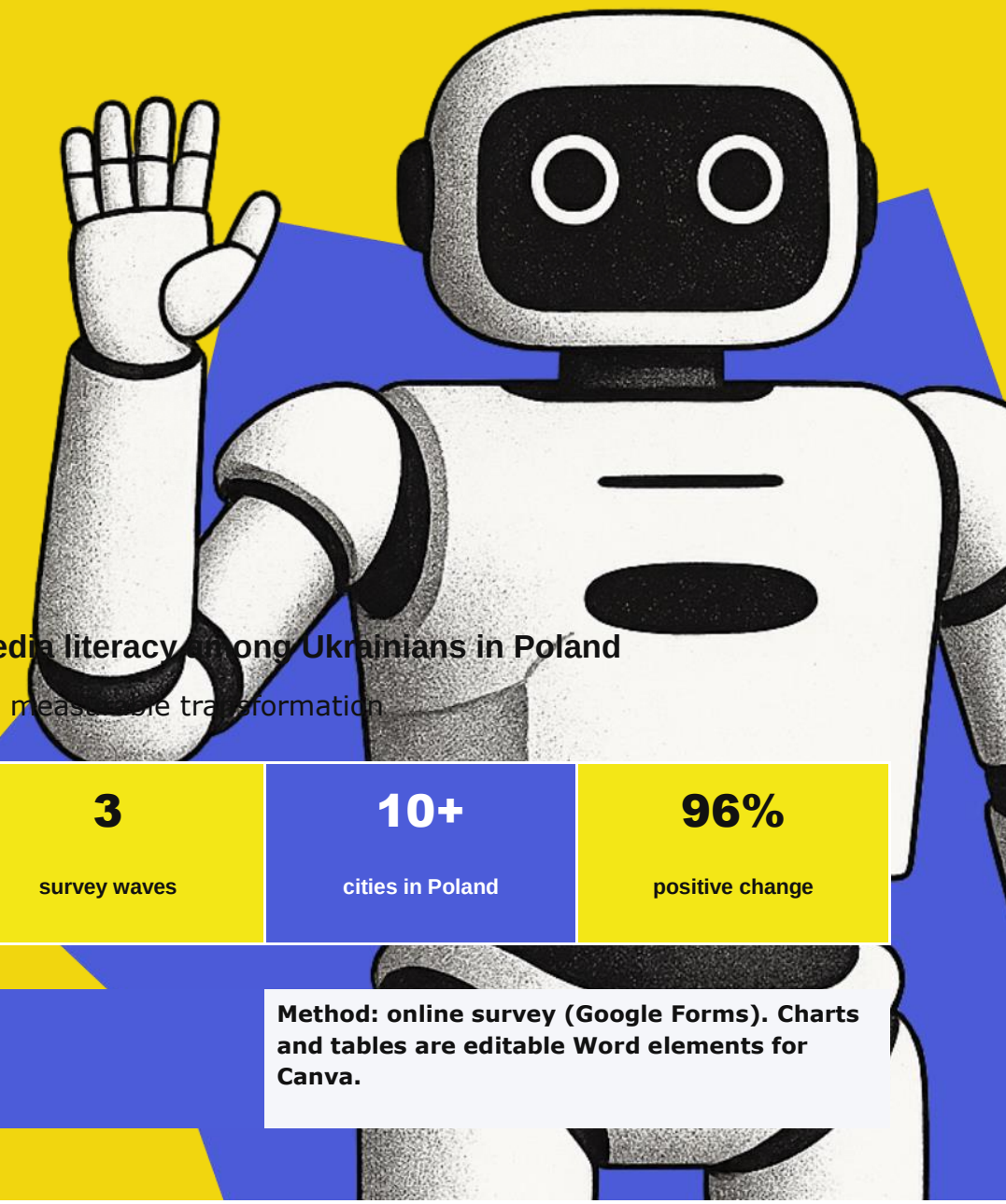
Zéro Fake

RESULTS OF THE SOCIAL SURVEY

within the framework of the Zéro Fake project



Three-wave study of media literacy among Ukrainians in Poland

From audience profiling to measurable transformation

611	3	10+	96%
survey responses	survey waves	cities in Poland	positive change

→

Method: online survey (Google Forms). Charts and tables are editable Word elements for Canva.

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1 Research methodology

The study is structured as a three-wave design and covers the entire cycle of the Zéro Fake project, from the initial diagnosis of the audience to the measurement of learning outcomes.

