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media masters

WORK PACKAGE N° 18

“CONFERENCE ON THE IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS ON THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES”

CONFERENCES IN SPAIN

Delivered by Instituto Ikigai



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Document Identification:

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EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	18
Event name:	CONFERENCE ON THE IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS ON THE EUROPEAN DEMOCRACIES - "ARE YOU SURE ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE ONLINE?"
Type:	Conferences and workshops
In situ/online:	[in-situ]
Location:	Spain, Zaragoza
Date(s):	16 June 2025 28th and 30th October 2025
Website(s) (if any):	https://institutoikigai.org/media-masters-aprendiendo-a-pensar-criticamente-sobre-los-medios-de-comunicacion/ https://institutoikigai.org/evento/estas-seguro-de-lo-que-ves-online-fake-news-y-comunicacion-digital/ https://institutoikigai.org/juntos-por-una-comunidad-digital-mas-segura-lo-mejor-de-nuestro-evento-en-la-azucarera/
Participants	
Female:	61
Male:	57
Non-binary:	
From country 1 [name]:	Spain
From country 2 [name]:	
From country 3 [name]:	
...	
Total number of participants:	118
From total number of countries:	
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	
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1. Introduction

The MEDMAS conference organized by Instituto Ikigai was held on **16 June 2025 at I.E.S. Leonardo de Chabacier**, a secondary school in **Calatayud, Zaragoza**, and involved four different classes from 2º ESO, 3º ESO, and 4º ESO, with **39 students ranging in age from 13 to 16**. This event marked a key opportunity to engage younger secondary school students and test the adaptability of the interactive learning tools in a traditional classroom setting across multiple educational levels. Respecting the same inclusive and participatory spirit and methodology of the previous MEDMAS workshops that were held with university students, journalists and media educators on different occasions, the Calatayud conference extended the project’s target groups to a younger audience. The main objectives for this event remained the same: to empower young people to recognize and combat misinformation and disinformation by gaining awareness of information manipulation, developing critical thinking skills and encouraging active reflection on their daily digital habits and social engagement over critical issues.

Two others **MEDMAS Engaging Conferences**, organized by Instituto Ikigai, took place on **28th October and on 30th October at La Azucarera**, a youth centre in Zaragoza. The sessions involved four different classes, reaching and engaging a total of **48 young students and professors aged between 15 and 56**. These events provided a key opportunity to engage young learners and to assess the adaptability of the interactive learning tools within a traditional classroom setting across multiple educational levels. The main objectives of these events remained consistent with those of previous MEDMAS activities: to empower young people to recognize and counter misinformation and disinformation by raising awareness of information manipulation, strengthening critical thinking skills, and encouraging



active reflection on their digital habits and social engagement with key societal issues. Hosting the conferences in a youth centre enabled the project to reach a wider and more diverse group of students, including those who might not otherwise have access to formal media literacy training. Participants came from various educational backgrounds and included young people with disabilities from specialized institutions. Engaging four different classes across several age groups also provided valuable insight into how students with varying levels of maturity and media experience perceive and respond to the topic of fake news. By collaborating directly with teachers and tailoring content to suit younger learners and students with specific educational needs, the MEDMAS team demonstrated both the relevance and the urgency of integrating media literacy education into diverse learning contexts. The experience also offered important insights into how schools can incorporate playful, discussion-based, and gamified methodologies into their curricula to help students become more informed, reflective, and responsible media users in today's digital era.

An additional **expert conference was held on the afternoon of 30th October at La Azucarera**. The panel featured Jorge Heras, a journalist specializing in economic reporting; Enjoy Zaragoza, a digital media outlet showcasing the best of the city; Desvergonzaus, a creative duo of local influencers combining humor and social critique to engage young audiences on social media; and Beatriz Martínez Téllez, a psychologist who contributed her expertise on the relationship between social media and mental health. This report provides a general overview of the structure and outcomes of the engaging classroom workshops and the expert conference, offering reflections on how the *Media Masters* project can continue to evolve to better meet the needs of young learners within formal educational settings.

2. Engaging Conference class activities

Events Structure

The MEDMAS conference held at I.E.S. Leonardo de Chabacier in Calatayud took place on **16 June 2025** and was carried out in four separate sessions, each with a different class. Two of these were from 2º ESO, one from 3º ESO, and one from 4º ESO, involving **39 students aged approximately 13 to 16 in total**. Although the sessions were held independently and adapted slightly depending on the age and responsiveness of each group, they followed the same structured agenda and shared a common goal: to introduce students to the fundamentals of media literacy and give them tools through a methodology full of fun and interaction to critically evaluate the information they consume online.



