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19.11.2025

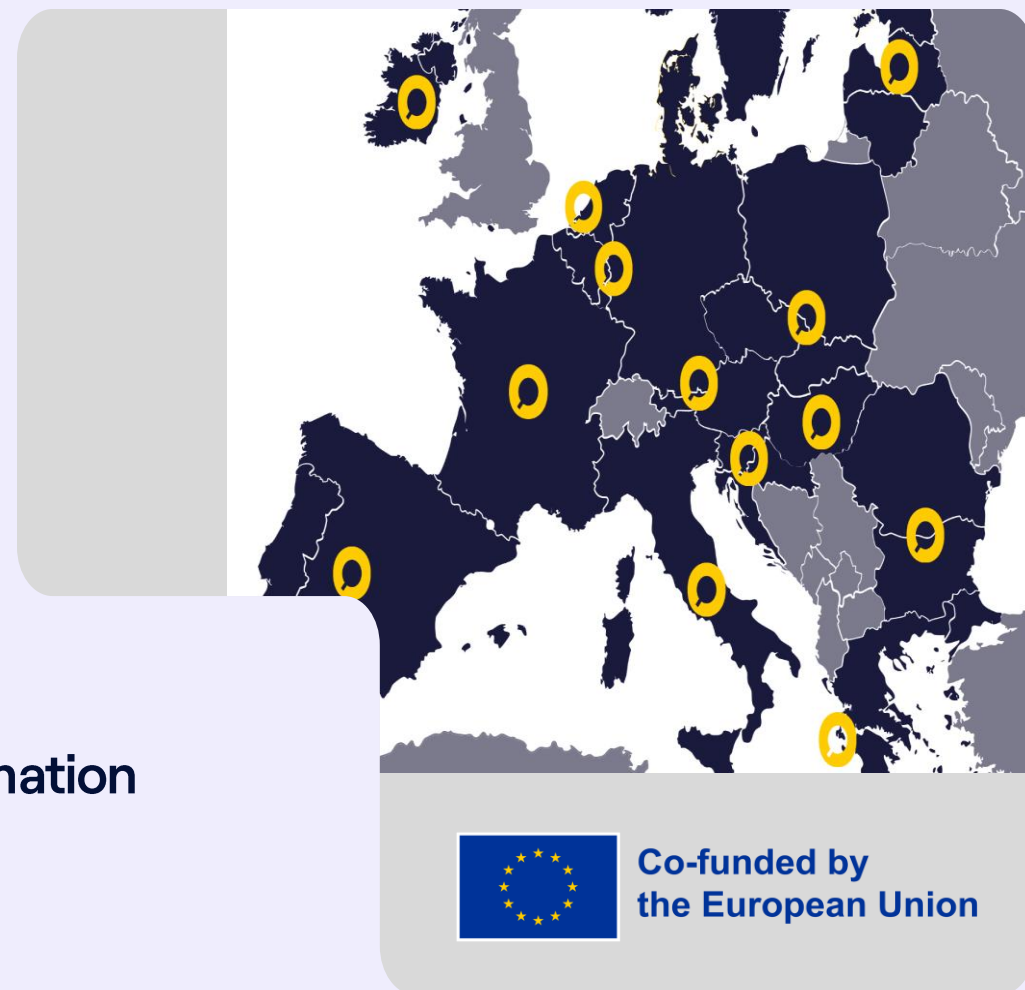
# Factcheck campaign Medical desinformation and social media





**EDMO: 14 hubs:** Limiting the impact of disinformation

**BENEDMO:** Netherlands & Flanders



# BENEDMO Partners

Network

297

EDMO  
hubs

14

Consortium



bellincat



.ANP



Universiteit  
Leiden



KU LEUVEN



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



Knack



Network  
Mediawijsheid



deCheckers

Participant  
council

53



BENEDMO



Co-funded by  
the European Union

# Activities

## BENEDMO network



- Needs assessment
- Training, for example
  - Fact checking
  - Verification methods
  - Data journalism
- Knowledge exchange

→ development of tools in support of these activities



## Disinformation research and policy analysis

- Impact and implementation of the Code of Practice
- Impact of emerging (AI-powered) disinfo techniques
- The effectiveness of different platform interventions for limiting the impact of disinformation



## Fact checking and disinformation investigations

- Fact checking
- Collaborative investigations
- Collaboration with EDMO-network

→ development of tools in support of these activities

## Media Literacy

- News literacy programmes
- Updating and recontextualising Resources (Fake News and AI)
- Exchanging Flemish and Dutch practices and materials
- Labs for professionals working with vulnerable groups





# 1. Start Campagne

Brainstorming day to determine topics and plan the campaign operationally

Get inspired by on-going initiatives (Gezondheid & Wetenschap TikTok general practitioner )

Focus on young people and the impact of social media on their health



## 2. Collect information

- Survey of Flemish general practitioners:
- 88 of the 126 doctors surveyed receive weekly or monthly questions from young people about social media messages.
- About a quarter of the participating doctors indicated that they should have intervened already.