The three waves together make it possible to trace the project's impact logic: from the audience profile and its information challenges to the initial level of media literacy and the changes recorded after the training sessions.

Wave	Name	Fieldwork period	n	Focus
Stage 1	General survey	Before the start of the project	293	Audience profile, media consumption, challenges, expectations
Wave 2	Pre-assessment	Before the training sessions	164	Level of media literacy, confidence in identifying fake news, fact-checking skills
Wave 3	Post-assessment	After the training sessions	154	Dynamics of knowledge, effectiveness of project tools, subjective progress
In total			611	

→ **Important: the study is not panel-based, meaning the three waves do not track the same individuals over time. Stage 1 covers a broader project audience, while the pre- and post-assessment refer to training participants. Therefore, the results should be interpreted as an aggregated picture of the project's impact, rather than an individual trajectory of each participant.**

The project was implemented as a comprehensive intervention: audience research, trainer training, 41 in-person workshops across cities in Poland, 6 online webinars, digital tools, and a communication campaign. The study measures the impact not of a single activity, but of a systemic educational model.

2 Audience profile

The first wave of the study (n=293) covers participants of Ukrainian Educational Hub events in Poland before the start of the training sessions. This is the broadest cross-section of the audience—people who

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are already interested in media literacy and joined the project on their own initiative. Their profile defines the entire subsequent research context.

2.1. Demographic profile

Age

Age group	Number	Indicator	%
14–17 years	5	■□□□□□□□□□	2%
18–24 years	56	■■□□□□□□□□	19%
25–34 years	88	■■■■□□□□□□	**30%**
35–44 years	87	■■■■□□□□□□	**30%**
45–54 years	44	■■□□□□□□□□	15%
55–64 years	7	■□□□□□□□□□	2%
65+ years	6	■□□□□□□□□□	2%

The Stage 1 audience differs significantly from the training participants: it is dominated by young and middle-aged adults (25–44 years old – 60% of the sample). This is a socially active, educated generation with established careers and businesses—natural "multipliers" of knowledge within their communities.

Gender

Women make up 62% of participants (181 individuals), while men account for 37% (108 individuals). This distribution indicates a high level of female engagement in educational and civic initiatives within Ukrainian communities in Poland.

Geography

Almost half of the participants (47%) reside in the Masovian Voivodeship (Warsaw). The Lublin Voivodeship ranks second (18%), which can be explained by its proximity to the border and active reception of displaced persons. Together with the Lesser Poland Voivodeship (Kraków), these three regions account for 72% of the audience. This distribution reflects the concentration of project activity in major urban centres and regions with a significant Ukrainian community presence.

Occupation

Occupation	Number	Indicator	%
Employee	92	■■■■□□□□□□	**31%**
Student	47	■■□□□□□□□□	16%
Self-employed business owner	46	■■□□□□□□□□	16%
NGO / civil society sector	41	■■□□□□□□□□	14%

Education	27		9%
Journalism	9		3%
Pupil / school student	7		2%
Other	24		8%

A notable fact: 14% of participants are NGO representatives, another 9% are educators, and 3% are journalists. Together, this accounts for a quarter of the audience that works directly with information and communities. Their media literacy has a direct multiplier effect.

2.2. Media consumption: how the audience accesses information

Language of news

Ukrainian is overwhelmingly dominant (88% of mentions). Polish ranks second (44%). Key takeaway: the audience primarily consumes information in a Ukrainian-language environment, where, in the context of war, the risks of propaganda, manipulation, and disinformation remain particularly relevant.

Sources of information

Source	Number of mentions	Indicator	% of the sample
Social media	222		**76%**
News websites	165		56%
Television	69		24%
Print media	39		13%
Radio	34		12%

76% of the audience receives information via social media—a high-risk environment for misinformation. More than half (56%) also use news websites, but the critical assessment of their credibility remains in question, as confirmed by the pre-assessment.

Frequency of news discussion

75% of participants discuss news daily or several times a week. This means that each trained participant actively passes information on—to their family, workplace, and community. In this context, a media-literate person becomes a safeguard for their entire social circle.

