



FAKE NEWS



What is Fake News?

Fake news is made up of two terms. “Fake” means “not what somebody claims it is” and “news” are of course “reports of recent events that appear in newspapers or on television, radio or the internet”. So: fake news. With lurid¹ headlines, fake pictures and allegations², lies and propaganda are spread. Fake news gives the impression that it is real news.

Why does fake news exist?

Fake News is meant to impress people. Readers are supposed to click, like and forward the Fake News. This is how money is made. Criminals use Fake News for fraud.

Dangerous Fake News

Some Fake News introduce computer viruses. With their help, users’ personal data is spied out. This is also called “phishing”. This data can be misused. Fake news is also used for political agitation³. False allegations, invented scandals are meant to shake the credibility⁴ of politicians. This is particularly dangerous in an election campaign. Because in an election campaign, people want to be seriously and correctly informed - as they would otherwise. Politicians are therefore dependent on people believing them. With fake news, however, false things are claimed. The aim is to create a mood. People are manipulated.

¹ (especially of a story or piece of writing) presented in a way that is intended to shock

² a public statement that is made without giving proof, accusing somebody of doing something that is wrong or illegal

³ public protest in order to achieve political change

⁴ the quality that somebody/something has that makes people believe or trust them



Recognising Fake News

It is often not easy to recognise whether it is real news or fake news.

Four steps can help:

1 | Look at the news carefully

Look at the news carefully. If everything looks like a headline, if it is mainly about sensation, then be careful. If it's just an opinion without explanation, if it's trying to create a mood, then be careful.

2 | Think for yourself

Always think before you pass on a message. If you have doubts about the authenticity of the message, it's better not to like and spread it.

3 | Read critically

Often numbers and quotes are mentioned in fake news. They appear without you being able to see where they come from. Caution is advisable. Check whether the article is very one-sided. Is only one opinion expressed or are other views also expressed?

4 | Check sources

Real news comes from reliable sources. Check who is spreading the news! There must be an "imprint" on every publication. There must be the name, address and contact details of the person responsible for the news on the page. If this information is missing or incorrect, there is reason for caution. If other media do not spread this news, there is reason to doubt the accuracy of the news.

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