The **MEDMAS Engaging Conferences**, organized by Instituto Ikigai, took place on **28th October and on 30th October at La Azucarera**, a youth centre in Zaragoza. The sessions involved four distinct classes, engaging a total of 48 participants, including young students and educators aged between 15 and 56 years. Of these, 32 participants attended the session held on 28 October, while 16 took part in the morning session on 30 October. The participants came from different educational institutions, namely *Instituto de Enfermería Zaragoza*, *Centro de Formación de Fundación Picarral* (Course: 1st year of Basic Vocational Training Cycle), and *CPFPE Rey Ardid* (Course: 1st year of Intermediate Vocational Training – Nursing Care Assistant). Although the sessions were held independently and adapted slightly depending on the age, responsiveness, level of knowledge of each group, they followed the same structured agenda and shared a common goal: to introduce students to the fundamentals of media literacy and give them tools through a methodology full of fun and interaction to critically evaluate the information they consume online. During each session, the *Media Masters* game was introduced and explained to participants. It soon became evident that there was a need to develop a simplified version of the game in a paper-based format, rather than relying on smartphones. This adaptation was particularly important for groups of students with disabilities and for those who did not have access to a personal device.

● **Introduced to the MEDMAS project**

Each session began with a welcoming introduction by the facilitators from **Instituto Ikigai**, who presented the **MEDMAS project** including its objectives, target groups and the concept of fake news. This first part was designed to give students a basic understanding of the project's purpose—raising awareness about misinformation and disinformation—and to explain why these issues are especially important for young people in the digital age. The second part of the introduction was more interactive and dynamic where students were invited to engage in a live polling on questions designed to test students' ability to distinguish fake news. They responded to a series of **fake news challenges** based on real examples circulating online concerning economy, sustainability, history, politics and feminism on the Mentimeter as well as Kahoot platforms. The typical traps presented in the quiz included **AI-generated videos and images, misleading scientific claims, and fabricated historical "facts."** After each question, facilitators opened up space for brief discussion, asking students why they chose their answer and encouraging them to reflect on the reasoning behind their decisions. This activity was particularly effective in capturing the students' attention from the very beginning, making them aware of how easy it is to be misled by visually convincing or emotionally charged content. It also laid the groundwork for greater passion and deeper engagement during the gameplay phase. As part of the workshop, an



interactive group-based activity was implemented with the aim of fostering creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Participants were divided into small groups and asked to create several news items, some of which were true and others intentionally false. The purpose of the exercise was to enhance media literacy and raise awareness of the prevalence and potential impact of misinformation and fake news on the internet. Each group subsequently presented their news items to the rest of the participants, who were invited to identify which pieces of information were genuine and which were fabricated. In addition, the project team developed a complementary activity consisting of six information sheets, each containing a mix of real and fake news stories. Participants were asked to examine and assess the credibility of these items, thus further strengthening their analytical and digital literacy skills.

• Learning about the MEDMAS Game

After the interactive quiz, facilitators introduced the **Media Masters board game** and its accompanying **mobile application**. A short presentation explained the **educational goals of the game**—namely, to improve media literacy through teamwork, critical thinking, and real-world problem solving. The rules were explained clearly and concisely, with demonstrations of how to scan the QR codes on each card using the app, how teams would take turns, and how game progression would work. The facilitators also invited questions and clarified any doubts about the mechanics before gameplay began.

Because the students ranged in age and familiarity with board games, this part was crucial in ensuring that all participants felt confident and prepared to participate. Special attention was given to simplifying the instructions, such as avoiding using too much terminology and focusing more on graphic presentation, for younger students in order to ensure all the efficiency and effectiveness of the following gameplay session. We noticed that there was a need to develop a simplified version of the activities as well as of the game in a paper-based format, rather than relying on smartphones, being aware in advance of the participation of students with cognitive disabilities. This adaptation was particularly important for groups of students with disabilities and for those who did not have access to a personal device. Through the use of this new version each single group of students was able to engage and to develop critical thinking and learn digital skills.

• Media Masters Gameplay Session

Students were divided into small groups and began playing the Media Masters board game. The activity was designed to foster **collaboration**, **discussion**, and **peer learning**. Each team took turns answering media-related questions, identifying fake news tactics, and debating the reliability of various scenarios.