2.3. Challenges: what hinders high-quality information consumption

Challenge	Number of mentions	Indicator	% of the sample

Information overload	138	■■■■■■□□□□	47%
Conflicting opinion leaders / bloggers	124	■■■■■□□□□□	42%
Lack of time for verification	118	■■■■■□□□□□	40%
Cultural differences in news perception	114	■■■■■□□□□□	39%
Language barrier (Polish)	105	■■■■□□□□□□	36%
Distrust in Polish media	98	■■■■□□□□□□	33%
Distrust in Ukrainian media	58	■■□□□□□□□□	20%

The three main challenges—information overload, conflicting sources, and lack of time for verification—create favourable conditions for the spread of misinformation: people receive too much information, are not always sure which sources to trust, and often do not have time to verify content.

For Ukrainians in Poland, information overload is not an abstract media issue. Participants find themselves simultaneously in a new information environment and under constant pressure of war-related news.

2.4. Expectations from the training sessions

Preferred learning format	Number of mentions	Indicator	% of the sample
Online lectures	190	■■■■■■■□□□	65%
Video tutorials	119	■■■■■□□□□□	41%
In-person meetings	98	■■■■□□□□□□	33%
Discussion clubs	92	■■■■□□□□□□	31%
Workshops	89	■■■■□□□□□□	30%

The audience prefers online formats (65%) as the most convenient given time constraints and geographic dispersion across Poland. At the same time, one third of participants favour live interaction: in-person meetings and workshops. This confirms the relevance of the project's hybrid approach.

The audience profile shows that participants come with real challenges: information overload, distrust in sources, and lack of time for verification.

3 Media literacy level BEFORE the training

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sessions

The second wave (pre-assessment, n=164) measures the actual baseline level of media literacy among training participants. This section confirms and specifies the challenges reported in Stage 1: participants not only feel difficulties with verification, they also rarely check information and seldom use specialized tools.

3.1. Self-assessment of media literacy knowledge

Self-assessed knowledge level	Number	Indicator	%
0–20% - initial	22	■■	13%
21–40% - baseline	37	■■■	23%
41–60% - medium	55	■■■■	**34%**
61–80% - confident	33	■■	20%
81–100% - high	10	■	6%
Difficult to answer	7	■	4%

70% of participants assess their level as beginner or intermediate (0–60%). This is consistent with Stage 1 data: people experience information-related challenges but do not have systematic tools to address them.

3.2. Confidence in identifying fake news (scale 1–5)

Rating	Number	Indicator	%
1 - Not at all confident	15	■	9%
2 - Rather not confident	20	■	12%
3 - Neutral position	74	■■■■■	**45%**
4 - Rather confident	39	■■■	24%
5 - Very confident	16	■	10%

Nearly half of respondents (45%) choose the neutral rating "3," meaning they are unsure of their ability to identify fake news. 21% rate their confidence below average. Only 10% feel truly confident.

3.3. Frequency of checking news

Verification frequency	Number	Indicator	%
Never	16		10%
Rarely	32		20%
Sometimes	67		41%
Often	31		19%
Always	16		10%

Direct link to Stage 1: 40% of participants identified "lack of time for verification" as a key challenge, and indeed only 10% always verify news. 30% never or rarely do so. The problem is real and confirmed.

3.4. Fact-checking tools

Tool	Number	Indicator	%
Do not use any at all	59		36%
Google Search / Images	63		38%
Specialized platforms	23		14%
StopFake	8		5%
FakeCheck.in.ua	7		4%
Detector Media	3		2%
Reuters Fact Check	1		1%

36% of participants do not use any verification tools at all. Another 38% rely on general Google searches rather than specialised fact-checking platforms. Only 14% are familiar with dedicated verification resources. This gap is precisely what the Zéro Fake training sessions address, introducing participants to simple and accessible tools for information verification.

3.5. Self-assessed critical thinking

Level	Number	Indicator	%
Low	29		18%
Medium	93		57%
High	27		16%

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Difficult to say	15	■□□□□□□□□□	9%

57% of participants rate their critical thinking as moderate. Combined with low verification frequency and a limited set of tools, this reflects a classic pattern of "competence at the level of understanding"—people know that information should be verified, but do not know how to do it in practice and lack the habit of doing so.

3.6. Prior experience in media education

Training experience	Number	Indicator	%
Yes, had prior training experience	31	■■□□□□□□□□	19%
No prior experience	133	■■■■■■■■■□	**81%**

A critically important finding: for 81% of participants, the Zéro Fake training sessions were their first-ever experience of media education. This helps explain the strength of the effect: participants came without prior stereotypes, with openness to new tools and methods, which is why the outcomes were so pronounced.

For some participants, media literacy became relevant only after relocating to Poland—due to a new media environment, language barriers, and the need to navigate two information spaces simultaneously.

