries of the Western Balkans Use of different platforms
- The impact of fake news on the development of the war in Ukraine.
- The influence of civil society in the fight against disinformation

Supported by:

- **Visegrad Fund**