Despite their age, students engaged actively and showed strong interest in both the content and the competitive element of the game. The gameplay environment encouraged open dialogue, and the questions prompted students to think critically, sometimes debating the answers among teammates before reaching a consensus. Some technical issues were noted with the QR code scanning in certain cases, these were quickly resolved by facilitators. Furthermore, the excessive length of some questions occasionally posed a challenge, as it contributed to a decline in students' attention and engagement during the activity. This issue, combined with the visual effects accompanying each question, sometimes distracted participants and reduced overall focus. These observations underline the importance of ensuring clear, concise, and well-paced content, as well as maintaining an appropriate balance between interactive and visual elements—particularly when working with younger learners or students with special educational needs. Overall, the game functioned well and succeeded in making students more alert to the types of manipulation they might encounter online.

● **Post-Game Discussion and Reflection**

After the gameplay session, a short group discussion was held in each class. Facilitators invited students to share what surprised them most, which types of fake news they found most difficult to identify, and how they think their habits might change after the activity. This reflection phase was important in consolidating the learning outcomes of the session. Many students commented that they had never thought critically about the information they see on TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube before. Some students shared stories of being tricked by fake content, while others said they would now pay more attention to the source of news and do a quick verification before sharing anything. The environment remained inclusive and respectful, allowing students to express different opinions and experiences freely. The facilitators helped moderate the discussion to ensure that every voice could be heard, especially those of quieter or more hesitant students.

● **Final survey and wrap-up**

To conclude the session, students were invited to fill out **two evaluation surveys**, one designed internally for the MEDMAS project, and one provided through the European project framework. These were made accessible via QR codes projected on the classroom screen, which students scanned using their smartphones or tablets. In addition, a **simplified version of the feedback form** was developed for students with disabilities and made available in printed format to ensure greater accessibility, or particularly for those who did not have access to a personal device.

Students were asked to reflect on how much they learned, how confident they now felt in identifying misinformation, and how they rated their experience with the



game and the conference as a whole. The feedback gathered from these responses will be used to refine the project materials and adapt them for future sessions. To conclude the session, students were invited to complete an evaluation survey designed by the MEDMAS project team. Accessed via QR code displayed on the classroom screen, the survey could be filled out using their smartphones or tablets. The questionnaire prompted students to reflect on their media literacy knowledge before and after the MEDMAS activities, whether the session met their needs and goals, and how confident they felt in applying the knowledge and skills acquired. It also explored their level of engagement, enjoyment, and motivation to further explore media literacy and critical thinking. This feedback will be used to improve the content and methodology of the Media Masters activity, ensuring it remains engaging and relevant for secondary school students. Students were encouraged to continue reflecting on the topics covered, and teachers received a digital summary and resources to extend the discussion in future lessons.

Feedback

The feedback and valuable insights, collected through student communication during and after the activity and a unified questionnaire completed at the end of the event, revealed strong interest, active participation, and measurable improvements in students' understanding of misinformation. For clarity, the feedback is presented across seven key thematic areas:

1. Improvement of media literacy skills

Prior to the activity, many students reported their understanding of fake news and media manipulation was vague, and limited. Key components such as algorithmic bias, AI-generated content, or viral disinformation were either unfamiliar or poorly understood. When asked to reflect on their learning, many of them demonstrated a better ability, after the MEDMAS session, to spot misleading headlines, identify manipulation tactics, and evaluate the credibility of online content, particularly on platforms they use daily such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram. More students became able to define key terms, explain common disinformation strategies, and critically assess the content they encounter. For many young students, the conference served as a structured opportunity in the primary stage of their learning journey to explore these issues in depth. The activities facilitated by the Ikigai team provided not only practical tools and real-life examples but also fostered a greater sense of confidence and autonomy in navigating the digital landscape. The Ikigai team also observed increased levels of engagement and problem-solving, both during the session and in subsequent classroom discussions, showing that the conference helped students to develop a more thoughtful and critical approach to the media they consume every day through introducing a complex and essential topic in a way that was both accessible and memorable.



2. Relevance to their media use

Students agreed to a large extent that the content of the conference was highly relevant to their daily media habits and online behavior. Many expressed that they regularly encountered suspicious, misleading, or confusing content on mainstream social media platforms, but they had rarely taken the time to question its accuracy or origin. More specifically they had seldom considered seriously verifying the sources of the information they consumed, and tended to assume unconsciously that the content appearing on popular accounts or trending pages was trustworthy by default. The conferences challenged these assumptions and revealed the influence mechanism of fake news over students' mentality and behaviors. From the intense responding rate and the lively atmosphere we can see that the use of real-life examples during the Mentimeter quiz, including viral videos, influencer posts, and AI-generated content, resonated strongly with students.