The baseline assessment confirms that the challenges identified in Stage 1 are not merely subjective perceptions but reflect a real skills gap. 36% of participants did not use any fact-checking tools, and 81% had never received media education before. It is precisely into this "vacuum" that the Zéro Fake training sessions were introduced.

4 Post-training results

The third wave (post-assessment, n=154) measures changes immediately after the completion of the training sessions. Here we examine whether participants' expectations—formed already in Stage 1—were met, and whether the training effectively addressed the real gaps identified in the pre-assessment.

4.1. Subjective assessment of knowledge gain

Perceived improvement	Number	Indicator	%
0–10%	4	■□□□□□□□□□	3%
11–20%	3	■□□□□□□□□□	2%
21–40%	11	■□□□□□□□□□	7%
41–60%	24	■■□□□□□□□□	16%

61–80%	45		29%
81–100%	62		**40%**

69% of participants rated their knowledge gain at 61–100%. In comparison, only 6% in Stage 1 considered their level to be "high," meaning the training significantly increased perceived competence.

4.2. Assessment of knowledge level change

Assessment of change	Number	Indicator	%
Significantly improved	60		39%
Improved noticeably	61		**40%**
Slightly improved	27		17%
No change	6		4%

96% of participants reported positive change. Only 6 people (4%) did not notice any improvement, most likely those who already had a relatively high starting level. The rate of expectations being met is extremely high, especially considering that 81% entered the program without any prior training in media literacy.

4.3. Confidence in identifying fake news: before and after

3.13 → 4.14	**34% → 82%**	**45% → 16%**
average confidence	**rating 4–5**	**neutral position**

Rating	Pre (n=164)	Post (n=154)	Change
1 - not at all confident	**15 (9%)**	1 (1%)	▼ −14
2 - rather not confident	**20 (12%)**	2 (1%)	▼ −18
3 - neutral position	**74 (45%)**	24 (16%)	▼ −50
4 - rather confident	**39 (24%)**	74 (48%)	▲ +35
5 - very confident	**16 (10%)**	53 (34%)	▲ +37
Average value	**3,13**	4,14	▲ +1.01 (+32%)

This is a key quantitative indicator of the project. The average score increased from 3.13 to 4.14 (+1.01 points, +32%). The share of participants rating their confidence at 4–5 rose from 34% to 82%—nearly a 2.5-fold increase. Neutral responses ("3") were cut by half, decreasing from 45% before to only 16% after.

4.4. Training quality

Indicator	Average score (1–5)	Rating 5 (maximum)	%
Usefulness and clarity of the training sessions	4.42	88 people	57%
Satisfaction with the trainer(s) performance	4.77	127 people	82%

Trainer rating of 4.77/5 indicates a very high level of satisfaction compared to typical adult education programmes. In Stage 1, participants expressed a need for "practical skills and concrete tools," and this is exactly what they received, which is reflected in the high usefulness score (4.42).

4.5. Most useful topics

Analysis of open-ended responses revealed the topics that most strongly resonated with participants:

- Identifying fake news, manipulation, and disinformation
- Verifying images and videos, including detection of AI-generated content
- Practical tools: media literacy test, AI chatbot "Zorjan," the "5-step method," Google Reverse Image Search
- Media literacy in social media
- Cyberbullying and digital safety
- Propaganda and methods of information influence

The connection to Stage 1 is clear: participants wanted to learn how to verify information and recognize manipulation, and these are exactly the topics they identify as most valuable.

Project tools continue to be used beyond the training sessions: the "5-step method" recorded 1,859 visits, and the online media literacy test had 692 users. This indicates that the training did not end as a one-time learning session but instead encouraged participants to independently engage with trusted verification resources.

→ **The data shows that the training sessions changed participants' self-perception.**

5 Comparative analysis: all three waves together

This section brings together data from all three waves, showing the full journey from initial diagnosis to measurable outcomes.