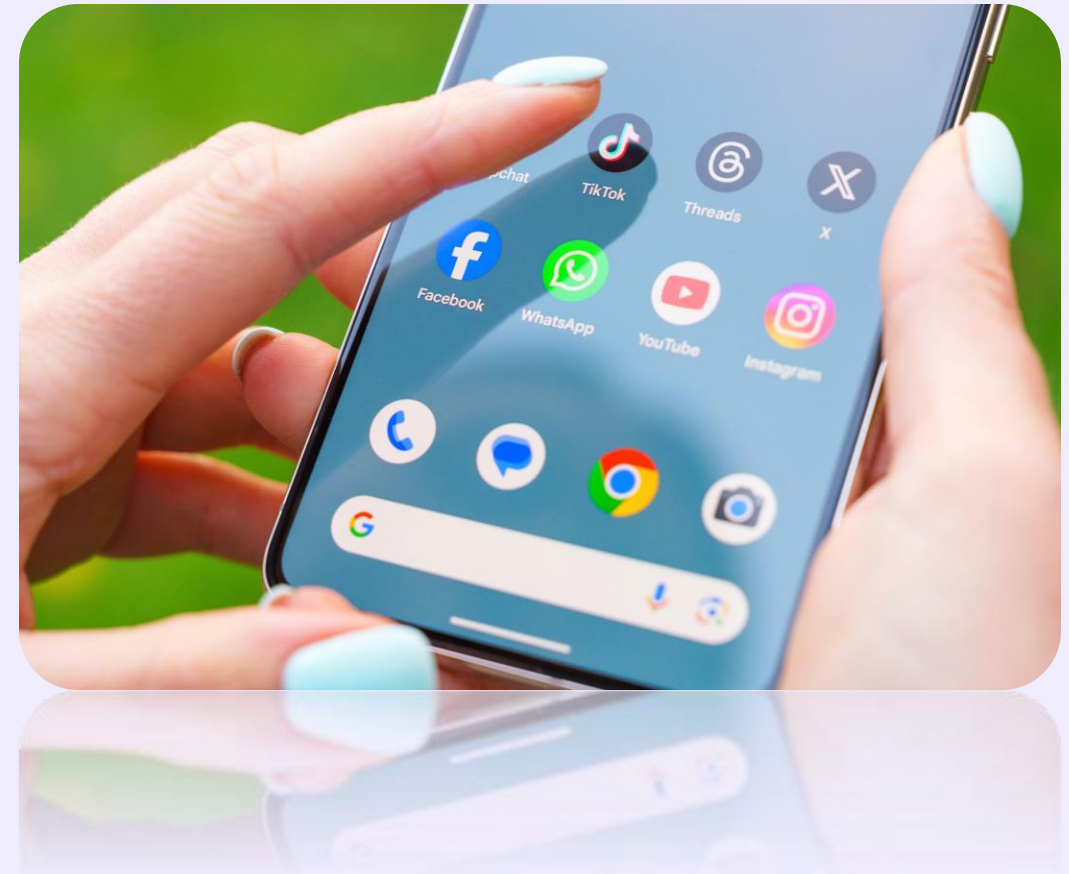
Scraping carried out to **delineate scope and issues**, in collaboration with AI company Textgain.