3. Content and accessibility

Participants frequently criticized the length, complexity, and density of the question text in the game. Many described the wording as overly academic, technical, or "lecture-like," which undermined the playful nature of the game and made the experience feel more like a school test than an engaging educational activity. This not only slowed down the overall gameplay but also limited accessibility, especially for younger players or those unfamiliar with certain terminology. Some participants said they had to reread questions multiple times to fully grasp the meaning, which interrupted the flow of the session and led to frustration. Others pointed out that long or abstract phrasing discouraged group discussion, as it was difficult to explain or rephrase the questions quickly for teammates. In addition, the level of prior knowledge assumed in some questions was seen as too high for a general audience. In particular, the videos presented in English proved challenging for many students to fully understand, highlighting the need for additional linguistic support or the inclusion of subtitles to ensure equal accessibility and participation.

4. Enjoyment of the activity

Enjoyment was one of the strongest outcomes of the session. When asked whether they enjoyed participating in the Media Masters activity, many students responded positively. They described the conference as "fun," "different from class," and "interesting."

The interactive quiz, the group-based board game, and the active discussion kept them engaged and involved. Many appreciated the chance to speak, move, and collaborate with peers, rather than passively listening to a lecture inserting knowledge in a one-sided way. Several expressed they would gladly participate in similar conferences in the future.



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5. Confidence in applying what they learned

A key goal of the conference was to give students tools they could use in their everyday lives—and the results suggest this goal was met. Most students reported **feeling more confident** in identifying fake or misleading information after the session. They mentioned strategies like checking sources, looking for emotional language, and comparing information across multiple outlets. Students acknowledged that misinformation can still be tricky to spot, they felt more capable than before.

6. Level of challenge and participation

Students generally found the activity to be **appropriately challenging**. They appreciated that the questions in both the quiz and the board game made them think, discuss, and sometimes even debate with their classmates. Some participants mentioned that a few terms were unfamiliar or complex, especially in the app-based questions, but they welcomed the opportunity to ask questions and learn. Group work played a key role in encouraging full participation, particularly for students who might be less confident speaking in front of the whole class.

7. Overall satisfaction and suggestions

All in all, students expressed a **high level of satisfaction** with the Media Masters activity. Most agreed that it was engaging, useful, and enjoyable. Many appreciated that it felt **different from a typical class**, more interactive, hands-on, and closely tied to real-life media situations. Others mentioned they would welcome similar conferences in the future, as they found the format both educational and fun.

Communication and promotion of the initiative

The communication and promotion of the conference held at I.E.S. Leonardo de Chabacier were carried out through targeted and context-sensitive strategies, primarily focused on internal school coordination and direct teacher involvement and online publication. Meanwhile, the initiative was promoted through student networks, including high school students and their surroundings. To ensure the initiative had lasting impact and could be referenced in the future, Ikigai published an official article, including both English and Spanish version, on its website shortly after the event. This mode of communication contributes to building a repository of documented experiences that can inform future iterations of the project, support funding applications, and foster collaborations with other schools across Spain and Europe. <https://institutoikigai.org/promocion-de-la-alfabetizacion-mediatica-en-los-jovenes/>



The screenshot shows the website for INSTITUTO iKigai. The main content area features a photograph of a classroom with students seated at desks, facing a teacher at the front. Below the photo is a date stamp '24 de junio de 2025' and a short text snippet in Spanish: 'Como parte de nuestros esfuerzos continuos de difusión, el equipo de Media Masters realizó una sesión en el I.E.S. Leonardo de Chabacier, un centro educativo en Calatayud, con el objetivo de fomentar la reflexión y el debate sobre temas'. The right sidebar contains a navigation menu with the following items: 'Formación' (with sub-items: Formación Presencial, Formación On-line, Recursos Gratuitos), 'Proyectos' (with sub-item: Proyectos), and 'Campus On-line' (with sub-items: Campus Sofeja, Campus FAMP Andalucía, Campus FAMP AulaOptima, Campus FEGAMP, and a 'Manage consent' button).

The communication and promotion of the conference held at “La Azucarera” were carried out through targeted and context-sensitive strategies, primarily focused on internal school coordination and direct teacher involvement and online publication. We collaborated with La Azucarera, which is a youth center in Zaragoza. They put us in touch with several schools and institutes, including those mentioned before. To ensure the initiative had lasting impact and could be referenced in the future, another local organisation created an official newsletter promoting the event at the local level, including both English and Spanish version, after the event it served to share outcomes and reflections with a wider audience, including teachers from other institutions, educational stakeholders, and project partners. This mode of communication contributes to building a repository of documented experiences that can inform future iterations of the project, support funding applications, and foster collaborations with other schools across Spain and Europe.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0		Initial version

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