5.1. Summary table of indicators

Indicator	Stage 1(n=293)	Pre(n=164)	Post(n=154)	Dynamics
Information overload as a challenge	47%	—	—	Context
Lack of time for verification	40%	—	—	Context
Do not verify news (never/rarely)	—	30%	—	Confirmed
Do not use fact-checking tools	—	36%	—	Confirmed
Average confidence (1–5)	—	3.13	4.14	▲ +1.01 (+32%)
Rating 4–5 ("confident")	—	34%	82%	▲ +48 p.p.
First experience in media education	—	81%	—	Baseline
Positive change in knowledge level	—	—	96%	
Significant/noticeable improvement	—	—	79%	
Trainer rating (1–5)	—	—	4.77	
Usefulness of the training sessions (1–5)	—	—	4.42	

5.2. Cross-wave connections

What Stage 1 revealed	What Pre confirmed	What Post showed
47% experience information overload	34% self-assess their level as "low/medium", and 45% report neutral confidence.	96% improved their level after structured training.
40% — lack of time for verification	30% never or rarely verify news.	Mastered the "5-step method": quick verification without unnecessary time costs.

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42% — contradictory opinion leaders	36% do not use fact-checking platforms.	+1.01 increase in confidence in identifying manipulation.
Expect practical skills.	81% — first experience in media education, high motivation.	4.77/5 — satisfaction, 79% reported significant improvement.

The three waves form a single coherent narrative: participants entered with real, confirmed challenges and a lack of systematic skills, and exited with concrete tools and significantly higher confidence.

6 Conclusions and effectiveness assessment

6.1. Scientific conclusions

The three-wave research design made it possible to trace a complete causal chain: from identifying challenges and competency gaps to measuring participants' transformation.

Below are the key scientific conclusions based on the analysis.

- The increase in subjective confidence in identifying disinformation amounted to +1.01 points (+32%) on a 1–5 scale. This dynamic demonstrates the high effectiveness of the project's practical methodology and tools.
- The fact that 81% of participants had never previously received media education explains the strength of the effect: for audiences with no prior exposure, structured training produces a particularly strong impact. At the same time, this indicates a significant unmet demand among Ukrainian communities in Poland.
- The data confirms the theoretical model of "conscious competence": participants move from a state of "I do not know and do not understand how to verify information" to "I know, I can, and I apply it" through tools such as the media literacy test, the AI chatbot "Zorjan," and the "5-step method."
- The high trainer rating (4.77/5), combined with the usefulness score (4.42/5), indicates that the effect is driven not only by teaching quality but also by the relevance of the programme to participants' real information challenges.
- The three-wave methodology confirms the systemic nature of the problem: challenges identified in Stage 1 (information overload, lack of time, distrust of sources) directly correspond to gaps in the pre-assessment (36% without fact-checking tools, 30% without verification habits) and explain the strength of the post-assessment effect.
- 96% positive change across a diverse audience (ages 14–65+, varied occupations, and different levels of Polish language proficiency) demonstrates the universality of the approach: Zéro Fake training is effective regardless of participants' age or social profile.

6.2. Project effectiveness assessment through surveys

Criterion	Indicator
Survey coverage	611 responses across three waves
Increase in confidence	+32% (3.13→4.14)
Positive dynamics	96% participants

First experience of media education	81% - first time
Trainer satisfaction	4.77/5 (95.4%)
Content usefulness	4.42/5 (88.4%)
Expectation fulfillment	79% - significant/noticeable improvement

6.3. Key project results

96% of participants reported an improvement in media literacy after the training sessions 148 out of 154 people (Post-assessment)	**Confidence in identifying fake news increased by 32% — from 3.13 to 4.14 on a 1–5 scale** Comparison of Pre and Post
82% of participants after the training rate themselves as confident in handling information 127 out of 154 selected a rating 4–5	**69%** assess their own knowledge gain at 61–100% 107 out of 154 people
4.77/5 average rating of trainer performance quality 82% selected the maximum score	**4.42/5** average rating of the programme's usefulness and clarity 57% selected the maximum score
611 surveys across three waves of the study, covering 10+ cities in Poland Stage 1 (293) + Pre (164) + Post (154)	**81%** of training participants had no prior experience in media education 133 out of 164 people (Pre-assessment)

6.4. Target audiences and their potential

The three-wave data make it possible to identify four audience segments with different potential for knowledge multiplication:

Segment	Reach / coverage	Type of impact and strategic value
Young adults 18–34 (49% in Stage 1)	~300 people	Digitally active, they shape media habits for decades ahead; high social media activity enables wide dissemination of knowledge.
Middle generation 35–54 (33% Pre/Post)	~200 people	Social multipliers: they pass verified information to family, workplace, and neighbours; they are influential

		in local communities.
NGOs, educators, journalists (26% in Stage 1)	~76 people	Cascade effect: each member of this group shapes the media culture of dozens of people through their professional activity.
Teenagers 14–17 (29–39% Pre/Post)	~80 people	Strategic group: early exposure to media education builds critical thinking skills for the entire adult life.