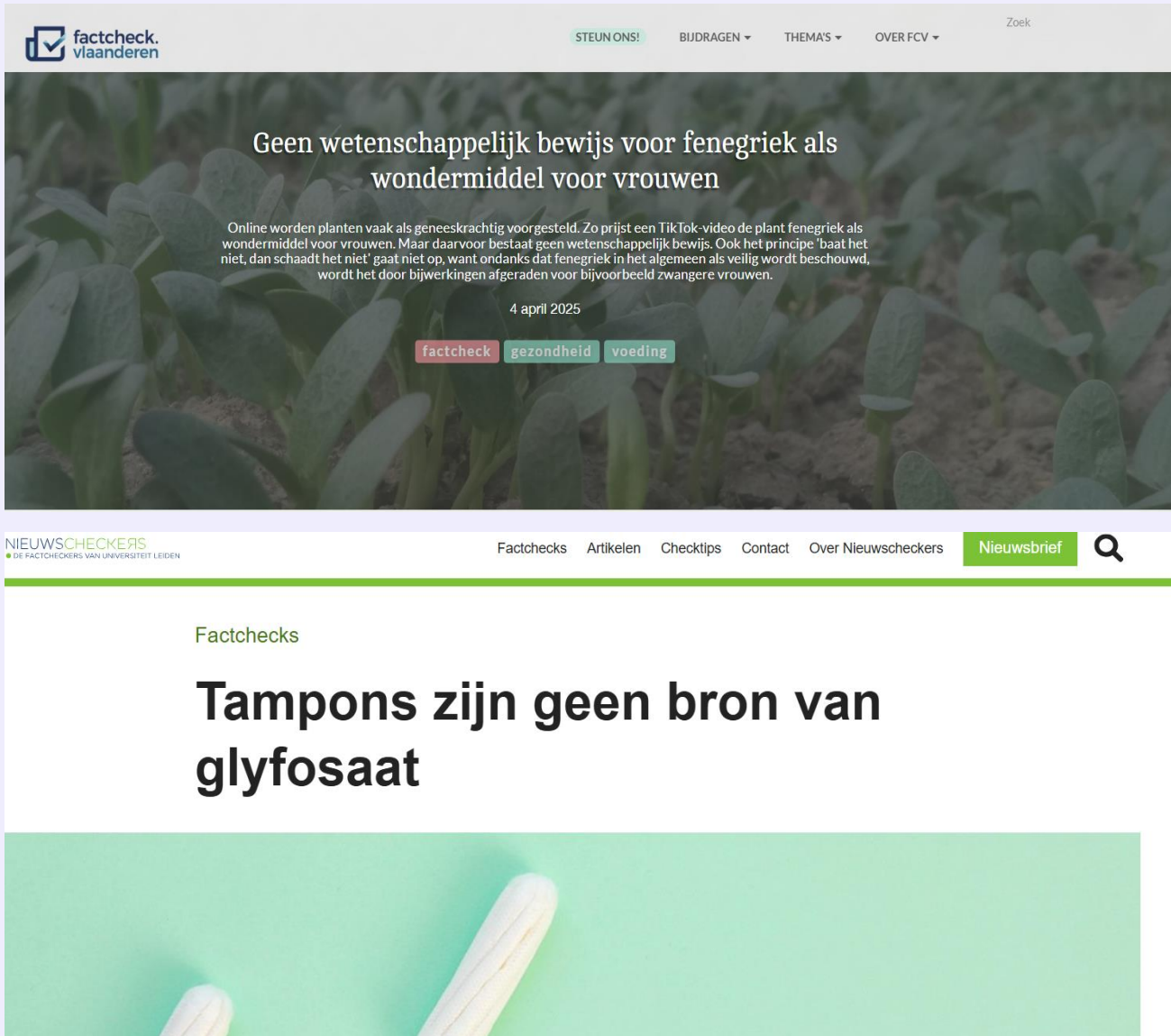
On Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, an average of **280 Dutch-language** messages are posted every day about health topics.



Vaccination, self-help and self-diagnoses, cosmetic procedures, hormone therapy, supplements, contraception.