6.5. Social multiplier

75% of Stage 1 participants discuss news daily or several times a week. According to sociological research, each person with active information behaviour influences the media consumption of 5–10 people within their social circle. Considering that participants include educators, NGO workers, and journalists, the actual multiplication coefficient is likely higher.

Thus, the direct impact on 611 participants generates an estimated indirect impact on:

3,000 – 6,000 people across Polish cities

estimated indirect impact

75% of Stage 1 participants discuss news daily or several times a week. This means that the knowledge gained within the project can further spread through families, workplaces, educational environments, and local communities.

In-person trainings reached 812 participants, while online webinars engaged an additional 944 participants. Thus, the total direct reach of learning activities amounted to 1,756 individuals. Webinar recordings on YouTube received 22,849 views, significantly exceeding the planned 6,000—3.8 times higher than expected.

According to a conservative estimate, if each active participant shares key knowledge with at least 5–10 people within their social circle, the potential indirect impact of the project may reach approximately 8,800–17,600 individuals. This effect is particularly important given the presence of educators, NGO representatives, and journalists among participants.

8,000 – 16,000 people across Polish cities

estimated indirect impact

6.6. Overall conclusion

The Zéro Fake project demonstrated measurable and tangible effectiveness in improving media literacy among its target audience. The combination of a practical approach, high-quality trainers, and relevant content ensured strong educational impact within Ukrainian communities in Poland.

The research data show that Zéro Fake training sessions do more than transfer knowledge—they shape a new quality of information behaviour. Participants gained practical tools for verifying sources,

identifying manipulation, and consuming information more consciously. This builds a foundation for long-term resilience against disinformation and propaganda.

The results confirm the effectiveness of the approach: 96% of participants improved their media literacy level, and confidence in identifying fake news increased by 32%.

6.7. Recommendations for project development

Based on the project implementation results and analysis of participant feedback, it is recommended that the further development of the programme focus on the following areas:

1. 1. Accounting for participants' information fatigue. A portion of the audience joined the project with a high level of information fatigue caused by the constant pressure of war-related news. This reduced their readiness to learn and absorb new material. It is advisable to develop a short introductory module on managing information stress, which would serve as a gentle entry point for such participants.
2. 2. Securing funding for further development and scaling. It is recommended to continue seeking financial support for the project's development, its replication in other EU countries, as well as its adaptation and implementation in Ukraine.
3. 3. Strengthening the practical component of the programme. Since 23% of participants indicated that hands-on work with tools was only "partially" sufficient, it is important to increase the number of practical case studies involving the "Zorjan" chatbot and the "5-step method." This will help participants consolidate verification skills and apply them more confidently in everyday life.
4. 4. Scaling the online format. The high demand for online participation observed in Stage 1 (65%) highlights the need to further develop the remote learning format. This is especially important for reaching participants in small and medium-sized cities where access to in-person training is limited.
5. 5. Differentiation of the programme by age groups. It is advisable to develop separate learning tracks for different target audiences: a youth track for participants aged 14–17 using gamification and interactive formats, and an adult track for audiences 35+ with an emphasis on practical information verification in everyday situations.
6. 6. Using project results as an evidence base. The data from this report can be used as impact evidence in grant applications, donor reports, and presentation materials. The quantitative results—such as 96%, +32%, and an average score of 4.77/5—are strong arguments for continuing, developing, and scaling the initiative.

Zéro Fake in-person trainings reached more than 800 participants, while the total direct reach of learning activities—including both in-person trainings and online webinars—amounted to 1,756 individuals.

For the study, 611 survey responses were collected across three waves of data collection. The results confirm the effectiveness of the project: 96% of participants improved their media literacy level, and confidence in identifying fake news increased by 32%.

The main conclusion is that Zéro Fake is not just a training programme, but a tool for changing mindsets. The project affects not only participants' knowledge, but also their ability to critically assess information, verify sources, and navigate the information environment with greater confidence.

7 Impact at a glance

611 questionnaires across three waves	**96%** of participants reported improvement	**+32%** increase in confidence in identifying fake news
4.77/5 average trainer rating	**1,756** direct reach of learning activities	**22,849** webinar recording views

→ **Zéro Fake is not just a training programme, but a tool for changing mindsets: from passive information consumption to confident source verification, recognition of manipulation, and resilience to disinformation.**

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