# 3. Results





## 4. Additional research

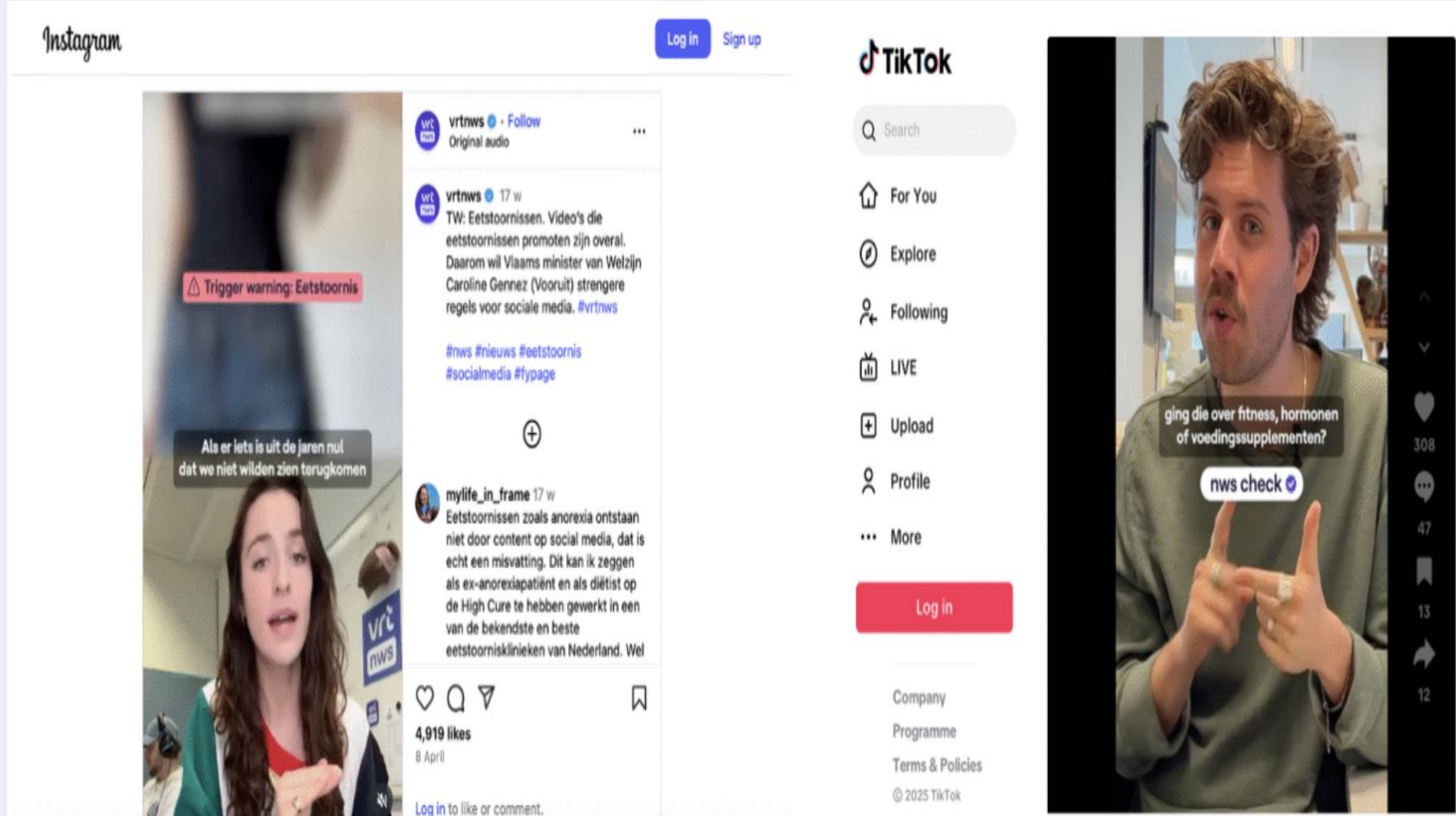
- How quickly do you get on Instagram vs. TikTok pro-anorexia videos against?
- 4 accounts: 2 on TikTok, 2 on Instagram, each a profile for an adult and a minor
- We scroll per account for 7 days, every day for 30 minutes
- Collecting testimonials



TikTok and Instagram show pro-anorexia videos to young people within the hour



## 5. Reaching audiences where they are



➡ **TikTok : 120.000 views / Instagram  
275.000 views**

## 6. Impact



Gezondheid

### Minister Vanessa Matz (Les Engagés) wil maatregelen tegen filmpjes die extreme slankheid promoten op TikTok

Minister van Digitalisering Vanessa Matz (Les Engagés) waarschuwt voor de grote gevaren van 'SkinnyTok', de trend op TikTok die viraal is gegaan en extreme slankheid promoot. Matz wijst op de gevaren van de inhoud van die TikTok-filmpjes voor de geestelijke en lichamelijke gezondheid van jongeren. Ze vraagt om het fenomeen als systeemrisico te erkennen in de Digital Services Act, de Europese digitale regelgeving. Ze wil ook dat digitale platformen als TikTok maatregelen nemen.

Sociale media verbieden is geen optie, schrijft Cieltje Van Achter (N-VA). 'Wel moet er geïnvesteerd worden in mediawijsheid.'

**CIELTJE VAN ACHTER** 17 april 2025, 03:00

Bewaren

Delen

Stephen Fry had een punt toen hij sociale media vergeleek met de industriële revolutie: ongereguleerde techplatformen vervuilen onze samenleving zoals de eerste fabrieken ooit onze rivieren vergiftigden. Maar als we die vergelijking maken, moeten we ze volledig doortrekken: de oplossing lag toen niet in het verbieden van fabrieken. De oplossing lag in regelgeving, bewustwording en collectieve verantwoordelijkheid.



Binnenland Politiek

### "Jongeren beschermen tegen schadelijke inhoud": minister Gennez en Gezinsbond pleiten voor strengere aanpak sociale media, maar verbod is niet altijd juiste oplossing



## 7. Knowledge sharing with experts and stakeholders

May 2025 – Knowledge sharing event in The Hague with various stakeholders from BENEDMO and the medical sector





## 8. Main take-aways of campaign

1. **Collaboration works** : synergies & leverage on each others expertise, avoid double work
2. **Collaboration creates a better database** that allows for a better understanding of the problematic and for relevant research and output
3. **Multimodal dissemination of results and insights**: beyond classical factcheck, adapt message to platform, reach more audiences
4. **Connect with stakeholders** for broader impact and structural uptake



# Thank you

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